

**St. Michael & All Angels Churchyard,
Figheledean, Wiltshire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



LIEUTENANT

T. E. BULTEEL

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

ATTD. ROYAL FLYING CORPS

24TH FEBRUARY, 1918

Thomas Edward BULTEEL

Thomas Edward Bulteel was born at Yealmpton, Devonshire, England on 2nd March, 1889 to parents Percy Francis & Julia Eleanor Bulteel (nee Pine-Coffin). His birth was registered in June quarter, 1889 in the district of Plympton St. Mary, Devon, England.

The 1891 England Census recorded Thomas E. Bulteel as a 2 year old, living with his family at Retreat House, Plymstock, Devon, England. His parents were listed as Percy F. Bulteel (Banker, aged 26, born Billacombe, Devon) & Julia E. Bulteel (aged 25, born Churston, Devon). Also listed was Thomas' younger sister - Ina K. Bulteel (aged 1 month, born Hove, Devon). Four servants were also listed – Mary J. Bennell (Widow, Cook, aged 36), Phoebe Venn (Parlour Maid, aged 21), Louisa Light (Nurse, aged 28) & William Ellis (Stable boy, aged 15).

The 1901 England Census recorded Thomas E. Bulteel as a 12 year old Student boarding at Courtenay House, Tavistock, Devon, England. He was one of 14 boarders & Thomas A. May was the Schoolmaster.

Newspaper item – *The Daily News*, Perth, Western Australia – 17 June, 1913:

“INWARD” BY MOLDAVIA

The passengers who landed at Fremantle from the R.M.S. MOLDAVIA were:- Mrs Holmes, Mr Cecil Holmes, Master Leonard Holmes, the Misses E. and M. Holmes, Mr G. Millist, Mr Ralph Gill, Mr and Mrs Thems, Mr and Mrs Hazell, Mr J. Calanchini, Mr J. H. Gibbs, Mr T. E. Bulteel and Private Spatters.

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of Katanning, Western Australia listed Thomas Edward Bulteel, Farm Labourer, from Walyaming, Katanning.

Thomas Edward Bulteel was a 25 year old, single, Farmer, from (care of R. W. A. Warren), Katanning, Western Australia when he enlisted at Black Boy Hill, Western Australia on 7th September, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as Miss Bulteel, “Grafton Cottage”, Stokes, Devonport, England. Thomas Buteel stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served for 2 years with 5th Battalion, Devon Regiment & 3 years with Ceylon Planters Rifle Corp & Mounted Rifles.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel was posted to 11th Battalion, 3rd Brigade Infantry on 7th September, 1914.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel, Service number 861, embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMT *Ascanius (A11)* on 31st October, 1914 with the 11th Infantry Battalion “H” Company.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel embarked on HMT *Suffolk* from Alexandria on 2nd March, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) at Gallipoli Peninsula.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel was transferred from “D” Company to Battalion Signallers on 22nd July, 1915 at Gallipoli Peninsula.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel reported sick on 21st September, 1915. He was admitted to No. 3 Field Ambulance at Gallipoli Peninsula with Pyrexia (Fever of unknown origin) then transferred the same day to 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station. Private Bulteel was transferred to Hospital Ship *Dunluce Castle* on 21st September, 1915 & was admitted to St. Patrick's Hospital at Malta on 27th September, 1915 with Debility. He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Panama* & embarked for England on 8th October, 1915.

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, England on 16th October, 1915.

Mrs J. E. Matthews, Babland, Modbury, South Devon, mother of Private Thomas Edward Bulteel, was advised by Base Records on 20th October, 1915 that he had been admitted to 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth.

11th Battalion

The 11th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. It was the first battalion recruited in Western Australia, and with the 9th, 10th and 12th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within weeks of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked for overseas after just two weeks of preliminary training. It arrived in Egypt to continue its training in early December. The 3rd Brigade was the covering force for the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 and so was the first ashore at around 4:30 am. Ten days after the landing, a company from the 11th Battalion mounted the AIF's first raid of the war against Turkish positions at Gaba Tepe. Subsequently, the battalion was heavily involved in defending the front line of the ANZAC beachhead. In August, it made preparatory attacks at the southern end of the ANZAC position before the battle of Lone Pine. The 11th Battalion continued to serve at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Thomas Edward Bulteel was discharged from Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) on 26th October, 1915, having been granted a Commission in the British Army. *"Discharged from A.I.F. with effect from 26.10.15 in consequence of his appointment to a temporary 2nd Lieutenancy in the 36th Bty, Royal Field Artillery."* He had served with Australian Imperial Force for 1 year & 50 days.

Second Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was granted a Commission in the British Army – Royal Field Artillery on 27th October, 1915.

From *The London Gazette* - 29 October, 1915:

War Office

29th October, 1915

SPECIAL RESERVE OF OFFICERS

ARTILLERY

The undermentioned to be Second Lieutenants (on probation). Dated 27th October, 1915;-

Royal Field Artillery

.....

Thomas Edward Bulteel

....

According to a newspaper report Second Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was gassed in June, 1917.

Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was attached to Royal Flying Corps as a Special Case on 10th September, 1917. He was posted to No. 7 Training Squadron on 3rd October, 1917 then transferred to No. 8 Training Squadron from 23rd November, 1917.

Royal Flying Corps (R.F.C.)

The Royal Flying Corps (R.F.C.) was the air arm of the British Army before and during the First World War, until it merged with the Royal Naval Air Service on 1 April 1918 to form the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.). During the early part of the war, the R.F.C. supported the British Army by artillery co-operation and photographic reconnaissance. This work gradually led R.F.C. pilots into aerial battles with German pilots and later in the war included the strafing of enemy infantry and emplacements, the bombing of German military airfields and later the strategic bombing of German industrial and transport facilities.

The R.F.C.'s motto was *Per ardua ad astra* ("Through adversity to the stars"). This remains the motto of the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) and other Commonwealth air forces.

(Extract from Wikipedia)

Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was appointed Flying Officer on 22nd January, 1918.

On 24th February, 1918 Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel, of No. 8 Training Squadron, Netheravon, Wiltshire, England was piloting a Bristol Fighter C4809 when it collided with D.H.6 C2003 mid-air at 50 feet at Netheravon. 2nd Lieutenant R. Wilson of the other plane was uninjured.

Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel died on 24th February, 1918 at Netheravon, Wiltshire, England as a result of an Aero Accident.

Court of Inquiry – *“The Court are of the opinion that 2nd Lt Wilson failed to see the B.F. which was apparently about to land. That the B.F. pilot evidently opened out his engine on seeing the D.H. 6 prepare to takeoff. That the collision was directly caused by the D.H. 6 turning to the left instead of flying straight into the wind. Further the Court are of opinion that the accident was due to carelessness on the part of 2/Lt R. Wilson the pilot of D.H. 6 2003.”*

A death for Thomas E. Bulteel, aged 28, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire, England.

Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was buried in St. Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Figheldean, Wiltshire, England and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

England & Wales National Probate Calendar:

BULTEEL, Thomas Edward of Netheravon, Wiltshire, Lieutenant R.F.A. died 24 February 1918. Administration London 29 June to Julia Eleanor Matthews (wife of Thomas Charles Matthews). Effects £164 15s. 5d.

Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

The Secretary, War Office, 27 Pilgrim St, England wrote to Base Records, Melbourne, Australia to advise that Lieutenant T. E. Bulteel, late No. 861, (Private with 11th Battalion, A.I.F.) *“has by service in the R.F.A. from October, 1915 to 12th July, 1917 qualified for the award of the British War & Victory Medals which will be administered by this office.... The latest known address of N.O.K.:- (mother) Mrs J. G. Matthews, 3 Lansdowne Place, Plymouth.”*

Base Records replied to The Secretary, War Office on 21st February, 1921 advising *“No. 861 Pte Bulteel, Thomas Edward in respect of his services in 11th Battalion, A.I.F. from 7th September, 1914 to 26th October, 1915 is eligible for the award of 1914/15 Star which will be administered by this office.”*

Mrs Julia E. Matthews, (formerly Bulteel), 3 Lansdowne Place, Plymouth, wrote to Base Records on 11th May, 1921: *“I am directed by our War Office to apply to you for the “1914-15 Star” – which my son the late Lieut T. E. Bulteel, R.F.A. attch, R.A.F. was entitled to. He served with the 11th Bat. Australia I. Forces from 16/8/14 to 28/10/15 and then went to Malta Hospital on the Sick List.... I believe I am right in saying he joined at Perth, Western Australia.”*

Base Records replied to Mrs J. E. Matthews, 3 Lansdowne Place, Plymouth, England on 18th June, 1921 advising *“....am forwarding herewith, per separate registered post, the 1914-15 Star as a memento of the gallant service rendered by your son, the late No. 861, Private T. E. Bulteel, 11th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force (subsequently served as Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force).....”*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel, of Royal Flying Corps. No family details are listed.

The State War Memorial Appeal Committee, Perth, Western Australia, wrote to Base Records, Canberra on 2nd December, 1947 with the following: *“Whilst organising the appeal for funds for the extensions to the West Australian State War Memorial to cater for the commemoration of the names of those who were killed or died of wounds, sickness, etc., in World War 2 we have frequently come up against problems which only your records can solve.*

A man name T. E. BULTEEL joined up the original 11th Battalion and was in the landing at Gallipoli. He subsequently joined the Royal Air Force or the Royal Flying Corps, which was its counterpart in those years. He was killed in an air accident at NETHER AVON in 1916.

What we want to find out is his original Regimental Number in the 11th Battalion A.I.F. and if possible his rank in the R.A.F. or R.F.C. when he was accidentally killed.

The above information is required as his relations have made application for his name to be included on the tablets of the State War Memorial and naturally we must be sure of our facts and figures before this can be listed for inclusion. We are writing direct on advice from the Officer in Charged Records Western Command.”

Base Records, Canberra, replied to The State Organiser, State War Memorial Appeal Committee, Perth, Western Australia, on 8th December, 1947: “Re Ex- No. 861 Pte Thomas Edward BULTEEL, 11th Bn, A.I.F. 1914 – 1918.

In reply to your letter dated 2nd December, 1947, I have to advise the abovenamed are the correct particulars under which Mr Bulteel served in the Australian Imperial Force, 1914 – 18.

He was discharged on 26th October, 1915, having been appointed to a Commission on the 36th Battery. Royal Field Artillery.

No knowledge is held of Mr Bulteel’s service after his discharged from the A.I.F.”

Lieutenant T. E. Bulteel 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)



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial (Capital Photographer)

T. E. Bulteel is remembered on the Katanning War Memorial, located in Prosser Park, Carew & Cliff Streets, Katanning, Western Australia.



Katanning War Memorial (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – James Wills)



(Photo courtesy of Stephen Bowes)

(46 pages of Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel's A.I.F. Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (First World War Embarkation Roll & Commemorative Roll) & National Archives Australia



PTE. T. E. BULTEEL.
11th Battalion. Ill at Malta after six
months in the trenches.

(Sunday Times, Perth, Western Australia – 9 Jan 1916)

Newspaper Notices

Off to the Front

OUR BOYS FAREWELLED

The send-off arranged by the Road Board to the district boys of the Expeditionary Force, on Saturday evening last packed the Mechanics'.

....

Patriotic addresses were delivered by Messrs J. F. Cullen, M.L.C., A. E. Piesse, M.L.A., and the Chairman, and Corporal Mason responded. In doing so, he pointed out that those who had seen active service in South Africa knew that the mission they were setting out on was not a picnic; but that they were all prepared to face whatever came, their way and act like men.

During the evening songs were rendered by Messrs Cobb, Bird and Thomas, while the National Anthem and Rule Britannia were also sung under the leadership of Mr Saggars.

The following are the names of the representatives : — Ivo Joy, Melville Piesse, Hector Haslam, **Thomas Edward Bulteel**, George F. Mason. Graham, Edmun Rogerson, Woods, P. Reid, C. Charles, Harry Hunt, Sidney Price, Spencer Squirrel, H. E. Treasure, W. Stephenson, B. Johnson, Victor Choules, T. P. Sudlow, Gabriel Church, C. Smith Broomehill, Patrick Green, A. Price, Victor Edmunds, Tambellup ; William Dentyoung, Kenneth Higgins, and F..C. West.

Afterwards Mr Thompson entertained the members and some friends at the King George Hostel. There was a large assemblage at the station on Sunday night to see the lads off and give them a final salute.

(The Southern Districts Advocate, Katanning, Western Australia – 9 September, 1914)

ROLL OF HONOUR

107th CASUALTY LIST

ILL OR WOUNDED

11th Battalion -T. E. Bulteel (England), ill hospital, London;.....

(Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 19 November, 1915)

Wurgabup Rifle Club

SPOON COMPETITIONS

This club has fixed up a weekly programme of shoots and has embarked upon the new year with the record of having during the year made all its active members efficient 46.6 have joined the A.I.F., while the remaining 53.4 went through the annual musketry course. The range has been cleared to 1,000 yards and a telephone installed at the club's expense. New members are enrolling, and the club's finances are in a healthy state.

Members are indeed pleased at Mr. E. F. Goodchild's promotion to lieutenant ; he is the second member from this club to receive that promotion, **the other member being T. E. Bulteel**. All of the A.I.F. recruits from the club are safe and well.

(The Southern Districts Advocate, Katanning, Western Australia – 1 August, 1917)



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HEROES

(*Western Mail*, Perth, Western Australia – 30 June, 1916)



SECOND-LIEUT. T. E. BULTEEL.
Took part in the famous landing at Gallipoli and after spending five months in the trenches was invalided to England.

FLYING OFFICER KILLED

Lt. Thomas Edward Bulteel, R.F.A., attd. To the R.F.C., aged 28m who was accidentally killed whilst flying in Wiltshire on Feb 24, was the eldest son of the late Mr Percy F. Bulteel and of Mrs Matthews, Elburton, Plymouth. He was educated at Kelly College, Tavistock; afterwards he went to Ceylon as a planter, where he was for many years, Owing to ill-health he afterwards went to Australia, and on the outbreak of war he was one of the first to enlist. He landed with the first contingent of Australians at Gallipoli, where he saw much fighting until invalided. As soon as he came out of hospital he received a commission in the R.F.A. He fought continuously in France until he was gassed in June, 1917. When he recovered he was transferred to the Flying Corps to become a pilot, for which he graduated when he was killed. His commanding officer in writing said "he was above the average in skill and reliability, and was picked out to be an instructor." He was a universal favourite, and was buried at Figheledean Churchyard, where he was accorded a military funeral.

(*Western Morning News*, England - 9 March, 1918)

Death of Australian Flyer

Advices received from England report the death, in an accident while flying of Lieut. T. E. Bulteel, well known to many people in the district, Mr. Bulteel was amongst the first to enlist in Katanning, was drafted to the 11th Battalion, in which he took part in the landing at Anzac Cove, after five months on the Peninsula he was invalided to England, where he was given a commission in the 36th Battery, R.F.A. He then joined the Royal Flying Corps and qualified as a pilot. He was rising from the ground for a flight at Wetherandon Camp on Feb. 24, and when 100ft in the air another machine came behind him and collided. His untimely death will be regretted by very many friends. It was his intention when he enlisted, if he came safely through the war, to return and settle in the Katanning district.

(*Great Southern Herald*, Katanning, Western Australia – 19 June, 1918) & (*Tambellup Times*, W.A. – 19 June, 1918)

A.I.F. MAN'S NAME NOT ON WAR MEMORIAL

The story of how an A.I.F. man who was killed in 1918 while attached to the Royal Flying Corps in England but whose name has never appeared on the State War Memorial was told in Perth to day.

The name had been left off the memorial by some mistake and was not noticed until last November when Mr. R. W. A. Warren of Xantippe, via Dalwallinu, made a donation to the War Memorial Extension Appeal and mentioned the matter.

The appeal committee investigated Mr. Warren's claim and a letter from the War Office in London revealed that Lieutenant Thomas Edward Bulteel of the Royal Field Artillery (Special Reserve) had been killed on February 24, 1918.

It is to put the name of Lieutenant Bulteel in its proper place on the honour roll of the State War Memorial, and to put the names of those thousands of West Australians who gave their lives in World War II on the proposed extension to the memorial, that £20,000 is being appealed for. Donations can be made to the R.S.L. at Anzac House or to the cashier at the Daily News.

(*The Daily News*, Perth, Western Australia – 2 March, 1948)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

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.

Lieutenant T. E. Bulteel has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but no inscription.

St. Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Figcheldean, Wiltshire, England

St. Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Figcheldean contains 17 Commonwealth War Graves – 16 from World War 1 & 1 from World War 2.



St. Michael and All Angels Church, Figcheldean (Photo above by Mike Searle – below from CWGC)





St. Michael and All Angels Church, Figheldean (Photos by Anthony Bysouth)



Photo of Lieutenant T. E. Bulteel's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Figcheldean, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Lady Linda 2021)