

**Brandwood End Cemetery,
Birmingham, Warwickshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



7686 PRIVATE

E. BARRETT

13TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH FEBRUARY, 1921

Ernest BARRETT

Ernest Barrett was born on 14th February, 1885 at Aston, England.

[Insufficient information is known about Ernest Barrett to correctly identify him in the England Censuses]

From the Victoria Police Gazette – 13 December, 1917:

DESERTERS From the A.I.Force:

BARRATT, ERNEST VALENTINE, private, 32 ¾ years of age, 5ft 7 ½ in., fresh complexion, brown hair and eyes, crossed flags tattooed in right forearm, heart on left forearm and chest. Born at Birmingham, England; enlisted at Melbourne, His wife, Margaret Barratt, resided at Birmingham, England. Deserted from Broadmeadows Camp, 26th November, 1917.

Ernest Barrett was a 33 year old, married, Saddler from Sydney, NSW (care Salvation Army, Peoples Palace, Pitt Street, Sydney) when he enlisted at East Sydney, NSW on 14th December, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 7686 & his religion was Salvation Army. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs M. Barrett, of “Cooma” North Cumberland Street, Liverpool, NSW. Description – 5 foot 8 inches, fair complexion, brown eyes, dark hair. Ernest Barrett had several tattoos on his body – “*crucifix on chest. Britannia. Girl American Flag standing on world left arm. Britannia. Joe Chamberlain. American & English flags Dancing girl right arm.*”

Private Ernest Barrett was posted to Recruits at Show Ground Camp, Sydney, NSW on 17th December, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to Recruit M. & D. Depot at Liverpool, NSW on 21st January, 1918 then transferred to C. Company of Technical Battalion on 30th January, 1918. Private Barrett was transferred to 26th Reinforcements of 13th Battalion on 15th March, 1918.

Private Ernest Barrett embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Runic* (A54) on 22nd March, 1918 with the 13th Infantry Battalion, 26th Reinforcements.

Mrs Maggie Barrett, wife of Private Ernest Barrett, wrote to Base Records on 12th April, 1918 to advise that her address had been changed from Liverpool, NSW to c/o Post Office, Cottesloe, Western Australia as she had friends in Western Australia.

Private Ernest Barrett was awarded 5 days forfeiture of pay on 1st May, 1918 for “*Making away with equipment by casting overboard*” while at Newport Mews, U.S.A. on HMAT *Runic*.

Private Ernest Barrett disembarked at London, England on 24th May, 1918.

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 Ernest Barrett was marched in to 12th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire from Australia on 24th May, 1918.

Mrs Maggie Barrett, wife of Private Ernest Barrett, wrote to Base Records in June, 1918 stating she had previously notified them of her change of address in case of casualty etc of her husband. She advised that she had “*not heard anything from him since he left only 1 letter from N. Zealand...*”

Private Ernest Barrett was reported to be AWL (absent without leave) from Codford on 25th June, 1918.

Private Ernest Barrett was declared by a Court of Inquiry held at Codford, Wiltshire on 9th August, 1918 to be an illegal absentee.

Private Ernest Barrett was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on 1st April, 1920 “in consequence of desertion & was to forfeit all rights of repatriation to Australia, all service medals, leave and gratuity monies”. London Order No. 68 dated 27th April, 1920. Recorded in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 61 date 22nd July, 1920.

Recorded in the Service Record file of Private Ernest Barrett – Statement of Service form: “*To undergo stoppage of pay under Section 119 of Defence Act for ____ of absence 25.6.18 to 1.4.20.*”

Base Records wrote to Deputy Controller, Department of Repatriation, Sydney, NSW in June, 1920 asking if they had knowledge of Private Ernest Barrett, 7686, 13th Battalion, who was an illegal absentee, returning to Australia.

Ernest Barrett died on 8th February, 1921 at Birmingham, England.

(Note: there is a discrepancy with the date of death as some forms show date of death as 9th February, 1921. Statement of Service form, Telegram to Headquarters Australian Forces Australia House stating “No means for funeral expenses. Is he to be buried as a Pauper. Wire Instructions.” & form sent to The Officer in charge, Records, Department of Defence, Melbourne from I.W.G.C. with details needing verification regarding the details of Private Barrett, his date of death & burial place & Summary sheet for Private Barrett (shows 9th crossed out & 8th written) all show date of death as 8th February, 1921; 2nd Statement of Service form, advice dated 15th February, 1921 from Brigadier General to Commandant 2nd Military District, advice of Particulars of Service issued to Department of Repatriation, Melbourne, War Gratuity Schedule, Service and Casualty Form Part II, all have the date of death as 9th February, 1921).

A death for Ernest Barratt, aged 35, was registered in the March quarter, 1921 in the district of Birmingham, Warwickshire, England.

A memo was sent to Melbourne (no further information to where it was from or to whom it was intended) on 10th February, 1921 stating that Private E. Barrett, 7686, 13th Battalion, Illegal absentee had died in Birmingham on 9th February & were requesting that his wife Mrs M. Barrett, Cooma, North Cumberland Street, Liverpool, NSW be advised.

Another memo dated 10th February, 1921 requested “*wire address Birmingham late Barrett A.I.F. to enable representative proceed to arrange funeral URGENT.*” Handwritten at the bottom of the memo were 2 addresses: “*88 Ravenshurst Street, Camp Hill, Birmingham*” & “*(Brother at) 3 Lorne Terrace, Bordesley Park Terrace, Sunall Heath, Birmingham.*”

Ernest Barrett was buried on 12th February, 1921 in Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England – Plot number C.1 “C.” 1248 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Ernest Barrett automatically forfeited his eligibility for any War Medals as recorded by Board Proceedings held on 14th November, 1922 as he was an Illegal Absentee.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Ernest Barrett - service number 7686, of 13th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private E. Barrett is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 61.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(66 pages of Private Ernest Barrett'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



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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 4th July, 1921, to Mrs M. Barrett, c/o Post Office, Haymarket, NSW. requested that she complete the attached forms – “Circular Form “A” relative to Memorial Inscription, Nation’s History and Roll of Honour.”

A letter from Base Records, dated 31st January, 1929, to The Secretary, Imperial War Graves Commission, London, advised that the Inscription and Cemetery Register forms that had been forwarded to next-of-kin had been returned unclaimed & the documents had been completed as far as possible.

Private E. Barrett does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England

The First World War saw four important hospitals - besides many smaller - posted at Birmingham: the 1st Southern General (3,500 beds) was in the university and other buildings, with a section at Stourbridge; the 2nd/1st Southern General (1,800 beds) in the Dudley Road Infirmary and in billets; the 1st Birmingham War Hospital (1,000 beds) at Rubery Hill Asylum and the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital (900 beds) at Hollymoor Asylum. Military hospitals were at Birmingham again during the Second World War, including No 7 Canadian Hospital at Marston Green. Birmingham and Coventry were among the chief manufacturing areas producing materials for the war effort and were subjected to many devastating air raids during the Blitz of 1940-41. Birmingham (Brandwood End) Cemetery contains 110 scattered burials of the First World War, with screen walls to commemorate 35 servicemen whose graves could not be individually marked. Second World War burials number 98. The cemetery also contains two Polish war graves.

(Information from CWGC)

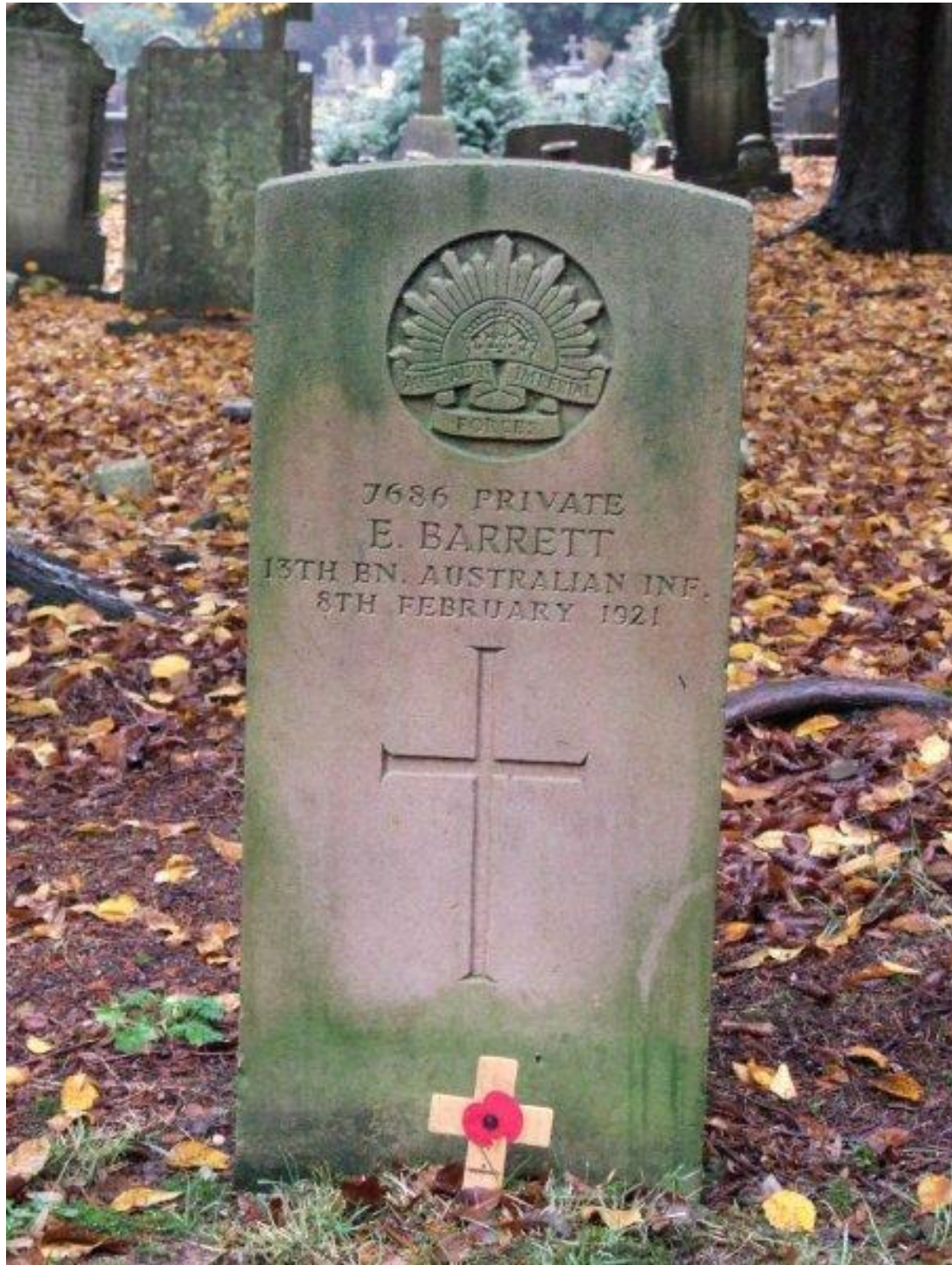


Cross of Sacrifice at Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham *(Photo from CWGC)*



War Graves at Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham

Photo of Private E. Barrett's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England.



(Photo by cresser – Great War Forum)

