

Durrington War Graves

World War 1



Lest We Forget



2300 PRIVATE

T. J. DESMOND

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

7TH FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 31

Our Loss Is Great

We'll Not Complain

But Trust In God

To Meet Again

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte T. J. Desmond is located in Grave Plot # 87
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Thomas Joseph DESMOND

Thomas Joseph Desmond was born at Townsville, Queensland in 1887 to parents Humphrey & Bridget Desmond (nee O'Dea/O'Day).

Thomas Joseph Desmond was a 29 year old, single, Customs Clerk from Townsville, Queensland when he enlisted on 10th July, 1916 with the 41st Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2300 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Bridget Desmond of Eyre St, North Ward, Townsville, North Queensland (his father was deceased – 14th December, 1900).

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Boonah (A48)* on 21st October, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 10th January, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond was marched in to 11th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire on 10th January, 1917.

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 6th February, 1917 with influenza.

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond died at 7 p.m. on 7th February, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire of Pneumonia. Pte Thomas Joseph Desmond was one of six soldiers to die in the period of 24 hours all related to pneumonia, influenza & bronchitis. (Thomas Dunn 2323; died 4 p.m. 7th February, 1917 / William Razey Robinson 2388; died 4.30 p.m. 7th February, 1917 / Charles Young 6842; died 6.50 p.m. 7th February, 1917 / Thomas Joseph Desmond 2300; died 7 p.m. 7th February, 1917 / Henry Walter Sharp 6180; died 4.20 a.m. 8th February, 1917 & Herbert Hector Seefeldt 6215; died 11 a.m. 8th February, 1917)

A death for Thomas Desmond, aged 29, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond was buried on 14th February, 1917 in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – plot number 87.

Private T. J. Desmond is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 133.

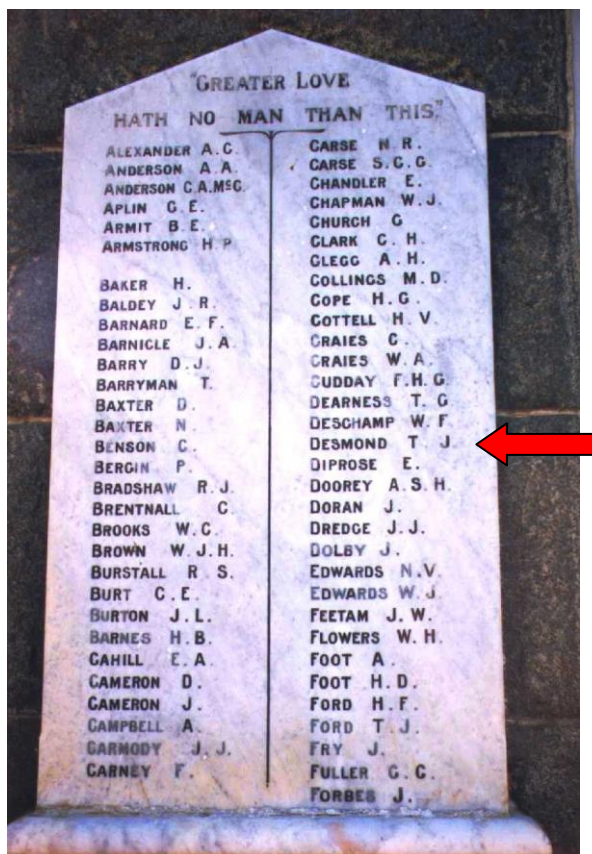


(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

T. J. Desmond is also remembered on the Townsville War Memorial located at Anzac Memorial Park, The Strand, Townsville, Queensland.



Townsville War Memorial (Photos by Shirley & Trevor McIvor)

Private Thomas Joseph Desmond was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Desmond's mother – Mrs Bridget Desmond (both August, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Joseph Desmond – service number 2300 as being 31 years old & served with 41st Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Humphrey and Bridget Desmond of "Roma", Eyre St, Townsville, Queensland.

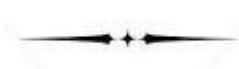
(43 pages of Pte Thomas Joseph Desmond's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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





(The Queenslander Pictorial – 10 March, 1917)



Newspaper Reports

A FIRST OFFENDER

TOWNSVILLE, February 16.

At the Police Court today, Thomas Joseph Desmond pleaded guilty to stealing £4/7/7, the property of Robert Kellock, and was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, sentence to be suspended under the Offenders' Probation Act on enfeathering into recognisances of £40 to be of good behaviour for 12 months, prisoner to also repay the money to Kellock. Desmond it appears stole the money while doing customs work for Kellock.

(*Cairns Post*, Queensland Thursday 17 February, 1916)

NORTHERN VOLUNTEERS

Four volunteers left Townsville by the Bingera on Monday night, their names and districts being as under –
Townsville – Thomas Joseph Desmond and George Edmund Patten

(*The Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Queensland Tuesday 11 July, 1916)

PERSONAL NOTES

Advice has been received of the death of Private T. J. Desmond at Fargo Military Hospital, England on 7th instant, the cause of death being pneumonia. The late Private Desmond, who enlisted at Townsville in June, 1916 was a brother of Mrs A. T. Jackson, Auchenflower.

(*The Brisbane Courier*, Queensland Monday 19 February, 1917)

CASUALTIES – 274th LIST ISSUED

QUEENSLAND – DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte T. J. Desmond

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW Saturday 24 February, 1917)

LEGAL NOTICES

NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIASIA LIMITED

Re THOMAS JOSEPH DESMOND

Late of Eyre Street, North Ward Townsville, whose life was assured under Policy No. 162390

NOTICE is hereby given that it is the intention of the Association on or after the 22nd day of June, to pay the proceeds of the above Policy to BRIDGET DESMOND, Mother of deceased, in terms of Section 39 of "The Life Assurance Companies Act of 1901."

Any person objecting to such payment being made, must notify his objection to the said Society within TWO WEEKS from the date hereof.

Dated at Brisbane, this Twenty second day of May, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventeen.

S. G. MARTIN,

Manager for Queensland.

(*The Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Queensland Tuesday 22 May, 1917)

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 at Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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)

Private T. J. Desmond does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Our Loss Is Great We'll Not Complain But Trust In God To Meet Again



Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire *(Photo by Dave Healing 2013)*

Photo of Private T. J. Desmond's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)