Queensferry Cemetery,

Edinburgh, Scotland,

War Graves

Lest We Forget

World War 1

2127   ORDINARY SEAMAN

WILLIAM KENNETH BUCK

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"

10TH MARCH, 1915   Age 17

Erected By His Shipmates

As A Token Of Their Respect

William Kenneth BUCK

William Kenneth Buck was born on 28th April, 1897 at Devonport West, Tasmania to parents William Henry Buck & Sarah Buck (nee Stephenson).

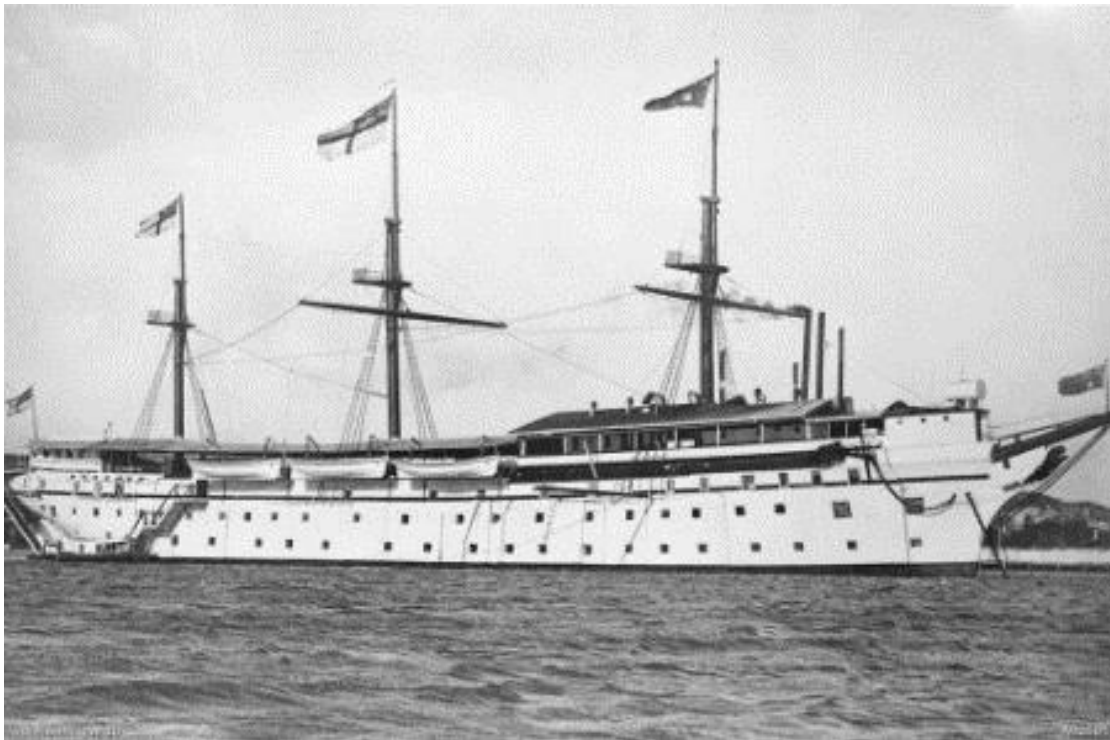Sarah Buck, mother of William Kenneth Buck, died on 27th October, 1902.

William Kenneth Buck was aged 15 years when he enlisted with the Royal Australian Navy on 9th September, 1912 for a period of 7 years, following his 18th birthday. His service number was 2127. William Kenneth Buck was 5ft 7 ½" with fair hair, blue eyes & a fair complexion. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr W. H. Buck of Dufton, Latrobe, Tasmania.

William Kenneth Buck joined H.M.A.S. *Tingira* on 9th September, 1912 as Boy 2nd Class. He was promoted to Boy 1st Class on 23rd June, 1913. His character was assessed as very good & his ability as satisfactory on 14th October, 1913.

H.M.A.S. *Tingira*

H.M.A.S. *Tingira* (an aboriginal word for "open sea") was a training ship commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. Previously the *Sobraon* carried cargo and passengers between Australia & the United Kingdom once a year between 1866 & 1891. The *Sobraon* had been purchased by the NSW Government in 1891 & was used as a reformatory or Nautical School Ship for wayward boys until 1911.

The Royal Australian Navy refitted the *Sobraon* & was commissioned on 25th April, 1912 as H.M.A.S. *Tingira* & moored in Rose Bay, Sydney. Up to 250 boys between the ages of 14 ½ and 16 could be trained at any time, although the trainee complement rarely exceeded 200. Between 1912 and 1927, 3,158 boys were trained for naval service. As *Tingira* was immobilised, the steam yacht HMAS *Sleuth* was attached to the training ship as a tender, and used to provide seagoing experience to recruits.

H.M.A.S. *Tingira* moored in Rose Bay, Sydney in 1912

Boy 1st Class William Kenneth Buck joined H.M.A.S. *Australia* on 15th October, 1913. He was promoted to Ordinary Seaman 2nd Class on 28th April, 1914.

H.M.A.S. *Australia*

H.M.A.S. *Australia* was launched in 1911 and commissioned as flagship of the Royal Australian Navy (R.A.N.) in 1913. On completion she sailed for Australia and, on 4 October 1913, led the cruisers and destroyers of the fleet unit into Sydney Harbour to public acclaim.

With the outbreak of the First World War, *Australia* became the flagship of the force that captured the German colonies in the southern Pacific. She led a force which captured Rabaul on 13th September, 1914 before proceeding to Samoa.

In late December, 1914 *Australia* received orders to sail to England via the Pacific and reached Devonport on 28th January, 1915. En route she captured and sank von Spee's supply ship *Eleonore Woermann* off South America. From Devonport *Australia* proceeded to Rosyth in Scotland, where in February, 1915 she became flagship of the 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron, flying the flag of Rear Admiral Sir William Pakenham, KCB, MVO. The squadron, as initially formed, comprised *Australia* and her two sister ships, HMS *New Zealand* and HMS *Indefatigable*.

H.M.A.S. *Australia* 1914

Ordinary Seaman William Kenneth Buck died on 10th March, 1915 at Linlithgow, West Lothian, Scotland (Source: Australian War Memorial – Roll of Honour) from Pneumonia.

Ordinary Seaman William Kenneth Buck was buried in Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland – Plot number 575. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission but his headstone was "Erected by his shipmates as a token of their respect".

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Ordinary Seaman William Kenneth Buck – service number 2127, aged 17, of H.M.A.S. "Australia", Royal Australian Navy. He was the son of William Henry Buck, of Devonport West, Tasmania.

Ordinary Seaman W. K. Buck is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 1. He is one of 117 "boy soldiers" and "boy sailors" who have been identified among the 61,000 names on the Roll of Honour for the First World War.

Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Wm. Buck is remembered on the West Devonport State School Roll of Honour located in the Devonport RSL Museum, 18 Macfie Street, Devonport, Tasmania.

West Devonport State School Roll of Honour *(Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)*

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W. Buck is remembered on the Devonport War Memorial located in Victoria Park, Victoria Parade, Devonport, Tasmania.

Devonport Cenotaph *(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson / Arthur Garland)*

Seaman William Buck is remembered on the Devonport Municipality Roll of Honour located Devonport RSL Museum, 18 Macfie Street, Devonport, Tasmania.

Devonport Municipality Roll of Honour *(Photos from Monument Australia – Glenn Morse, Curator & Arthur Garland)*

William Kenneth Buck is remembered on the Wall of Remembrance, at the War Memorial, Cecilia Street, St. Helens, Tasmania. The Wall of Remembrance commemorates those from Tasmania who died in service or were killed in action in World War One.

Front Inscription

Tasmania`s World War One Roll of Honour, 1914 - 1918

The names of 3165 soldiers, sailors and airmen who were Tasmanian by birth or residence and died from their service in WW1 are commemorated on these walls. Their names appear alphabetically, grouped by the year of death. These men served with Australian, New Zealand and British units.

"What these men did nothing can alter now. The good and the bad, the greatness and the smallness of their story will stand. Whatever of glory it contains nothing now can lessen. It rises, as it will always rise, above the mists of ages, a monument to great hearted men; and for their nation, a possession forever. "

Wall of Remembrance, St. Helens, Tasmania *(Photo from Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)*

Wall of Remembrance, St. Helens, Tasmania

Ordinary Seaman W. K. Buck is remembered on Royal Australian Navy WW1 Memorial, located at HMAS *Cerberus* Protestant Chapel of St Mark, Nelson Road, Crib Point, Victoria.
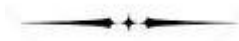

HMAS *Cerberus* Protestant Chapel of St Mark, Crib Point, Victoria *(Photos courtesy of Karen Standen)*

Ordinary Seaman William Kenneth Buck *(Weekly Courier, Tasmania – 8th April, 1915)*

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour) & National Archives

Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIA

H.M.A.S. AUSTRALIA

DEATH OF A TASMANIAN

Melbourne March 14

The Navy Office reports the death from pneumonia on March 11 of William Kenneth Buck, ordinary seaman, on H.M.A.S. Australia. Next of kin, father, Mr William Buck, Buckton, Latrobe, Tasmania.

(*The Mercury*, Hobart, Tasmania – 15 March, 1915)

IN MEMORIAM

BUCK – On March 11, 1915, in hospital, near Edinburgh, Scotland, William Kenneth, of H.M.A.S. Australia – youngest son of Mr and Mrs W. H. Buck, of Devonport, in his 19th year.

(*The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times,* Tasmania – 11 March, 1916)

Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland contains 180 First World War burials, almost all of them naval. There are also eight burials of the Second World War. There are 11 War Graves from World War 1 belonging to members of the Royal Australian Navy.

(Information & photo from CWGC)

Photo of Ordinary Seaman William Kenneth Buck Headstone in Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland. His headstone was erected by his shipmates.

IN MEMORY OF

WILLIAM KENNETH BUCK, O.S.

OF

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"

WHO DIED 10TH MARCH 1915

AGED 17 YEARS

ERECTED BY HIS SHIPMATES
AS A TOKEN OF THEIR RESPECT

(Photo courtesy of Allan Noble - 2020)

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