

**Comely Bank Cemetery,
Edinburgh, Scotland
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



12368 GUNNER

A. E. BENNETT

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

24TH OCTOBER, 1918

Alfred Edward BENNETT

Alfred Edward Bennett was born at Launceston, Tasmania on 13th February, 1893 to parents Charles & Mary Ann Matilda Bennett (nee Cox).

The 1914 Australian Electoral Roll for the Division of Bass, subdivision of Launceston North, recorded Alfred Edward Bennett, French Polisher of 4 Goderick Street, Inveresk.

Alfred Edward Bennett was a 23 year old, single, French Polisher from Goderick Street, Inveresk, Launceston, Tasmania when he enlisted on 15th September, 1915 with the 6th Field Artillery Brigade, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 12368 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr C. Bennett of Goderick Street, Inveresk, Launceston, Tasmania.

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Themistocles* (A32) on 28th January, 1916.

Gunner Bennett was taken on strength of 2nd D.A.C. from Reinforcements while at Zeitoun on 29th February, 1916. He was taken on strength & posted to 106th Battery at Zeitoun on 10th March, 1916.

Gunner Bennett proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & embarked from Alexandria on 18th March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th March, 1916.

Gunner Bennett was transferred to 6th F.A.B. from 106th Howitzer Battery on 13th May, 1916.

Gunner Bennett was sent sick to Hospital on 14th August, 1916. He was admitted to Corps Rest Station with a dislocated right shoulder then transferred to 4th Casualty Clearing Station on 15th August, 1916. Gunner Bennett was transferred & admitted to 8th Stationary Hospital, Wimereux on 16th August, 1916, then transferred to 1st Convalescent Depot at Boulogne on 6th September, 1916. Gunner Bennett was discharged on 15th September, 1916 & joined 2nd Australian Base Depot at Etaples on 16th September, 1916. It was certified that “the accident (injury to right shoulder) occurred about 18th July, 1916 & that Gunner Bennett was not on duty at the time.”

Gunner Bennett was taken on strength with Australian General Base Depot at Etaples on 28th September, 1916.

Gunner Bennett was transferred to 2nd Div A.F.A. (2nd D.A.C.) on 27th October, 1916 & joined 2nd D.A.C. in the field on 2nd November, 1916. He was transferred to 6th F.A.B. on 3rd November, 1916 & posted to 106th Battery.

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett was written up for a Crime – Absent without leave on 4th July, 1917 from 6.30 am till noon. He was awarded 24 hours Field Punishment No. 2.

Gunner Bennett was on leave to UK from 15th August, 1917 to 2nd September, 1917.

Gunner Bennett was on leave to UK from 12th October, 1918.

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett was admitted to the 2nd Scottish General Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland on 19th October, 1918 suffering from Influenza. He had been admitted while on leave from France. Gunner Bennett developed Pneumonia three days after being admitted to Hospital.

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett died at 1.15 pm on 24th October, 1918 at 2nd Scottish General Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland from Pneumonia.

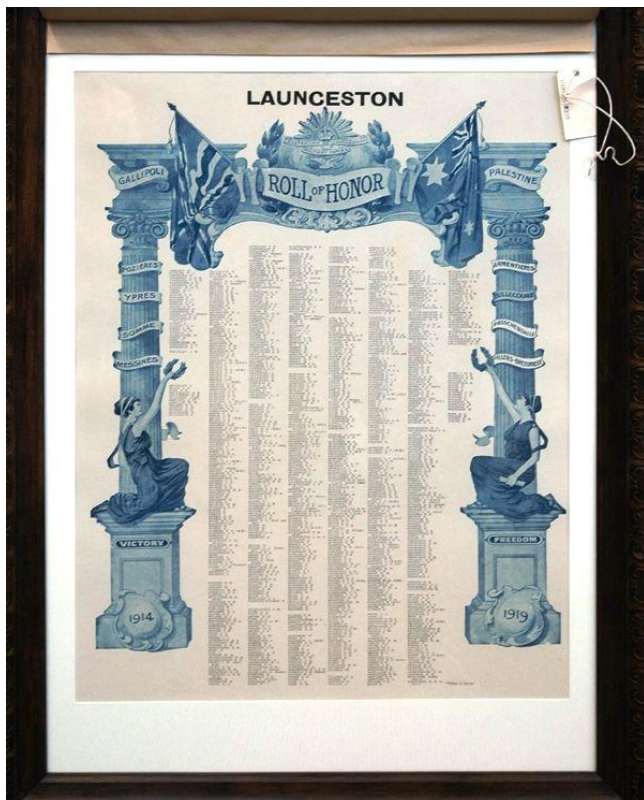
Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett was buried on 29th October, 1918 in Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland – Plot number D. 52 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Gunner Bennett - *Coffin was Elm Cloth Bound. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with a Union Jack, and surmounted by many beautiful wreaths sent from Victoria League and comrades of Hospital. The “Last Post” was sounded at the graveside, and the Rev. T. Scott officiated at the graveside. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the Funeral. Mr Young, representative Red Cross and 12 comrades attended the Funeral.*

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett was “not desirous of making a Will.”

Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner Bennett’s father – Mr C. Bennett, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner A. E. Bennett – service number 12368 of Australian Field Artillery. No family details are listed.

A. E. Bennett is remembered on the Launceston Roll of Honour which is preserved in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Community History Museum 2 Inverney Road, Inveresk, Tasmania.



Launceston Roll of Honour (Photos from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)



Gunner A. E. Bennett is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 14.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. E. Bennett is remembered on the Launceston War Memorial located at Paterson Street, near Bathurst Street Overpass, Launceston, Tasmania.



Launceston War Memorial (Photo by Mattinbgn)

(75 pages of Gunner Alfred Edward Bennett'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

Roll of Honour

Tasmanian Casualties

Casualty Lists Nos. 448 and 449 in connection with the Australian Imperial forces was released yesterday.

DIED OF ILLNESS

Gnr. A. E. BENNETT, Warburton, Vic., 24/10/18

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 3 December, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 2nd July, 1921, to Mr C. Bennett of 79 Langridge Street, Collingwood, Victoria advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of the late No. 12368 Gunner A. E. Bennett in Comely Park Cemetery had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Gunner A. E. Bennett does not have a personal inscription on his headstone. Correspondence to the address in Collingwood had been returned "Not know at address". The Collingwood address was advised to Base Records in May, 1919.



Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland contains 302 War Graves. There are only seven Australians buried in this cemetery from World War 1.

During the First World War, Edinburgh was headquarters to the 4th, 5th, 6th and 9th Battalions of the Royal Scots, with the 7th Battalion at Leith. The 2nd Scottish General Hospital (1,000 beds) occupied Craighleith Poorhouse, the Edinburgh War Hospital (2,600 beds) was in the Asylum buildings at Bangour and the Leith War Hospital (585 beds) in the infirmary at Leith. The port of Leith was used by hospital ships from north Russia and about 4,500 officers and men passed through it.

Second World War military hospitals were in Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and Bangour. The city was also Scottish Command Headquarters.

Edinburgh (Comely Bank) Cemetery contains 225 burials of the First World War, most of them forming a war graves plot in Section D. The Second World War plot is immediately in front and contains more than half of the 76 Second World War burials. The cemetery also contains a Finnish war grave and two non-war service burials.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh



Communal Commonwealth War Graves plot in Section D

An unusual feature of the War Graves plot is that the granite headstones lie flat. This was a decision made by the architect, Sir Robert Lorimer. The plot contains WW1 and WW2 casualties/Spanish Flu victims and a member of the Finnish Legion.

Photo of Gunner A. E. Bennett's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Drysdale)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J00524

Australian Graves at Comely Bank Cemetery in Edinburgh, Scotland.

(From the collection of Mr Alfred Thomas Sharp, who was the Commonwealth Immigration Officer of Victoria and was based in the London Office during the First World War.)