

**Sleepyhillock Cemetery,
Montrose, Scotland**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



LIEUTENANT

E. W. BURTON

AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

4TH APRIL, 1918 Age 25

For Here We Have

No Continuing City

But We Seek One To Come

Ernest Wilfred BURTON

Ernest Wilfred Burton was born in Auckland, New Zealand on 16th November, 1892 to parents Ernest William and Ellen Burton (nee Spiers). His birth was registered in 1893.

Ernest Wilfred Burton attended King's College in Auckland from 1907 to 1909. From 1909 to 1911 he served with Communication & Signalling Corps in Auckland and from 1911 to 1912 with Communication Corps, Auckland, New Zealand. He was a member of the College Rifles Rugby Football Club. Ernest Wilfred Burton served in the King's College Cadets, then moved into the College Rifles (a corps of Old Collegians), for Officer Training Corps, N. Z. Territorial Force from 1913 to April, 1914.

Ernest Wilfred Burton was a 21 year old, single, Clerk from 46 Arthur St, Lavender Bay, NSW when he enlisted in Sydney, NSW on 18th August, 1914 with the 1st Divisional Signal Company of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 128 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his Father – Mr Burton, of 44 York Place, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton was posted to 1st Division Signal Company on 18th August, 1914.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Karoo (A10)* on 20th October, 1914.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton proceeded to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) at Gallipoli on 5th April, 1915.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton was taken to 2nd Field Ambulance on 18th September, 1915 & was transferred to 3rd Australian General Hospital, Lemnos with Chronic synovitis neck. He returned to duty with his Unit at Anzac from Convalescent Camp at Lemnos on 2nd October, 1915.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton rejoined his Unit from Anzac on 13th December, 1915.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton disembarked at Alexandria on 3rd January, 1916.

Sapper Ernest Wilfred Burton was promoted to Corporal while posted at Serapeum on 1st March, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Wilfred Burton proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 21st March, 1916 on H. T. Bohemian. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 28th March, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Wilfred Burton was temporarily attached to D.A. H.Q. from 1st Division Signal Company on 21st April, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Wilfred Burton rejoined his Unit from detachment to 1st D.A. H.Q. in France on 3rd September, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Wilfred Burton was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant on 15th May, 1917.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was transferred from 1st Signal Company to 2nd Battalion, A.I.F. on 4th June, 1917.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was sent to School of Instruction on 17th June, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 19th July, 1917.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was detached for duty with A.F.C. (Australian Flying Corps) & proceeded to England & seconded for training on 29th August, 1917. 2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton proceeded from Boulogne to England on duty on 30th August, 1917.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton transferred to Royal Flying Corps. His next-of-kin was listed as his father – Mr E. W. Burton of Wairer Mill Road, Whanyance, New Zealand. Ernest Burton stated he worked for Burton & Hammond, Auckland, New Zealand from 1910 to 1914. His Service Record reads: "Travelled over whole area occupied by B.E.F. in France. Since entry into R.F.C. flown M.F.S.H. Avro Sop Pup, Sop Camel."

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was posted to Reading, Berkshire, England on 7th September, 1917. He reported to No. 1 School of Aeronautics, Reading to qualify as a Pilot in the Australian Flying Corps.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was transferred to No. 14 Training Squadron on 23rd October, 1917 then transferred to No. 18 Training Squadron (30W) – no date recorded.

2nd Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was promoted to Lieutenant on 25th November, 1917 & to remain seconded with A.F.C. (Australian Flying Corps).

Lieutenant Burton was recorded as N.E.P. (Non-effective Personnel?) on 17th January, 1918 then transferred to No. 36 Training Squadron on 12th February, 1918.

On 13th March, 1918 Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton having graduated was appointed Flying Officer (Pilot) & was transferred to A.F.C. (Australian Flying Corps).

Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton, of Australian Flying Corps was piloting a Sopwith Pup B. 7529 at Montrose, Scotland when it collided in the air with Sopwith Camel B. 7338. On the morning of the accident, two pilots in Pups (Lieut. E. W. Burton and 2nd Lieut. G. Gledhill, Royal Field Artillery and R.A.F.) were to follow 2nd Lieut. A. A. Payne in the Camel, who was to dip his wings to indicate the direction in which he was turning. The formation carried out one successful turn to the left before the Camel collided with the right wings of Lieut. Burton's Pup.



Sopwith Scout (Pup)



Sopwith Camel

Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was killed in an aeroplane collision on 4th April, 1918 at Montrose, Scotland. 2nd Lieutenant Arthur Arnold Payne also died in the collision on 4th April, 1918.

A Court of Enquiry was held on 8th April, 1918 at Montrose, Scotland enquiring into the circumstances attending the fatal accidents of 2nd Lieutenant A. A. Payne, Sopwith Camel B. 7338 & Lt. E. W. Burton, Sopwith Scout B. 7529. The Court examined the wreckage of Sopwith Camel B. 7338 and Sopwith Scout B. 7529 and listened to the following witnesses:

EVIDENCE.

1st Witness.
2/Lieut J.J.A.Thompson, General List, R.A.F. states:-

On the morning of the 4th April 1918 at 11.45 I sent up three machines in formation:- 2/Lieut. Payne, Sopwith Camel leader and Lieuts. Burton and Gledhill in Sopwith Scouts. I gave instructions for the Sopwith Scouts to fly well above and behind the leader (Sopwith Camel). I saw the machines leave the ground and make a circuit of the Aerodrome, and watched them fly across the Basin.

(Sgd) J.J.A.Thompson. 2/Lieut.

2nd Witness. 42529. Cpl Brown.A.H. Rigger states:-

I thoroughly examined the rigging and controls of Sopwith Scout B.7529 at 11.40.a.m. on 4th April 1918, and found all correct.

(Sgd) A.H.Brown. Cpl.

3rd Witness. 22353, Sgt Yates.F. Fitter. states:-

I examined the engine of Sopwith Scout B.7529 on 4th April 1918, and found all correct, after which Lieut Burton flew the machine. I was also present when the engine was tested.

(Sgd) F.A.Yates. Sgt.

4th Witness. 40446. Cpl Way A.R. Rigger, states:-

I thoroughly examined the rigging and controls of Sopwith Camel B.7338 at about 11.50.,a.m. on 4th April 1918, and found all correct after which 2/Lieut Payne flew the machine.

(Sgd) A.R.Way. Cpl.

5th Witness. 60465, 1/AM D'Arcy, W.H. Fitter states:-

I examined the engine of Sopwith Camel B.7338 at about 11.50.a.m., on 4th April 1918, and found all correct. I was also present when the engine was run up and tested. 2/Lieut Payne then flew the machine.

(Sgd) W.H.D'Arcy, 1/AM.

6th Witness. 2/Lieut G.Gledhill, R.F.A. attd R.A.F., states:-
the

I was flying in formation and in/rear and lower than the two machines in front. 2/Lieut Payne was leading and Lieut Burton was a little to the rear and left. The signal before going up was that the leader should dip his plane in which direction he was to turn. 2/Lieut.Payne gave the signal for the first turn and it was quite successful. Again he dipped his plane and commenced to turn and I cut across to catch up with them. When I looked at the two machines in front again I saw them swerve into one another - being at the same level - and it appeared as if they had noticed each other but just too late and each did an outward turn to avoid collision. I saw 2/Lieut Payne's Camel collide with the right planes of the Scout. This threw the machines on to their backs and when I last saw them they were spinning down to earth.

(Sgd) G.Gledhill. 2/Lieut. R.F.A.

P.T.O.

7th Witness. Lieut. C.W.Hay, A.F.C. states:-

I flew Sopwith Scout B.7529 for 40 minutes on the morning of the 4th April 1918, and just before Lieut Burton flew the machine. In my opinion all was correct.

I spoke to 2/Lieut Payne when I had just come down in the machine (Sopwith Camel B.7529) in which he was to make the formation flight, and he remarked that the machine was in good order and that he liked flying it.

(Sgd) C.W.Hay. Lieut.
Australian Flying Corps.

8th Witness. 265984, Gunner Japp. J.L. R.G.A., states:-

At Montrose on the 4th April 1918 at about 12.10.p.m. from Rossie Brae I saw three machines flying in formation. The two leading machines were close together and the rear one slightly on the left. The foremost machine turned to the left and the right wing of the second machine collided with the left wing of the leader. They then both did what appeared to be an outward turn and came down in a spin.

(Sgd) James L. Japp. Gunner.

9th Witness. Capt. J.Ewen Cable, R.A.M.C. Station Medical Officer states:-

I examined the dead body of 2/Lieut E.W.Burton A.I.F., about 3.p.m., on 4th April, 1918, in the Mortuary at Montrose Infirmary. He had sustained a fracture of the skull in the region of the left temple, various compound fractures and fractures, dislocation of the left elbow joint. In my opinion death was due to fracture of the skull.

I also examined the dead body of 2/Lieut A.A.Payne, Royal Air Force about 3.p.m. on 4th April 1918, in the Mortuary at Montrose Infirmary. He had sustained compound fracture of the skull and the head was mutilated; various other fractures and lacerated and contused wounds, together with general bruising. In my opinion, death was due to fracture of the skull.

(Sgd) J.Ewen Cable. M.B.
Capt. R.A.M.C.

The Court having examined the witnesses and the wreckage of the two machines, Sopwith Camel B. 7338 and Sopwith Scout B. 7529, come to the conclusion that the accident occurred through the misjudgement of one or both pilots, and as a result of the collision in the air both the machines came down out of control.

Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was buried on 8th April, 1918 in Sleepyhillock Cemetery, Montrose, Scotland – Plot number A7. 36 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Lieutenant Burton - *The deceased was accorded a Military funeral, the coffin being of oak. The Rev. H. M. Franklin conducted the service. This Officer collided with another Officer's machine in mid-air, both machines crashing to earth, and both pilots being killed instantly.*

Lieutenant Arthur Arnold Payne, 36 Training Squadron, Royal Air Force, was buried in St. Edmund Churchyard, Castleton, Derbyshire, England.



Wilfred Burton's Funeral Cortege

Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lieutenant Burton's father – Mr E. W. Burton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton, aged 25, of Australian Flying Corps. He was the son of Ernest William and Ellen Burton, of Auckland, New Zealand. (Next-of Kin listed as Mr E. Burton, Stipendiary Magistrate, Auckland, New Zealand).

Lieutenant E. W. Burton is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 187.



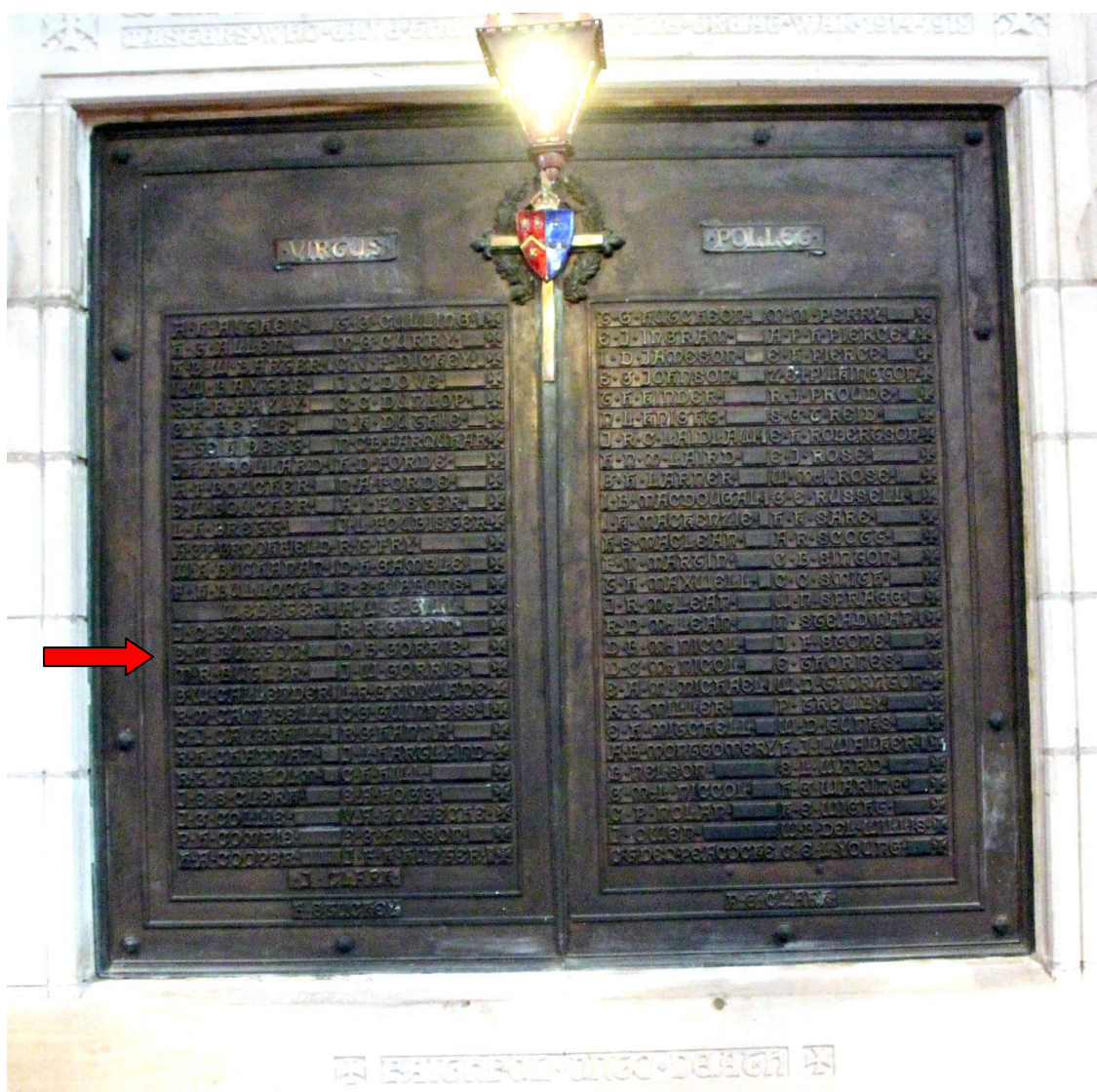
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

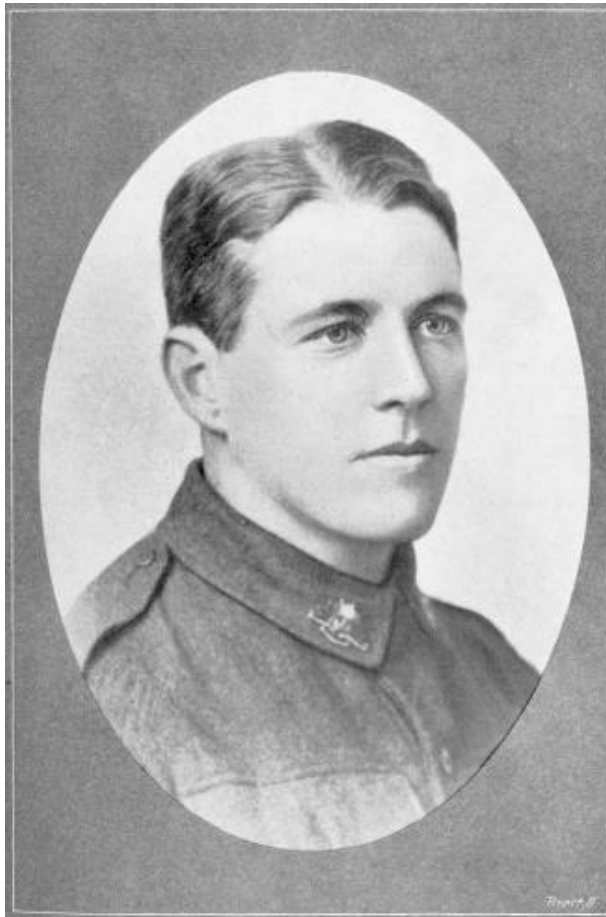
E. W. Burton is remembered on the Memorial Roll of Honour for World War 1 located in The Memorial Chapel at King's College, Otahuhu, Auckland, New Zealand.



King's College Memorial Roll of Honour for World War 1

(Photos from New Zealand History)

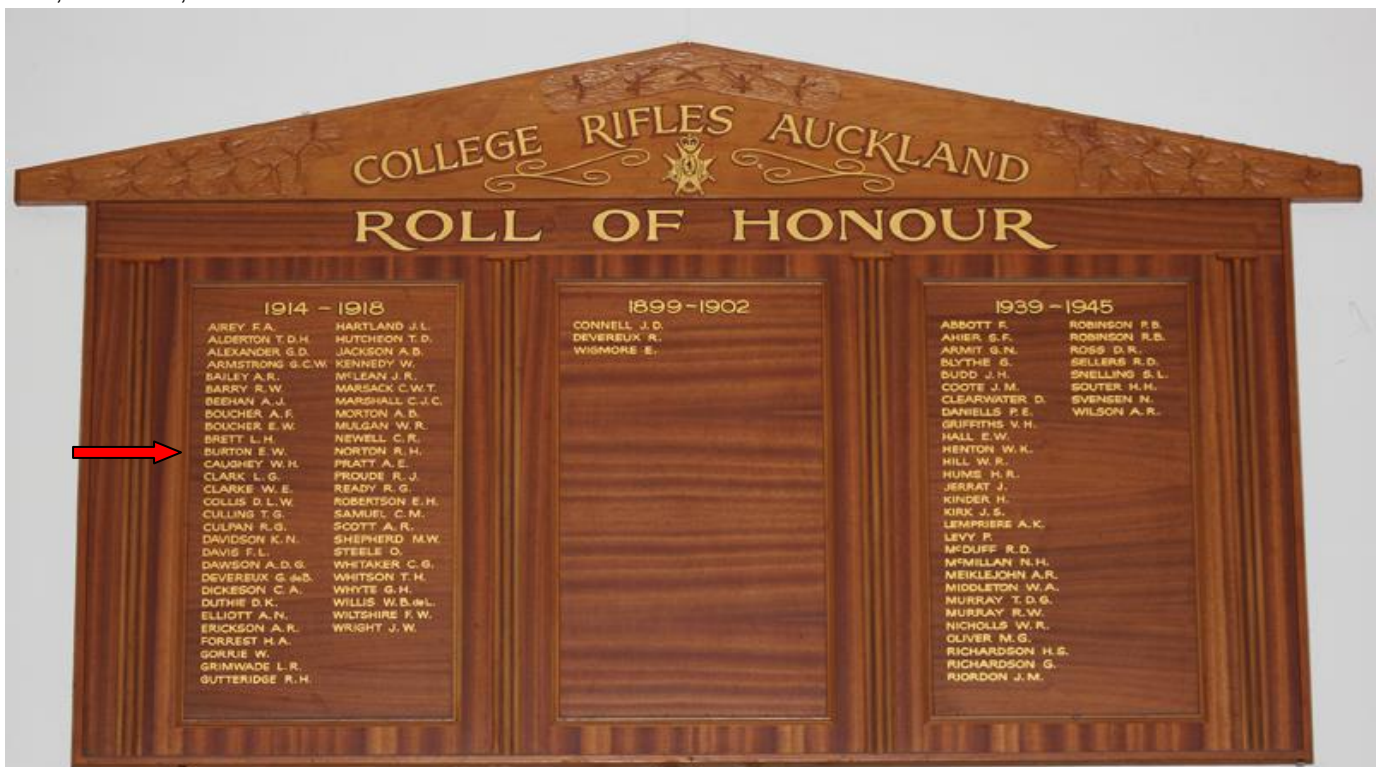




Ernest Wilfred Burton

(Portrait from King's College WW1 Honour Roll)

E. W. Burton is remembered on the Roll of Honour, College Rifles located at the Rugby Union Football & Sports Club, Auckland, New Zealand.



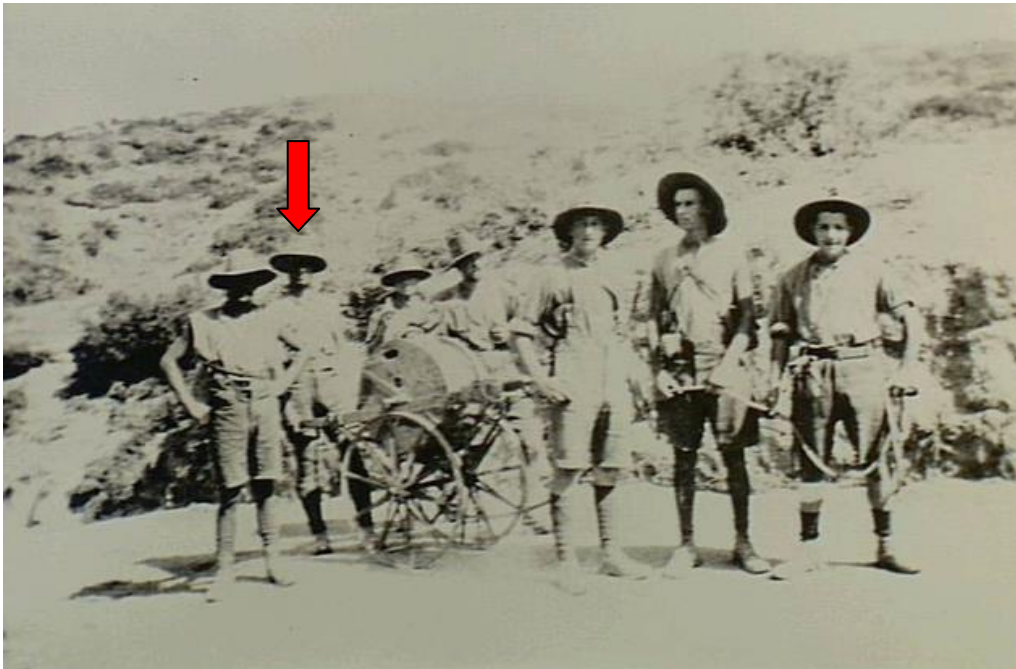
(94 pages of Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred Burton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Despatch riders, Sapper Oswald (Ossie) Thiele (left) and **Sapper Ernest Wilfred Eccles Burton**, who was later accidentally killed on 4 April 1918, of the 1st Australian Divisional Signal Company ready for the August operations at Anzac. The white armbands and a white patch on the back were distinguishing marks worn by all the Australian, New Zealand, British and Indian troops taking part in the offensive.

(Photo taken c August, 1915)



Gallipoli, Turkey. 1915. Using a handcart or trolley with a roll of cable mounted on it, members of the 1st Australian Divisional Signal Company lay telephone lines at Anzac Cove. The soldiers are (left to right): 118 Sapper (Spr) Arthur Raymond (Ray) McConchie; **Spr Ernest Wilfred Eccles Burton, accidentally killed 1918-04-04**; Spr Walker; 130 Spr James David Chalmers; Spr Ernest Ray (Roy) Yelland; 122 Spr Thomas Edison S. (Ted) Corry; Spr Lawrence.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02367.002

Lemnos, Greece. c. 1915-12. Informal outdoors group portrait of members of the 1st Australian Divisional Signal Company opening Christmas billies and reading letters or messages from home soon after the evacuation from Gallipoli. Left to right: 123 Sapper (Spr) Oswald Adelburt (Ossie) Thiele, a despatch rider; Spr ? Ernest Ray (Roy) Yelland; 115 Spr Robert Wilfrid (Bill) Riches; **Spr Ernest Wilfred Eccles Burton, accidentally killed 1918-04-04**; Dick Ellis; 125 Spr Arthur George Wade, later MM; 118 Spr Arthur Raymond (Ray) McConchie, later MM; 36 Spr John Thomas (Jock) Nicholls. The Christmas billies, some of which the men are holding and some of which are lying on the ground in front of them, bear a kangaroo symbol on their side. Also lying on the ground in front of the men are boxes labelled 'Mutual Store Melbourne'.

Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL

The sad news was received on Thursday last in Whangarei of the death of Flight-Lieut. E. W. Burton, eldest son of Mr E. W. Burton, S. M., Whangarei, as the result of an aviation accident at Montrose, Scotland, on the 4th inst. Lieut. Burton was born in Auckland 25 years ago and received his finishing education at King's College, afterwards joining his father's business in the city. A few months before the outbreak of war he was in Australia, and directly hostilities opened he joined the Australian Mani Body as motor despatch rider. He served right through the Gallipoli campaign from the fateful landing to the final evacuation, and thence to France, where he was given a commission and later transferred to the Flying Corps with promotion as First Lieutenant. It was while undergoing his final instructional course that the fatal misadventure occurred.

(Northern Advocate, New Zealand – 13 April, 1918)

PERSONAL ITEMS

Mr E. W. Burton, S.M., of Whangarei, has received news of the death of his eldest son, Lieutenant Wilfrid Burton, who has been killed by an accident in Scotland. Lieutenant Burton, who was in Sydney when the war broke out, enlisted o the first Australian contingent, and fought in Egypt, Gallipoli and France. His last letter was written in Aberdeen, where he was enjoying a short holiday. He had been promoted from second to first lieutenant in the Flying Corps. Deceased, who was educated at S. John's Collegiate and King's College, was about 25 years of age.

(New Zealand Herald – 16 April, 1918) & (Star, New Zealand – 20 April, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN FLIERS KILLED

Three Victims Reported

Lieutenant Burton, an Australian, has been killed as the result of an aeroplane collision in mid-air.

Lieutenant Eric D. Grant, an Australian instructor at an aerodrome in Gloucestershire, and reputed to have been one of the finest fliers in the country, crashed to earth on Monday, and was killed.

Lieutenant Hay, another Australian, fell into the sea while flying off the Scottish coast and was drowned.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 April, 1918)

WAR CASUALTIES

NEW SOUTH WALES LIST

390th LIST

Other Deaths

Lieut. E. W. BURTON (New Zealand), result of accident, 4/4/18

(Evening News, Sydney, NSW – 18 April, 1918)

DEATH

BURTON – On April 4, at Montrose, Scotland, Lieutenant Ernest Wilfred, eldest son of Mr and Mrs E. W. Burton, of Whangarei; aged 25 years.

(Observer, New Zealand - 27 April, 1918)

A bright New Zealander has "gone West" in the person of Flight Lieut. Wilfred Burton, son of Mr Ernest W. Burton, S.M., at Whangarei. The fact that he came by his death accidentally in his final aviation trials at Montrose, Scotland, after undergoing over three years active service on the fighting zones, makes the loss doubly sad. He volunteered four days after England's declaration of war in 1914, took part in the Gallipoli landing, and went through that campaign to the bitter end. Then he went to France and served there right up to Mid-November, never experiencing a day's illness or getting a wound. In November he transferred from 2nd lieutenant in an infantry battalion to 1st lieutenant in the Flying Corps, and was ordered to report at once to Reading, England. And surely, it was the irony of fate that so soon after leaving the field where bullets were thick and while in scenes where smiling peace held sway he should be suddenly cut down just when completing his training as an aviator. As one who knew him well says "he was always a cheerful, robust, and optimistic soldier, and his very optimism must make the blow all the harder for his parents to bear."

(New Zealand Herald, New Zealand - April, 1918)

CASUALTIES

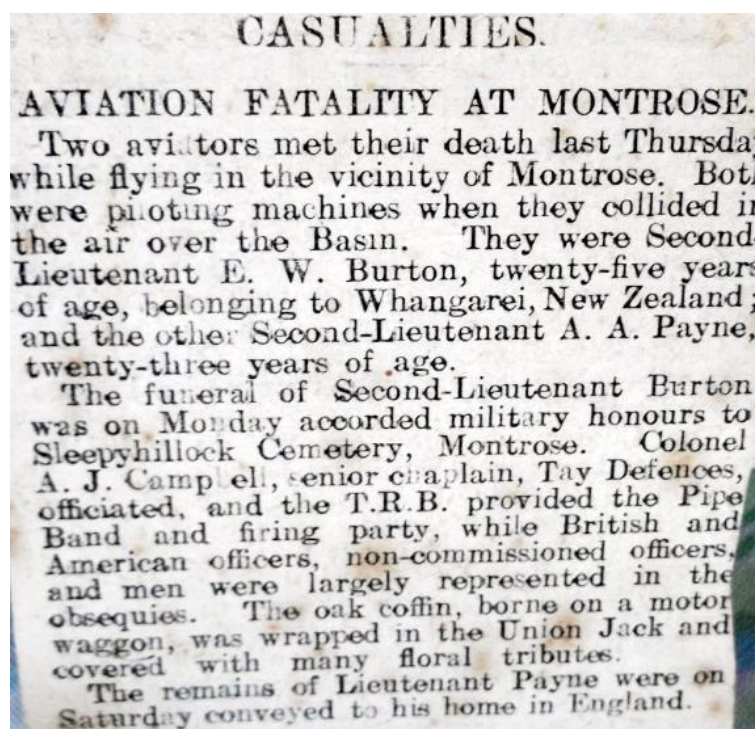
AVIATION FATALITY AT MONTROSE

Two aviators met their death last Thursday while flying in the vicinity of Montrose. Both were piloting machines when they collided in the air over the Basin. They were Second-Lieutenant E. W. Burton, twenty-five years of age, belonging to Whangarei, New Zealand; and the other Second Lieutenant A. A. Payne, twenty-three years of age.

The funeral of Second-Lieutenant Burton was on Monday accorded military honours to Sleephillock Cemetery, Montrose. Colonel A. J. Campbell, senior chaplain, Tay Defences, officiated, and the T.R.B. provided the Pipe Band and firing party, while British and American officers, non-commissioned officers, and men were largely represented in the obsequies. The oak coffin, born on a motor waggon, was wrapped in the Union Jack and covered with many floral tributes.

The remains of Lieutenant Payne were on Saturday conveyed to his home in England.

(Source – unknown newspaper – April, 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 5th July, 1921, to Mr E. W. Burton, Stipendiary Magistrate, Te Kuiti, New Zealand, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late Lieutenant E. W. Burton 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.

Lieutenant E. W. Burton does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

For Here We Have No Continuing City But We Seek One To Come

Sleepyhillock Cemetery, Montrose, Scotland

The cemetery contains service plots of both wars here (the majority of which are 1939-1945). Most of these graves are of airmen and there is a special R.A.F. plot in the south-eastern part of the cemetery, near the lodge. South of the north gate is an all services plot.

There are 39 War Graves from World War 1, 1914-1918 and 93 War Graves from World War 2 commemorated in this site.



(Photo by Delboy – Scottish War Graves Project)



Sleepyhillock Cemetery, Montrose, Scotland *(Photos from CWGC)*



Photo of Lieutenant E. W. Burton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Sleepyhillock Cemetery, Montrose, Scotland (Left). Photo of original Grave marker (right).



(Photo by Delboy – Scottish War Graves Project)