

**Hollybrook Memorial,
Southampton, Hampshire, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



STAFF NURSE

E. BLAKE

QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S IMPERIAL MILITARY NURSING SERVICE

26TH FEBRUARY, 1918 Age 32

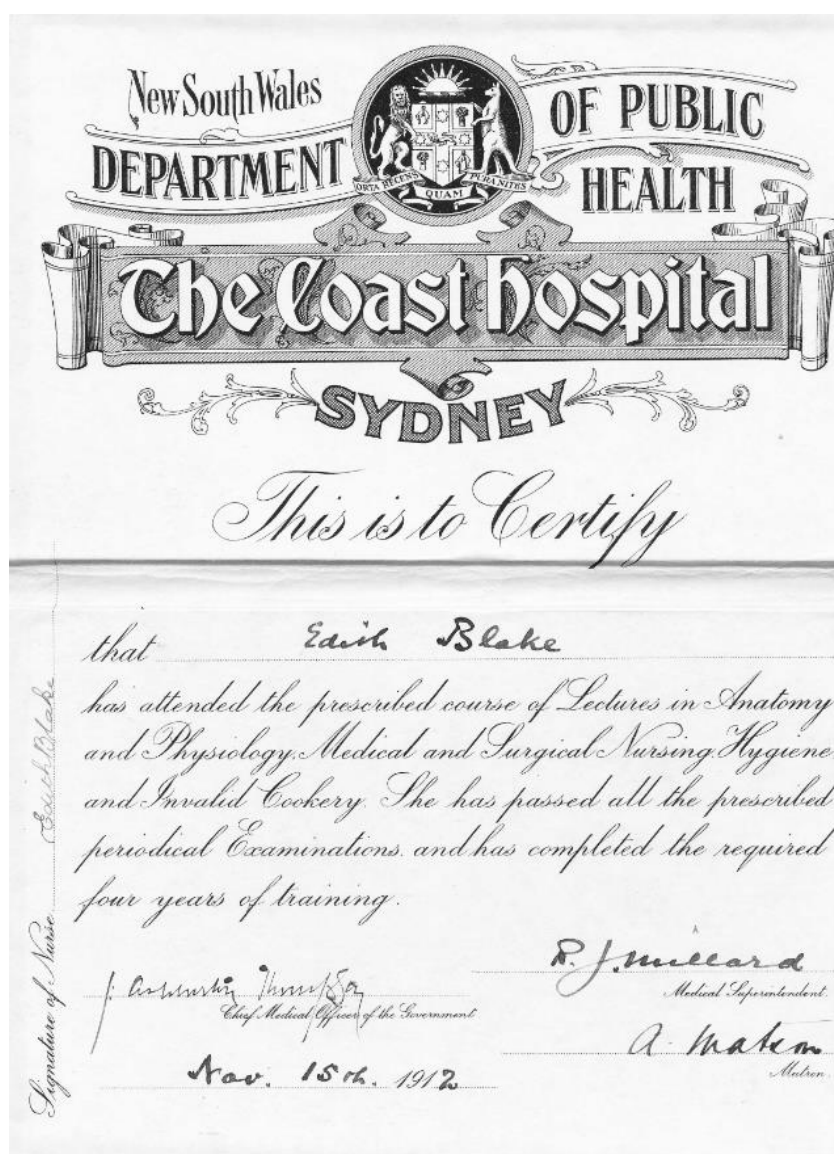
Edith BLAKE

Edith Blake was born on 22nd September, 1885 at Redfern, Sydney, NSW to parents Charles & Catherine Blake (nee Canham). Her birth was registered in the district of Sydney, NSW. Edith Blake was baptised on 25th October, 1885 at St. Peter's Church, Woolloomooloo, East Sydney, NSW. Charles Blake was listed on the Baptism Register as a Van Proprietor from Darlington.

Charles (Miner, aged 33) & Catherine (aged 30) Blake & their 2 daughters – Edith (aged 6) & Grave (aged 4 ½) were passengers on *Kaiser Wilhelm II* which arrived at Southampton, England on 2nd June, 1892 from Australia.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Randwick, Long Bay Polling Place recorded Sister Edith Blake, of Coast Hospital, New South Wales.

Edith Blake received her Certificate of Nursing from The Coast Hospital, Sydney (now Prince Henry Hospital, Little Bay, Sydney, NSW) on 15th November, 1912 after four years training.



Staff Nurse Edith Blake embarked from Sydney, NSW on 4th April, 1915 on RMS *Malwa* after joining the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (Q.A.I.M.N.S.) (2/Reserve B/498) in response to the British requesting 200 Australian Nurses. She arrived in Egypt from Australia for Imperial Service on 4th May, 1915.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake's Medical Index Card shows she entered a Theatre of War – Egypt on 2nd May, 1915.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake was on duty at 17th General Hospital, Alexandria in January, 1916.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake renewed her "*Contract of Trained Nurses employed in Military Hospitals*" with the Army for a period of twelve months from 4th April, 1916. The form was signed at Alexandria & witnessed by Assistant Matron Hall, 17th General Hospital, Alexandria.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake embarked on *Wandilla* on 1st October, 1916 to join *Essequibo* at Mudros. She joined *Essequibo* at Mudros on 5th October, 1916.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake was on temporary duty with 21st General Hospital at Alexandria from 27th December, 1916. She rejoined *Essequibo* on 14th January, 1917.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake was transferred from Hospital Ship *Essequibo* to the Prisoners of War Hospital, Belmont, Surrey, England on 1st May, 1917. Staff Nurse Blake arrived at Prisoners of War Hospital, Belmont for duty on 1st May, 1917 along with Staff Nurse A. M. Sortwell, Staff Nurse K. Cameron & Staff Nurse R. R. Beresford.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake renewed her "*Contract of Trained Nurses employed in Military Hospitals*" with the Army for a period of twelve months from 4th April, 1917.

Edith Blake, 6 Staverton Road, Cricklewood, wrote to Miss Beecher (no date) stating "*Having completed the period of service for which I agreed to serve in the Q.A.I.M.N.S.R. on the 4th Inst. I am now considering whether to resign or to sign on for a further period. My hope is that I may be transferred to duty in England, & if this is possible I should be glad to know at your early convenience as I have already served six months on a hospital ship & eighteen months in Egypt. I consider that I should now be relieved of further duty at sea, instead of returning to Liverpool on the 24th as at present arranged.*"

Edith Blake wrote to Miss Beecher on 21st April, 1917 stating "*I wrote to you on the 18th inst. asking if I may have home duty. I had instructions from the Hospital Ship Essequibo to go to Dover for passage to France on the 20th. On arriving I received orders to go back to Liverpool & report to the Officer Commanding. I am told now that we may be sent to Salonika. May I have home or French duty instead? As I do not feel inclined to take up more duty in the East. I am an Australian & left Sydney on 4th April, 1915. Commenced duty in Egypt May 2nd 1915 & left Alexandria October 1st 1916 to join the H.M.A.S. Essequibo.*

A letter was sent to Miss E. Blake, 6 Slaverton Road, Cricklewood on 25th April, 1917 from Matron-in-Chief, Q.A.I.M.N.S. "*I am directed to inform you that you are granted 14 days leave from April 20th 1917 and that you will be posted for duty to Salonika later. If you are not desirous of proceeding abroad you must notify this at once.*"

Staff Nurse Edith Blake departed for duty on Hospital Ship *Glenart Castle* on 13th November, 1917 from Liverpool, England.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake was reported "*Missing believed Drowned*" in the loss of H.M.H.S. *Glenart Castle* on 26th February, 1918 when the Hospital Ship was torpedoed & sunk by a German Uboat.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake's death was accepted on 11th July, 1918, for official purposes, as having occurred on the 26th February, 1918.

H.M.H.S. *Glenart Castle* (from Wikipedia)

HMHS *Glenart Castle* (His Majesty's Hospital Ship) was a steamship originally built as Galician in 1900 for the Union-Castle Line. She was renamed *Glenart Castle* in 1914, but was requisitioned for use as a British hospital ship during the First World War. On 26 February 1918, she was hit and sunk by a torpedo fired from the German U-boat UC-56.

Mine damage

During the First World War, *Glenart Castle* suffered damaged when she struck a mine in the English Channel 8 nautical miles (15 km) northwest of the Owers Lightship on 1 March 1917. She was repaired and returned to service.

Sinking

On 26 February 1918, *Glenart Castle* was leaving Newport, South Wales, heading towards Brest, France. Fishermen in the Bristol Channel saw her clearly lit up as a hospital ship. John Hill — a fisherman on Swansea Castle — remembered "I saw the Hospital Ship with green lights all around her – around the saloon. She had her red side lights showing and mast-head light, and also another red light which I suppose was the Red Cross light." At 04:00, *Glenart Castle* was hit by a torpedo in the No. 3 hold. The blast destroyed most of the lifeboats, while the subsequent pitch of the vessel hindered attempts to launch the remaining boats. In the eight minutes the ship took to sink, only seven lifeboats were launched. Rough seas and inexperienced rowers swamped most of the boats.

Only 32 survivors were reported. A total of 162 people were killed, including the Captain — Bernard Burt, eight nurses of the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, seven Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) medical officers and 47 medical orderlies. Of the hospital patients being treated on board, a total of 99 died. The matron of *Glenart Castle*, Miss Kate Beaufoy (1868–1918), was among those killed in the sinking. Beaufoy was a veteran of the South African War and the Gallipoli campaign. Her family kept her diary and her writings describe life on the ship.

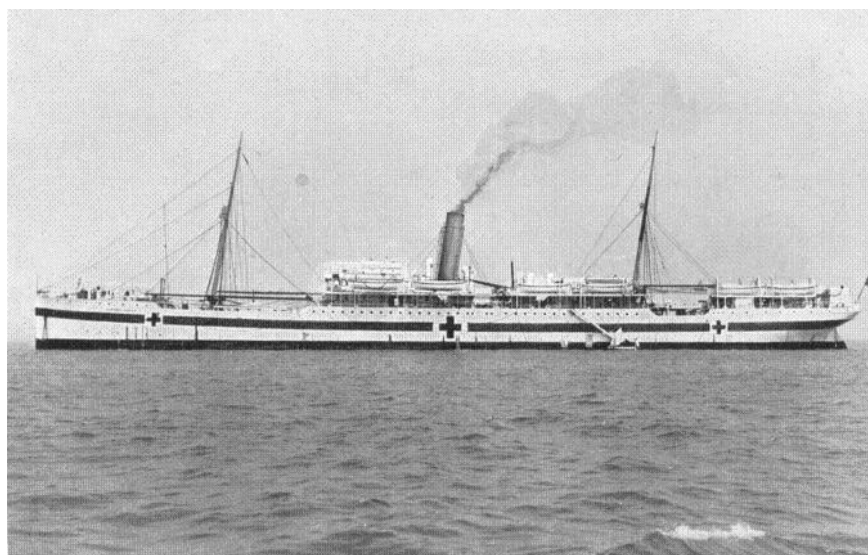
Evidence was found suggesting that the submarine may have shot at initial survivors of the sinking in an effort to cover up the sinking of *Glenart Castle*. The body of a junior officer of *Glenart Castle* was recovered from the water close to the position of the sinking. It was marked with two gunshot wounds, one in the neck and the other in the thigh. The body also had a life vest indicating he was shot while in the water.

Aftermath

After the war, the British Admiralty sought the captains of U-boats who sank hospital ships, in order to charge them with war crimes. Kapitänleutnant Wilhelm Kiewewetter — the commander of *UC-56* — was arrested after the war on his voyage back to Germany and interned in the Tower of London. He was released on the grounds that Britain had no right to hold a detainee during the Armistice.

Memorial

A memorial plaque was dedicated on the 84th anniversary of the sinking, 26 February 2002 near to Hartland Point, with the inscription, "In proud and grateful memory of those who gave their lives in the hospital ship *Glenart Castle*. Please remember, Master Lt. Cmdr. Burt, Matron Katy Beaufoy, the ships officers, crew and medical staff who died when their ship was torpedoed by *UC56* in the early hours of 26th Feb 1918. The ship lies 20 miles WNW from this stone. For those in peril on the sea. R.I.P. Dedicated 26.02.2002".

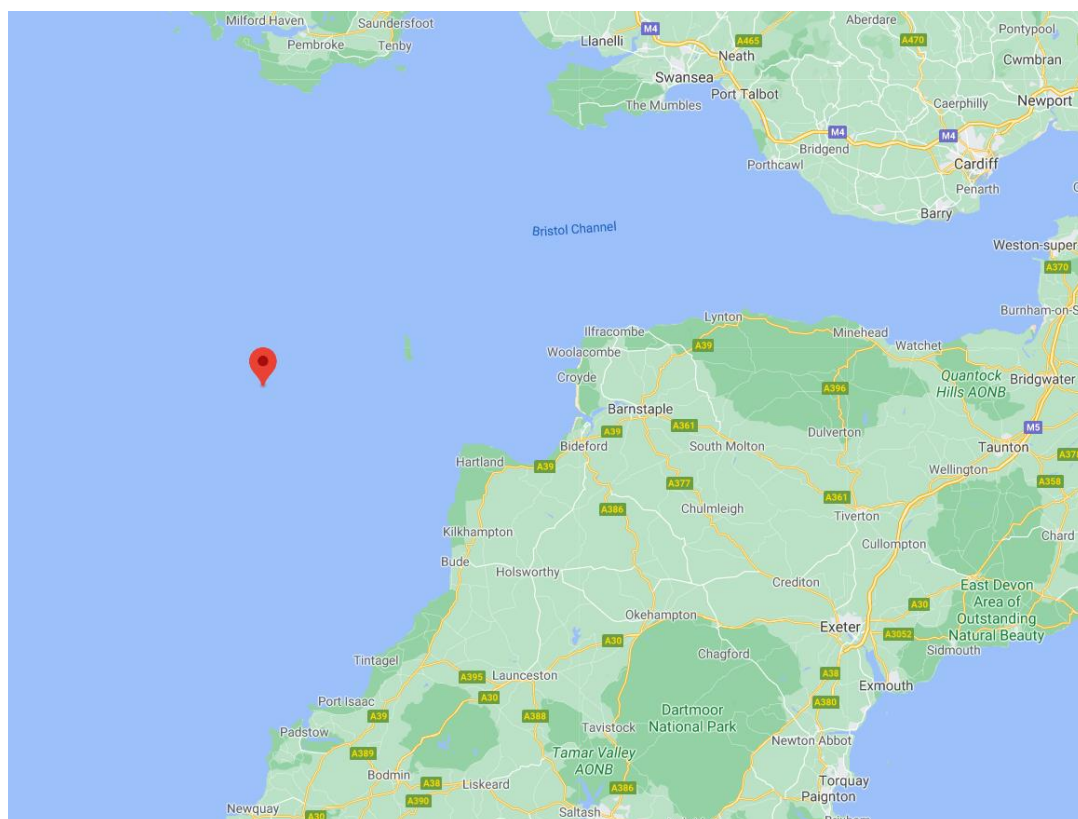


H.M.H.S. *Glenart Castle*



Memorial to Hospital Ship *Glenart Castle* on Hartland Point, Devon, England (Photo by Etchacan1974)

The *Glenart Castle* lies at almost 230 feet below the surface, north of Newquay, England in the Bristol Channel. The ship is on an even keel with the bow & stern in good shape & remain almost as they were when sunk in 1918. The middle of the ship has collapsed due to deterioration & strong currents off the English coastline and possibly depth charging during WW2.



Wreck of the *Glenart Castle*

Staff Nurse Edith Blake had served with Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (Q.A.I.M.N.S.) for 2 years & 329 days.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake is commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England as she has no grave. Her death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Sister E. Blake requested in her Will, dated 3rd April, 1915, that all her real and personal estate be bequeathed to her mother – Catherine Blake. Her parents Charles & Catherine Blake were named as Executors.

The Mutual Life & Citizen's Assurance Company Ltd (of Australia), Effingham House, Strand, England had requested the death Certificate of Miss E. Blake, Staff Nurse, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve. The death certificate was sent on 11th July, 1918.

Messrs Minter, Simpson & Co., Solicitors & Notaries, Hunter Street, Sydney, NSW wrote to Base Records on 16th October, 1919 stating "*Nurse Blake died at Sea on Board the S.S. Glenard Castle whilst on a voyage from Bristol to France on or about the 26th February 1918 and we shall esteem it a favour if you will let us have a Certificate of her death for Probate purposes*"

Base Records replied to Messrs Minter, Simpson & Co., Box 521, General Post Office, Sydney, NSW, on 22nd October, 1919, stating "*I have to acknowledge receipt of your communication dated 16th October, 1919, and to state the name of Nurse Edith Blake cannot be traced on the records held in connection with Nurses attached to the Australian Imperial Force.*"

[Note: The National Archives of Australia has a 22 page file for Staff Nurse Edith Blake in which the front page is marked "NOT A.I.F." Her Unit is listed as "R.A.M.C." (Royal Army Medical Corps). The file consists of mainly consignment notices, inventory lists, correspondence between Base Records & Messrs Minter, Simpson & Co. regarding Probate details & correspondence between Base Records & Mr Charles Blake regarding the personal effects of his late daughter.]

Mrs A. G. Price, Marpole Post Office, Vancouver B.C., Canada, wrote to The Admiralty, England on 4th November, 1920 asking for details of Nursing Sister Edith Blake – "*What part of Australia did she come from and whether she was a married woman children if any or next of kin...*"

The Matron-in-Chief replied to Mrs Price on 18th December, 1920 stating that a copy of her letter had been forwarded to the late Miss E. Blake's father in Sydney, NSW, Australia.

The Medical Director-General wrote to the Accountant General of the Navy on 30th November, 1920 stating "*The Nursing Sister referred to (Edith Blake) did not serve in Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service Reserve. As she appears to have served in "GLENART CASTLE", it is assumed that she was a member of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service and it is suggested that this communication may be forwarded to the War Office.*"

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Staff Nurse Edith Blake, aged 32, of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service. She was the daughter of Charles and Catherine Blake, of 9 Vista St., Sans Souci, Sydney.

Staff Nurse Edith Blake is listed in the Soldiers Died in The Great War 1914 – 1919 records.

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Staff Nurse Edith Blake was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Staff Nurse Blake's father – Mr Charles Blake, as the closest next-of-kin.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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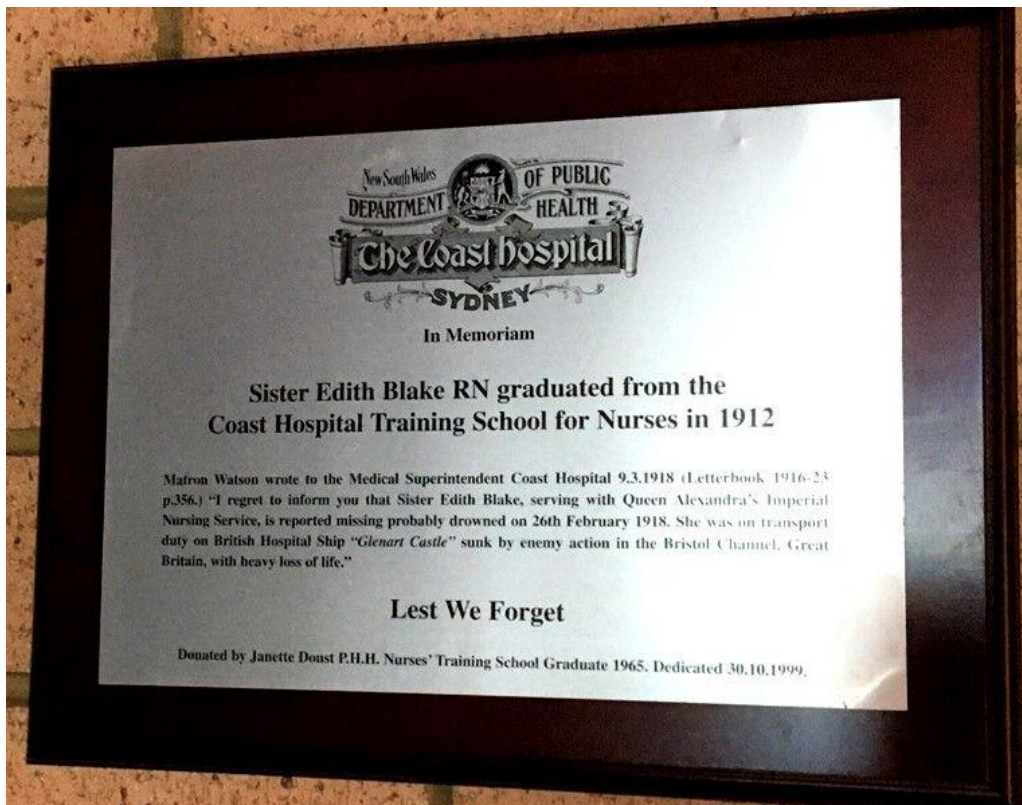
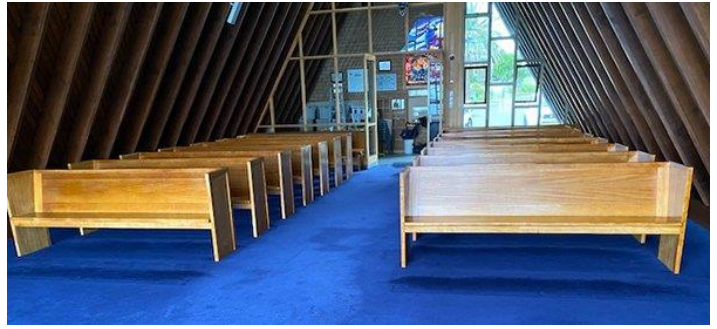
Memorial Plaque for Staff Nurse Edith Blake

Staff Nurse Edith Blake is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.



Commemorative Roll (Photo from AWM)

Sister Edith Blake is remembered with a plaque for having graduated from The Coast Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1912. The Plaque is located at The Coast Chapel, Prince Henry Hospital Conservation Area, Pine Avenue, Little Bay, Sydney, NSW.



Plaque for Sister Edith Blake (Photo from Monument Australia – Heather Stevens)

Sister Edith Blake is remembered by the Prince Henry Hospital Museum.



Staff Nurse Edith Blake is remembered on the Municipality of Kogarah Honour Roll, located at Kogarah RSL, 254 Railway Parade, Kogarah, NSW. (6th Row; Middle position)



Municipality of Kogarah Honour Roll (Photos from Monument Australia)



Edith Blake is one of the names remembered on a panel on the Roll of Honour Tablet that is beside the Five Sisters Window in York Minster, York, England. The Tablet bears the names of representatives of many associations, services and corps, including Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, Women's Royal Air Force, Women's Land Army, and the Canadian, Newfoundland, Australian, New Zealand and Union of South Africa Army Nursing Services.



Five Sisters Window in York Minster

The wooden memorial screen (right) is in the North Transept of York Minster. Each door bears the crest of a regiment and written inside are the names of the women who served in that regiment and were killed during the First World War. The doors can be opened by anyone to view the names inside.

The screen also records that the Five Sisters window in York Minster was restored by women in memory of their fallen comrades. The window is now a memorial to the women who gave their lives in both World Wars.





(Photo from Qaranc)

Staff Nurse E. Blake is remembered on the Nurses' Memorial located in Edinburgh's Central Library, Scotland.

REMEMBRANCE

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service

ARMSTRONG, E Sister
 ARMSTRONG, ERR Sister
 ALLEN, MA Staff Nurse
 BATES, FM Probationer
 BEAUFLOY, K Matron
 BENNET, HS Staff Nurse
 BERESFORD, RR Staff Nurse
 BERRIE, C Sister
 BIRD, L E Staff Nurse
 BLAKE, E Staff Nurse
 BODE-BLANDY, SR Sister
 BOLGER, K Staff Nurse
 BOND, EM Sister
 BRACE, F Staff Nurse
 BROWN, EL Sister
 BUCKINGHAM, MA Matron
 BUCKLER, AE Staff Nurse
 BUTLER, SE Sister
 CALLER, FFM Sister
 CHALLINOR, EA Staff Nurse
 CHANDLER, DM Sister
 CLOUGH, M Staff Nurse
 COLE, H Sister
 COMPTON, FD Sister
 CONSTERDINE, VC Staff Nurse
 COOKE, EK Staff Nurse
 COOPER, A Sister
 COOPER, A Staff Nurse
 CORFIELD, AB Sister
 CROWTHER, L Sister
 CROYSDALE, M Sister
 CRUICKSHANK, I Sister
 DALTON, JG Staff Nurse
 DANAHER, M Staff Nurse
 DAWES, AE Sister
 DAWSON, EM Staff Nurse
 DEWAR, MS Staff Nurse
 DOHERTY, MA Sister
 DONOVAN, B Staff Nurse
 DUCKERS, ME Staff Nurse
 DUNCAN, ILM Sister
 EDGAR, E Staff Nurse
 ELLIFFE, M Sister
 EVANS, J Sister
 FARLEY, M Matron
 FEARNLEY, E Staff Nurse
 FERGUSON, R Staff Nurse
 FOYSTER, EL Sister
 GARNER, AEC Sister
 GLADSTONE, EM Sister
 GLEDHILL, AE Sister
 GORBUTT, M Sister
 GRIFFITHS, JL Sister
 GROVER, AJ Sister
 GURNEY, ES Staff Nurse
 HALL, FM Matron
 HANNAFORD, ID Staff Nurse
 HARRISON, WM Sister
 HAWLEY, F Staff Nurse
 HAWLEY, N Sister
 HENRY, CE Staff Nurse
 HETTERLEY, H Staff Nurse
 HILLING, S Sister
 HOBBS, N Sister
 HOCKEY, JO Sister

WORLD WAR ONE

Dedicated to the memory of the Scottish, Irish, Welsh, English and Dominion Forces' nurses who lost their lives as a direct consequence of their war service.

DEATH SHALL NOT SILENCE THEIR STORY



Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service

HODGSON, EM Sister
 HOOK, FML Assistant Nurse
 HUGHES, GC Staff Nurse
 JACK, C Sister
 JOHNSON, AM Sister
 JOHNSON, MJ Staff Nurse
 JONES, BE Chief Matron
 JONES, GE Sister
 JONES, LH Sister
 KEARNEY, IM Sister
 KEMP, CMC Staff Nurse
 KENDALL, RE Staff Nurse
 LEA, HL Staff Nurse
 MACBETH, MA Staff Nurse
 MACGILL, MM Matron
 MACKENZIE, I Nurse
 MANN, AG Staff Nurse
 MARMION, M Nurse
 MARSHALL, MB Staff Nurse
 MASON, F Staff Nurse
 MCALISTER, C Sister
 MCGIBBON, RA Sister
 MCROBBIE, JE Nurse
 MILNE, H Nurse
 MORETON, A Nurse
 NICOL, C Sister
 O'BRIEN, M Nurse
 OXLEY, EM Sister
 PARKER, EK Matron
 PARKRIDGE, CH Staff Nurse
 PEARSE, PA Staff Nurse
 PEPPER, ED Probationer
 PHILLIPS, J Sister
 PILLING, DE Probationer
 RADCLIFFE, EB Sister
 REID, AC Staff Nurse
 RITCHIE, J Staff Nurse
 ROBERTS, AL Sister
 ROBERTS, E Staff Nurse
 ROBERTS, J Staff Nurse
 ROBERTS, HD Staff Nurse
 ROBINETTE, CA Staff Nurse
 ROBINS, MJ Sister
 ROWLETT, OK Sister
 WILSON, A Sister

Territorial Force Nursing Service

ANDREW, E Sister
 ASTELL, FE Sister
 BLACKLOCK, AM Sister
 BLENCOWE, ME Sister
 BRETT, NV Staff Nurse
 BRINTON, NG Staff Nurse
 CAMMACK, EM Staff Nurse
 CARLEY, B Sister
 CLIMIE, A Staff Nurse
 COLE, DH Staff Nurse
 COX, MA Staff Nurse
 ELLIOTT, E Nurse
 ELLIOTT, LM Staff Nurse
 FLINTOFF, A Staff Nurse
 FORBES, BG Staff Nurse
 GARLICK, HM Staff Nurse
 GOLDSMITH, AAV Staff Nurse
 GREATOREX, JM Sister
 GRIFFIN, L Sister
 HASTINGS, HM Sister
 HENSHAW, I Sister
 HILLS, ME Staff Nurse
 HOWARD, FG Staff Nurse
 HUMPHREY, EM Sister
 IRWIN, WH Staff Nurse
 JAMESON, JS Staff Nurse
 JINKS, M Nurse
 KEMP, EM Sister
 KERR, MT Staff Nurse
 LANCASTER, AH Staff Nurse
 MACKINNON, M Staff Nurse

CUIMHNEACHAN

JORDAN, L Sister
 MINSHULL, A M Sister
 SUTHERLAND, B G Sister
 TOUGHILL, C M Sister

Australian Army Nursing Service

BICKNELL, LA Staff Nurse
 BRENNAN, KA Nurse
 CLARE, E Sister
 DICKINSON, R Staff Nurse
 GLADSTONE, EM Sister
 GREWAR, GA Sister
 HENNESSY, M Sister
 KNOX, HM Staff Nurse
 MCPHAIL, I Sister
 MOORHOUSE, EA Sister
 COLES, DKM Nurse
 MORETON, LG Staff Nurse
 MOWBRAY, NV Staff Nurse
 MUNRO, GE Sister
 O'GRADY, AV Sister
 O'KANE, R Staff Nurse
 PORTER, KAL Sister
 POWER, K Staff Nurse
 RIDGWAY, DA Staff Nurse
 ROTHERY, E Staff Nurse
 STAFFORD, MF Staff Nurse
 THOMPSON, AM Staff Nurse
 TYSON, FIC Sister
 WALKER, JM Matron
 WATSON, BM Staff Nurse
 WILLIAMS, BE Sister

Canadian Army Medical Corps

ALPAUGH, AE Sister
 BAKER, ME Sister
 BAKER, ME Sister
 BALDWIN, DMY Sister
 BOLTON, GE Nurse
 CAMPBELL, C Sister
 CHAMPAGNE, E Sister
 CUMMING, IK Sister
 DAGG, AS Sister
 DAVIS, LA Sister
 DONALDSON, G Sister
 DUNN, AS Sister
 DUSSAULT, A Sister
 FOLLETTE, MA Sister
 FORNERI, A Sister
 FORTESCUE, MJ Sister
 FRASER, MM Sister
 FREDRICKSON, C Sister
 GALLAHER, MK Sister
 GARBUTT, SE Sister
 GRANT, GM Sister
 GREEN, ME Sister
 HENNAN, VB Sister
 HUNT, MI Sister
 JAGGAR, JB Matron
 JARVIS, JA Sister
 JENNER, LM Sister
 KEALY, IL Sister
 KING, JN Sister
 LOWE, M Sister
 MACDONALD, KMM Sister

New Zealand Army Nursing Service

BROWN, MS Staff Nurse
 CLARK, I Staff Nurse
 FOX, CA Staff Nurse
 GORMAN, M Staff Nurse
 HAWKEN, AG Staff Nurse
 HILDYARD, NM Staff Nurse
 ISDELL, HK Staff Nurse
 JAMIESON, ME Staff Nurse
 LUMLEY, C Matron
 RAE, PH Staff Nurse
 RATTRAY, LA Staff Nurse
 ROGERS, M Staff Nurse
 THOMPSON, MH Staff Nurse
 TUBMAN, EM Staff Nurse
 WHISHAW, MH Sister

Nyasaland Nursing Service

SLAYTOR, M Sister

South African Military Nursing Service

BAKER, EA Staff Nurse
 BEAUFORT, K Nurse
 BERNSTEIN, D Staff Nurse
 BETTLE, HM Sister
 DUNN, GE Staff Nurse
 EDMEDAES, CA Sister
 FITZHENRY, DA Sister
 FLANAGAN, MC Sister
 HEARNS, B Staff Nurse
 MUNRO, AW Staff Nurse
 WARDLE, I Staff Nurse
 WATKINS, JK Staff Nurse

Russian Red Cross

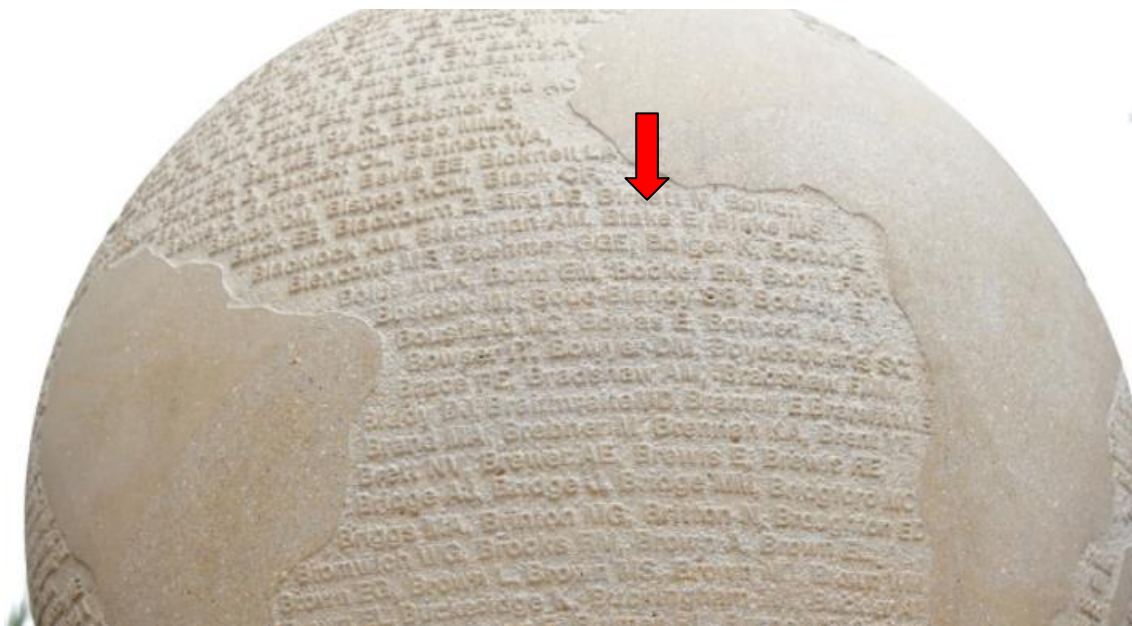
RYLE, MC Sister

© Cathy Sedgwick 2020

E. Blake is remembered on the Memorial to the Nurses and Voluntary Aid Detachment Nurses who died during both World Wars. The Memorial lists almost 1,300 names & is located at the National Memorial Arboretum, Croxwall Road, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England.



Wartime Nurses Memorial (Photo courtesy of Alf)



(22 pages of Staff Nurses Edith Blake's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website. A further 66 page Service Record file is available from National Archives UK).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial, National Archives Australia & National Archives UK



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11193.004

**Hand coloured studio portrait of Sister Edith Blake,
Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve (QAIMNS (R)).**



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11193.006

Sister Edith Blake pours medicine for a patient in a ward at the No 17 General Hospital.

*Sister Edith Blake of San Souci, NSW, served with the Queen Alexandra Imperial Nursing Service and was killed when the hospital ship she was on, the HMHS Glenart Castle, was sunk by a German U-boat on 26 February 1918.
(Photo c1915)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P11193.001

Group portrait of hospital staff outside a hospital (Photo c 1915)

The staff include, doctors, matron, sisters, VADs, orderlies and a hospital chaplain. Amongst this group, exact position unknown, is Sister Edith Blake of San Souci, NSW



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

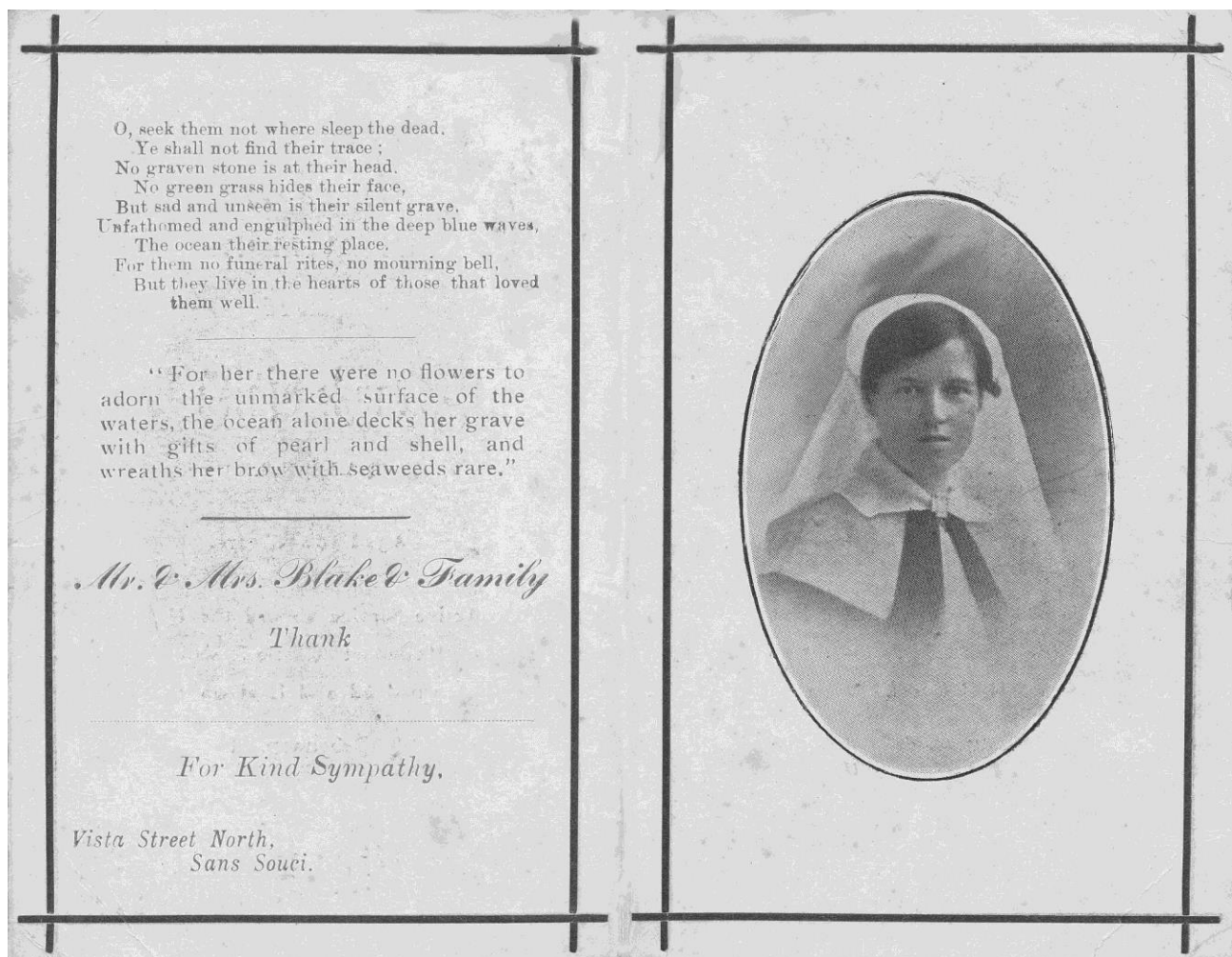
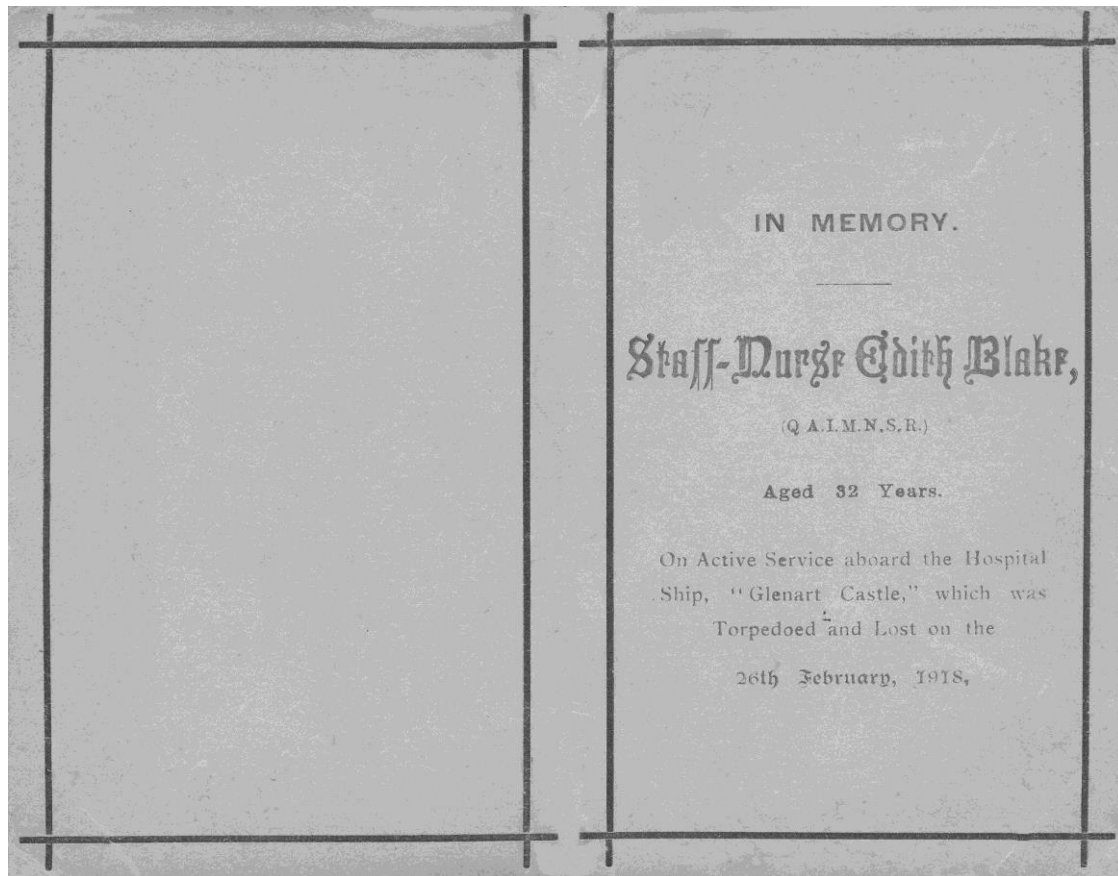
P11193.003

Portrait of nurses sightseeing in Egypt, four on camels and four on donkeys in front of the Sphinx.

Amongst this group, exact position unknown, is Sister Edith Blake of San Souci, NSW

(possibly 2nd from left; back row)

"In Memory" Thank you card for Staff-Nurse Edith Blake



Order of Service for held at St. Paul's Cathedral

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

(By kind permission of the Dean and Chapter).

Order of Service.

Commencing at 2.30 p.m.

Hymn.

O GOD, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home ;
Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwelt secure ;
Sufficient is Thine Arm alone,
And our defence is sure.
Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the Same.
A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone ;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away ;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.
O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home. Amen.

Hymn.

TEN thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransom'd Saints
Throng up the steeps of light :
'Tis finish'd ! all is finish'd,
Their fight with death and sin ;
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.
What rush of Alleluias
Fills all the earth and sky !
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeaks the triumph nigh !
O day, for which creation
And all its tribes were made !
O joy, for all its former woes
A thousand-fold repaid !
Oh, then what raptur'd greetings
On Canaan's happy shore.
What knitting sever'd friendships up,
Where partings are no more !
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle
That brimm'd with tears of late ;
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate.
Bring near Thy great Salvation,
Thou Lamb for sinners slain,
Fill up the roll of Thine elect,
Then take Thy power and reign :
Appear, Desire of nations,
Thine exiles long for home ;
Show in the heavens Thy promised sign ;
Thou Prince and Saviour, come. Amen.

The Blessing.

THE blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

The Offerings of the Congregation, after certain deductions for expenses, will be handed to the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross Society, and the Order of St. John.

ROLL OF HONOUR.

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

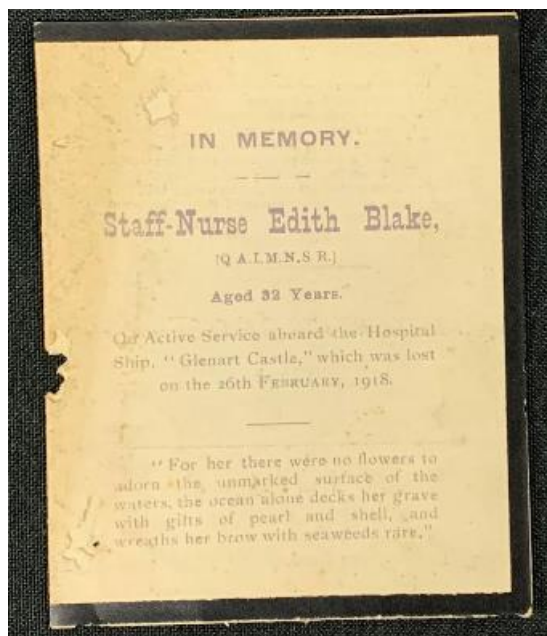
Cole, E. H.	- - - - -	Died.
Dalton, Jean	- - - - -	Died.
Parker, E. K.	- - - - -	Died.
Pearse, Phyllis	- - - - -	Died.
MacGill, M.	- - - - -	Died.

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve.

Barclay-Smith, J.	- - - - -	Died.
Beaufoy, Kate	- - - - -	Drowned.
Beresford, Rose Mary	- - - - -	Drowned.
Blake, Edith	- - - - -	Drowned.
Bolger, K.	- - - - -	Died.
Brace, F. E.	- - - - -	Died.
Buckingham, M. A.	- - - - -	Died.
Butler, S. E.	- - - - -	Drowned.
Chandler, D. M.	- - - - -	Died.
Clough, M.	- - - - -	Died.
Compton, Florence D.	- - - - -	Drowned.
Cooke, Ella K.	- - - - -	Accidentally Killed.
Cruickshank, I.	- - - - -	Drowned.
Dawson, Evelina Maud	- - - - -	Drowned.
Dewar, Margaret S.	- - - - -	Killed.
Doherty, M. A.	- - - - -	Died.
Donovan, B.	- - - - -	Died.
Duncan, I. Lucy	- - - - -	Died.
Edgar, E.	- - - - -	Drowned.
Eliffe, M.	- - - - -	Died.
Evans, Janet	- - - - -	Drowned.
Fearnley, E.	- - - - -	Died.
Foyster, Ellen Lucy	- - - - -	Drowned.
Garner, A. E. C.	- - - - -	Died.
Griffiths, J. L.	- - - - -	Accidentally Killed.
Gurney, Elizabeth S.	- - - - -	Drowned.
Hanaford, J. D.	- - - - -	Died.

An "In Memory" leaflet for Staff Nurse Edith Blake was sold at auction on 17th October, 2020 by Sydney Rare Book Auctions, Ultimo, Sydney, NSW, Australia.

Description: A folded card *In Memory Staff-Nurse Edith Blake (Q.A.I.M.N.S.R.). Aged 32 Years. On Active Service aboard the Hospital Ship "Glenart Castle" which was lost on the 26th February, 1918. It's a thank you card from the family and has a very beautiful photograph of Nurse Blake. An unusual piece of military memorabilia.*



Newspaper Notices

HOSPITAL STEAMER

SUNK IN BRISTOL CHANNEL

The Admiralty announces: The hospital ship Glenart Castle (6824 tons), while outward bound, with all lights burning, was sunk in the Bristol Channel at 4 o'clock yesterday morning. No patients were aboard at the time. An American destroyer landed the survivors. Eight boats are still adrift. The death roll, it is believed, exceeds 200.

The Glenart Castle had just returned from the East with wounded, and was going to France for wounded when she was torpedoed. The steersman before dawn reported strange lights a mile distant. The captain thereupon altered his course. Shortly afterwards a torpedo struck, the explosion smashing several life-boats.

Syrens roused the sleepers. Seven boats were launched in a rough sea. The ship sank stern foremost seven minutes after being torpedoed and a few seconds after the last boat had launched.

The captain was last seen rushing into the chart-room. The fate of nine nurses is unknown. Many men were seen struggling in the water.

A torpedo penetrated the engine-room of the Glenart Castle, put the wireless out of action, and extinguished the lights. The launching of the lifeboats was most difficult.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 1 March, 1918)

Amongst the nursing staff of the *Glenart Castle* were two nurses who had just given up the greater part of a year to nursing German prisoners of war at Belmont, Surrey. We all know how hard this task is, and it seems an act of brutal ingratitude that their work for the enemy wounded should be requited with foul murder at the hands of the German navy.

Sister R. R. Beresford joined the *Glenart Castle* on February 24th; and Sister Blake, an Australian, in November.

A memorial service, held on Sunday in the hospital chapel at Belmont, was conducted by Captain Whitaker, who paid a high tribute to the work of the Sisters.

During the impressive service, Sister Berry sang "O Rest in the Lord"; and it concluded with the "Last Post."

(*The British Journal of Nursing* – 9 March, 1918)

A Sans Souci Heroine

It is not generally known that a local nurse has honored this district by sacrificing her life for King and country. The brave heroine who so distinguished herself is Nurse Blake, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. Blake, of Vista Street, Sans Souci, who was drowned when the hospital ship *Glenard Castle* was torpedoed in the Bristol Channel some months ago.

According to English newspapers to hand the sinking of the hospital ship *Glenard Castle* was another of those Hun outrages which have become quite common. The steamer was outward bound, consequently no patients were on board. It was night and the regulation hospital lights were burning.

Sister Blake was trained at the Coast Hospital, where, after her training, she remained as sister for about four years. She left for the Front in April, 1915. On reaching Suez nurses were urgently needed to attend to the wounded soldiers from Gallipoli. Although anxious to go to England Sister Blake at once volunteered for service in Egypt and remained there 18 months. She then joined a hospital ship carrying wounded from Salonica and other ports to Egypt and England, and from France to Canada. She was also on a prisoners- of-war hospital ship for eight months, afterwards joining the hospital ship *Glenard Castle*. She had been on that steamer three months when it was torpedoed in the Bristol Channel, Sister Blake and seven other nurses being drowned.

The parents of the deceased nurse have received a letter from Buckingham Palace conveying the sympathy of the King and Queen.

(*The Propeller*, Hurstville, NSW – 12 July, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

BLAKE – In loving memory of our daughter, Staff-Nurse Edith Blake (Q.A.I., M.N.S.R.), on active service aboard the Hospital ship *Glenart Castle*, which was torpedoed and lost February 26, 1918.

For her there were no flowers
To adorn the unmarked surface of the waters;
The ocean alone decks her grave with gifts of pearl and shell,
And wreaths her brow with seaweeds rare.

Inserted by her father, mother, and sisters, Vista-street, Sans Souci.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 26 February, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

BLAKE – In loving memory of Nurse Edith Blake, lost in ship Glenart Castle, torpedoed February 26, 1918. Sadly missed. Inserted by her parents and sisters.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 26 February, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

BLAKE – In loving memory of Staff-nurse Edith Blake Q.N.I.M.N.S.R., on active service aboard Hospital Ship Glenart Castle, which was torpedoed and lost February 26, 1918. Sadly missed by her loving parents and sisters.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 26 February, 1921)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England

The Hollybrook Memorial is situated in Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery behind the plot of First World War graves near the main entrance.

The Hollybrook Memorial commemorates by name almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces* whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports or other vessels torpedoed or mined in home waters (*Officers and men of the Commonwealth's navies who have no grave but the sea are commemorated on memorials elsewhere). The memorial also bears the names of those who were lost or buried at sea, or who died at home but whose bodies could not be recovered for burial. Almost one third of the names on the memorial are those of officers and men of the South African Native Labour Corps, who died when the troop transport Mendi sank in the Channel following a collision on 21 February 1917. Other vessels sunk with significant loss of life were: HS Anglia, a hospital ship sunk by mine off Dover on 17 November 1915. SS Citta Di Palermo, an Italian transport carrying Commonwealth troops, sunk by mine off Brindisi on 8 January 1916. In rescuing survivors, two Royal Naval Otranto drifters were themselves mined and blown up. HMTs Donegal and Warilda, ambulance transports torpedoed and sunk between Le Havre and Southampton on 17 April 1917 and 3 August 1918. HS Glenart Castle, a hospital ship torpedoed and sunk off Lundy on 26 February 1918. SS Galway Castle, torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic on 12 September 1918. RMS Leinster, the Irish mail boat, torpedoed and sunk in the Irish

Sea on 10 October 1918. Among those commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial is Field Marshall Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, who died when the battle cruiser HMS Hampshire was mined and sunk off Scapa Flow on 5 June 1916.

The memorial was designed by T. Newham and unveiled by Sir William Robertson on 10 December 1930.

There are approximately 162 Australian World War 1 Service Personnel commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England. *(Information & photos from CWGC)*



Cross of Sacrifice



Name Panels behind Cross of Sacrifice



CWGC Graves in Hollybrook Cemetery with Cross of Sacrifice & Hollybrook Memorial

(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Staff Nurse E. Blake's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by Charlie – Find a Grave)

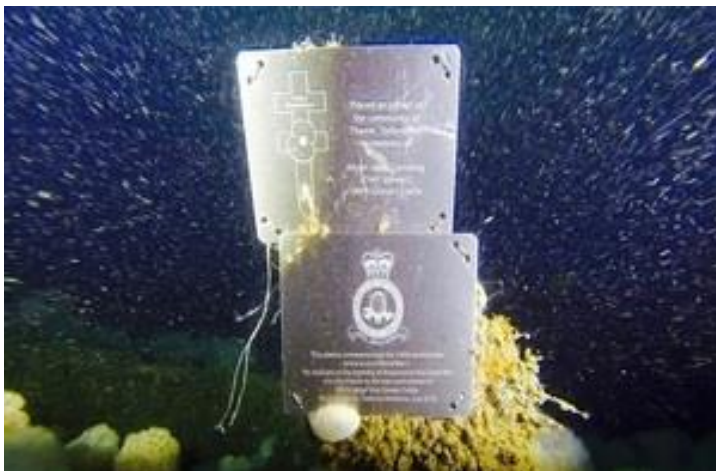


Recent Newspaper Items:

The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine pays tribute to the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Glenart Castle

Published 2 August 2018
From: [Ministry of Defence](#)

On the 21 July 2018, the Defence Medical Services Diving Association dived the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Glenart Castle.



During the dive two memorial plaques were fixed to the wreck on behalf of Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and the Thame Remembers Project. MOD Crown Copyright.

The Dive Team were heavily reinforced by members of the Royal Engineers Sports Diving Association and training took place over many months to ensure both teams were ready to dive in this remote location.

HMHS Glenart Castle sank 100 years ago when she was torpedoed by a German U-boat, resulting in over 160 lives lost including Medical Officers and Nurses. She currently lies at 73m in the Bristol Channel, 40 nautical miles from Padstow. During the dive two memorial plaques were fixed to the wreck on behalf of Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and the Thame Remembers Project; these plaques marked the centenary of the sinking and the end of World War 1.

The dive was poignant to those working for Defence Medical Services and the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine as the newly opened modern Tri-Service Mess for those serving at the Royal Centre Defence Medicine, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham has been named after the Hospital Ship.



On the 21 July 2018, the Defence Medical Services Diving Association dived the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Glenart Castle. MOD Crown Copyright.

Major Henrietta Poon of the Royal Army Medical Corps said:

We remember the brave Medical Officers, Nurses and Service Personnel who perished onboard HMHS Glenart Castle. It was a particularly poignant moment for me as a serving Military Doctor to complete this dive and lay tributes at their final resting place.

The Commanding Officer of the Royal Centre Defence Medicine, Colonel Jo Palmer, said:

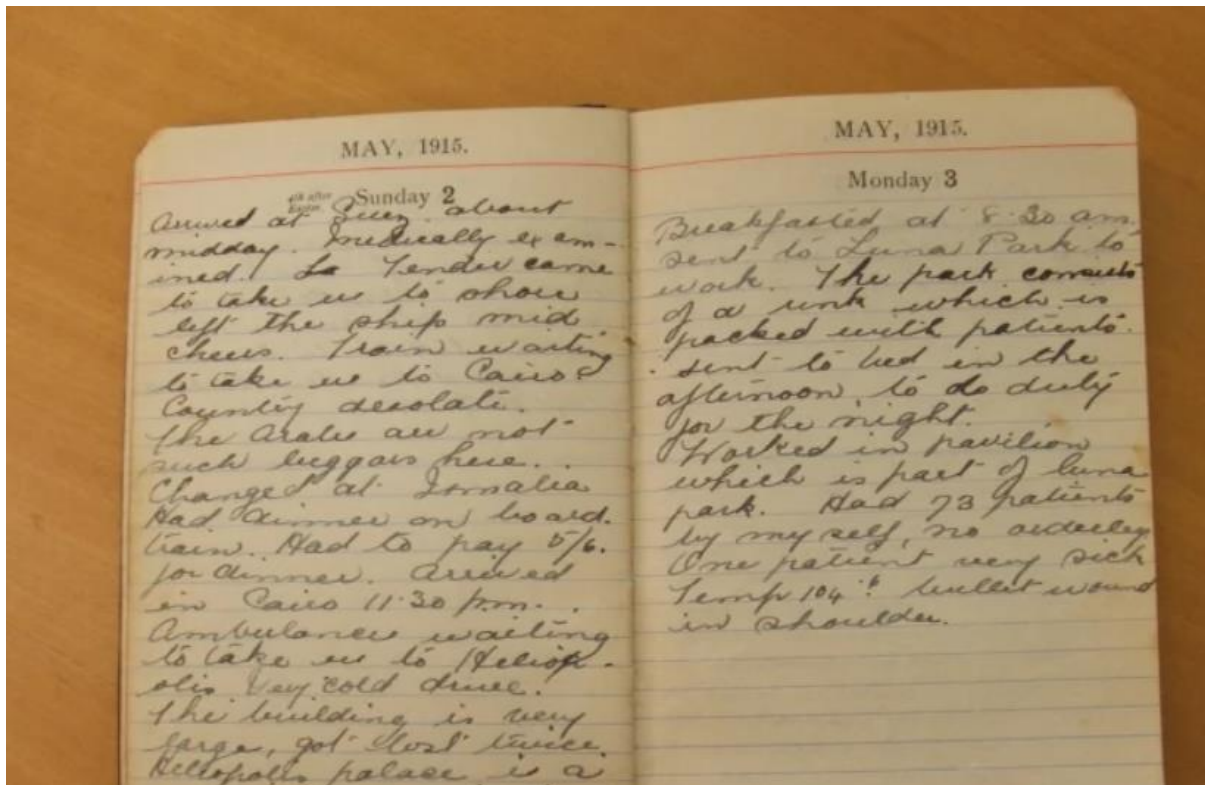
This challenging project to place Commemorative Plaques on HMHS Glenart Castle is a fitting tribute to all those on board who gave their lives whilst serving their country, and illustrates the enduring nature of the ethos and values of the military medical services.

WWI nurse Edith Blake gave a snapshot of life in war with her letters home

By Krista Kneeshaw

In the early hours of February 26, 1918, HMHS Glenart Castle steamed into the Bristol Channel to pick up men wounded on the Western Front. The ship was fully lit from her bow to her stern, clearly displaying the broad green band and red crosses on her white hull denoting her to be a hospital ship. Shortly before 4am the Glenart Castle was struck by a torpedo and sank, with the loss of some 153 lives, including all eight nurses on board.

One was Edith Blake, the only Australian nurse to die in World War I as a direct result of enemy action. She was 32 years old.



Edith Blake - diary

My grandmother Alice was the youngest of three sisters. I grew up knowing only that the eldest was a nurse who died when her hospital ship was sunk by a German submarine. The family never talked about it – most families never did, though after Edith's death my great grandmother wore only black, and great grandfather took a set against the Irish, who he believed had provided safe harbour to the U-boat.



Edith Blake is in second row behind second (from the left) seated man

After nan's death in 1993 just shy of her 97th birthday, her personal papers passed to my uncle and then to my father. Dad did not look at the papers handed to him and stuffed them at the bottom of a wardrobe. Then, almost two years ago my stepmother was tapping away at her computer researching family history, when my father shuffled off to the bedroom and returned with a plastic shopping bag. "Might be something useful in there," he said as he handed it to her and retired to his chair to continue his crossword.

'In there' were photos and family letters, including 138 letters that Edith wrote home throughout her war service. These were separated into three thick bundles tied with string, one each for 1915, 1916, and 1917-8. Many of the letters ran to four or five sheets, secured by a rusty pin.

The paper has browned and mottled with age, the edges are a little ragged, but in blue or black ink flowing over hundreds of pages Edie chronicles her war service, revealing herself to be educated, intelligent, conservative, practical and earnest, with a sense of humour.

Nearly 100 years after it had been silenced, I could hear Edie's voice.



Edith Blake portrait

This August the world marks the centenary of World War I. More than 2000 Australian nurses served in that war, including 130 with the British Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

Eddie was a Sydney girl; born in Redfern in 1885 and raised at Sans Souci on the shores of Botany Bay. She trained at the Coast Hospital (later Prince Henry) at Little Bay. Although she joined the QAIMNS, along with a number of 'Coasters', likely in response to a British request for 200 Australian nurses, Eddie was staunchly patriotic and wore her Australasian Trained Nurses Association badge, as "It is a mark of an Australian nurse, of which we are very proud ... everybody knows the Southern Cross of the ATNA nurse."

Thinking she was bound for England, Eddie left Sydney with several other Coasters on Sunday, April 4, 1915, in a first class train carriage bound for Melbourne, where she joined the Malwa. The nurses embarked with little idea of what lay ahead. They were told they would "probably be in charge of wards put aside for the wounded as there are very few trained nurses in England". The Malwa departed Fremantle on April 12. "Sailed 4pm. Bid a long farewell to Australia. Wonder if [scratched out] when we will return."

On board, the passengers were entertained by concerts, dancing and games. Eddie observed acerbically that "only some" of the nurses were "pleasure bent," casting "sheep's eyes" at the men. Romances between nurses and doctors or soldiers were not unusual (though officially frowned upon, with nurses required to resign from military service upon marriage), but Eddie never did enjoy a wartime liaison, musing the following February "I'm afraid I'm doomed to the solitude of an old maid, but my lashe [maalish] (Arabic for never mind) so far the life of an old maid is anything but unpleasant, but of course I cannot tell what life will present in another 10 or 15 years." Almost two years to the day, Eddie would be dead.

At Aden they were diverted to Egypt and arrived at the 'Palace' (No.1 Australian General Hospital, established in the Heliopolis Palace Hotel, Cairo) at midnight on May 2, 1915. Eddie was on duty by 10am treating men wounded at the Dardanelles: "There are about 800 patients & 4 nurses, you couldn't imagine what it was like ... Train loads upon train loads of patients come in."

Like many, Eddie anticipated a short war, writing in January, 1916: "surely another 12 months will see it all ended?" Although she hoped it was only temporary, Eddie would nurse in Egypt for 18 months, initially in Cairo – where she sent home a photo of a group posed in front of the Sphinx ("Do you recognise me under the chin?") – then at the 17th British General Hospital at Alexandria. "We will see much more nursing here than at Heliopolis but it is more depressing. When I see eyes taken out, legs amputated, you wonder what sort of existence that these poor men will lead as time goes on. It is far better to hear of them being killed, than maimed for life." She also took her turn at "night duty in tents ... The inside of the tents have boarded floors but the outside is heavy sand. Walking from one to another is worse than walking on Manly beach sand. It makes me so tired."

Despite applying for "home or French duty", Eddie left Egypt for six months on the hospital ship Essequibo, and in May, 1917 was assigned to a new hospital in Belmont, Surrey. "I had to change [trains] at Sutton. ... the guard came up to me & asked if I were going to Belmont ... as a new hospital for prisoners. I declared I wasn't going to nurse any German prisoners. My feelings went down to zero when I found out only one hospital is in the locality." There "I found myself on guard, with 63 German prisoners! If they had only known it. Fancy me trying to stop one let alone 63, if he wanted to escape."

Feelings for those nursing the prisoners were understandably "very mixed ... I don't think anybody resented nursing Huns [more] than we did when we first came here. But poor beggars, when you see them downhearted when they get their home letters (for they are not as cheery as our boys) & they sometimes drop a few tears, we can't help feeling the kindred spirit that makes us wondrous kind, & yet when you hear of the raids in London & loss of non-combatant life you feel you could screw all their necks, & we know that the Germans would poison the air we breathe only they would have to breathe it themselves."

The ambivalence of the staff towards their patients was exacerbated by the antipathy of the locals, some of whom "despise us because we have to nurse these people. They seem to think we volunteered to do it." Even if relations with patients were cordial, it had to be hidden from public scrutiny; "... the guards think we are too good to the Huns. So I told the men they were not to recognise us in the grounds, that it wasn't correct. So one said in German to another (one sister understood) 'we may love enemies, but in England we mustn't show it.' "

The nurses learned a few German words, and the prisoners learnt English. Misunderstandings were inevitable. "One [prisoner] handed me a flower saying 'you are a flower'. I told him it wasn't right to say such things ... After a lot of talking I mentioned the word 'compliment'. He then said he didn't mean a compliment he wanted me to have a flower ... They all asked then if it was customary for English gentlemen to pay compliments to ladies by calling them flowers. One is a Bavarian and said that they were in the habit of saying 'titmouse'. Fancy being called a titmouse!

Edie's attitude towards her patients was influenced by her 'Britisher' upbringing. Valuing stoicism and loyalty, she pitied the Germans if they were hungry or in pain, yet despised them should they complain; and while she found them polite and helpful, added "They are sneaks though & will not uphold each other at all, as Britishers will."

Frustration with hospital management prompted Edie to apply for a transfer. "I asked for France but I've got a hospital ship instead ... Whether for weal or woe I'm going to join the Glenart Castle at Liverpool Nov 12th."

Previously while on the Essequibo, Edie reassured her family "we are prepared for emergencies", which included detailed weekly drills – but also (somewhat less reassuringly) leaving "in readiness our coat & dressing gown ... In the pocket of my coat I have put several handkerchiefs, a pair [of] stocking[s], a silk scarf & a flask of brandy."

Edie's first encounter with a submarine, in the Atlantic in March, 1917, had a fortunate outcome. The submarine fired three shots, but Edie "didn't feel very upset as we were only 40 miles from land." The Germans sought information then steamed away, "putting up the flags reading 'A pleasant voyage'. We answered with flags 'Thank you' ... The Essequibo seems to have a charm, we ride through everything without trouble."

The Glenart Castle was not so charmed. The night was clear, the sea moderate with a heavy swell as she made for France. Without warning a torpedo crashed into the starboard side. The engines stopped. The wireless transmitter was disabled, so no distress call could be sent. The ship listed heavily and the starboard lifeboats were smashed to pieces. Only the portside Number 8 lifeboat launched successfully, with 22 men inside who baled continuously and were nearly swamped before being rescued by a French sailing boat at 10.30am. Nine men were rescued by the USS Parker at 3.30pm.

Asked by a court of inquiry if any order was given to put the nurses into the lifeboats first, bosun's mate Thomas Matthews said "There was no time to do anything. The ship sunk in seven or eight minutes and there was no time to rescue anybody."

The captain of U-Boat UC-56, Kapitanleutnant Wilhelm Kiesewetter claimed not to have known the Glenart Castle was a hospital ship, though there was evidence the submarine tracked the ship for an hour before firing. Although Kiesewetter served again in World War II, the Glenart Castle remained the only ship he ever sank.

The last letter we have from Edie is dated January 26, 1918. "We are now ready loaded to go to Blighty ... I will write home as soon as we get to Avonmouth, or wherever we land unless we strike a torpedo instead ... I wonder how long it will be till I come back to the Dear Old Coast. Much love from Edie."

Edie's letters, diary and other articles related to her war service have been donated to the Australian War Memorial, where the writer is a volunteer. Because Edith Blake died serving with a foreign nation, she is recorded in the AWM's Commemorative Roll rather than on the Roll of Honour.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 5 August, 2014)

Call to name land earmarked for Bruce Lee statue after local heroine, WWI nurse Edith Blake

Jim Gainsford



A small reserve in South Street, Kogarah scheduled to be renamed after the Chinese city of Shunde could instead be renamed after Australian heroine, WWI nurse Edith Blake.

Edith Blake lived at Blakehurst and was the only Australian nurse to die in World War I as a direct result of enemy action.

She died aged 32 when the hospital ship she was serving on, the HMHS Glenart Castle was torpedoed off the English coast by a German submarine on February 26, 1918.

Her name has been proposed by the Kogarah Historical Society as being suitable for the South Street Reserve.

If her name is approved by Georges River Council it would kill off forever a proposal by the former Kogarah Council to name the reserve after the Chinese city of Shunde.

This was proposed in recognition of the gift that Shunde presented to Kogarah Council as its Sister City of the Bruce Lee statue that now stands in Kogarah Town Square.

The life-size statue of martial arts legend and Hollywood actor Lee caused a furore when it was installed at Kogarah Town Square in 2011.

Shunde was the ancestral home of Bruce Lee but, as critics pointed out at the time, he had no connection with Kogarah.

In 2016 Kogarah Council voted to move the Bruce Lee statue to South Street Reserve and rename the space Shunde Gardens.

But the proposal seems to have lapsed following the amalgamation of Kogarah and Hurstville Councils.

And Bruce Lee seems to be staying where he is for the moment with Georges River Council workers last week repairing the base of the statue.

With Georges River Council drafting a new Sister City Policy, Shunde may not longer be recognised as a Sister City of the new council.

And there seems to be confusion over the actual name of the reserve.

A report by Georges River Council's Community and Culture committee describes it as "the currently unnamed road reserve informally known as Shunde Gardens on South Street, Kogarah".

But historian Dr Peter Orlovich said the reserve is unofficially called South Street Reserve.

South Street is named after Kogarah's first Post Master John South who was also an alderman on Kogarah Council.

Dr Orlovich who has been a counsellor or advisor on the Geographical Names Board since 1966 said the feeling of the Kogarah Historical Society is that the name of the reserve should be related to somebody of local historical significance.

The Geographical Names Board is empowered by the Geographical Names Act 1966 as the official body assign names to places.

“The proposal that it be named Shunde Gardens seems to have lapsed,” Dr Orlovich said.

“Kogarah Historical Society president Beverley Earnshaw has written extensively about nurse Edith Blake.

“The society believes the reserve should be named in honour of Edith Blake who is a person of local historical significance.”

In a letter to the council, Kogarah Historical Society secretary Gill Whan said the renaming of the reserve, which is across the road from St George Private Hospital, would honour Edith Blake for her contribution to the medical profession.

It is also considered appropriate as 2018 is the centenary of the end of World War 1.

A report by council staff recommends the new name be supported.

If Georges River Council decides to rename the reserve after nurse Edith Blake, the proposal would have to be placed on public exhibition.

If it receives community support, it the new name would then have to go to the NSW Geographical Names Board to be formalised.

(St George & Sutherland Shire Leader, NSW – 6 December, 2018)

Kogarah park expected to be named after local WWI heroine, nurse Edith Blake

Jim Gainsford



Keeping her memory: WWI nurse Edith Blake who lost her life when her hospital ship was torpedoed in 1918.

A small corner of Kogarah is expected to be dedicated to the memory of local heroine, WWI nurse Edith Blake.

Edith Blake was one of a list of names recommended by Georges River Council's Community and Culture Committee to identify a number of local pocket parks, reserves, unnamed roads and lanes throughout the local government area.

The small reserve on South Street Kogarah, opposite St George Private Hospital, is expected to be named Edith Blake Reserve.

The name is supported by members of the Kogarah Historical Society who said it would be particularly appropriate as the reserve is located in the Kogarah medical precinct.



This small park in Kogarah, unofficially known as South Street reserve, could soon be dedicated to the memory of Edith Blake.

Edith Blake is believed to have lived at Blakehurst and was the only Australian nurse to die in World War I as a direct result of enemy action.

She died aged 32 when the hospital ship she was serving on, the HMHS Glenart Castle was torpedoed off the English coast by a German submarine on February 26, 1918.

Georges River Council has accepted the recommendations which will be sent for approval to the Geographical Names Board, the NSW body that approves names.

The unnamed parcel of land is unofficially called South Street Reserve. Several years ago there was a proposal to name the reserve after the Chinese city of Shunde.

Other place naming requests accepted by the council will see an unnamed road reserve informally known as Edgbaston Road Reserve in Beverly Hills will be called Merv Lynch Reserve after the former mayor of Hurstville.....

(St George & Sutherland Shire Leader, NSW – 16 May, 2019)

Feedback sought on plan to name parks after two local heroes

Jim Gainsford



The public is being asked for input on a proposal to name two small Georges River parks after local heroes.

The Geographical Names Board, the official body for determining place names in NSW, is seeking feedback on the proposal to name the reserves Edith Blake Reserve and Merv Lynch Reserve.

The names have been put forward by Georges River Council for consideration.

"It is important that place names reflect the character and history of the local area and community," chair of the Geographical Names Board, Narelle Underwood said.

Edith Blake Reserve is located on the corner of Montgomery and South Streets, Kogarah, in the medical precinct, opposite St George Private Hospital.

Edith Blake is believed to have lived at Blakehurst and was the only Australian nurse to die in World War I as a direct result of enemy action.

She died aged 32 when the hospital ship she was serving on, the HMHS Glenart Castle was torpedoed off the English coast by a German submarine on February 26, 1918.

Edith's war time letters and diaries were donated by her family descendants to the Australian War Memorial, where a next of kin plaque is displayed in her honour. Tributes to Edith also stand at the Municipality of Kogarah Honour Roll and the Hollybrook Memorial in Southampton.

The land proposed to be named Merv Lynch Reserve is located between Gregory Crescent and Edgbaston Road, Beverly Hills.....

Mrs Underwood said the board is encouraging community comment before it considers the proposal.

"We want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to provide their feedback on the proposed names."

Details of the proposal can be viewed and submissions lodged on the Geographical Names Board's website.

Written submissions may be lodged with the Secretary Geographical Names Board 346 Panorama Avenue Bathurst NSW 2795.

The closing date for submissions is 21 September, 2019.

(St George & Sutherland Shire Leader, NSW – 29 August, 2019)

The Kogarah Bay Progress Association supports the naming proposal of the South Street Reserve (corner of Montgomery and South Streets, Kogarah) to '**Edith Blake Reserve**'.

With the reserve being located in the medical precinct, opposite St George Private Hospital, the name change is a wonderful way to pay tribute to and is an important step in acknowledging the ultimate sacrifice Edith Blake made in service as a medical professional to her country. It is also taking positive steps to honour the women who have supported our community and will help preserve our connection to the history of our area.

(From Kogarah Bay Progress Association)

To honour her achievements, Georges River Council assigned the name “Edith Blake Reserve” to the reserve at the corner of Montgomery and South Street in Kogarah, New South Wales..

