

**Earlham Road Cemetery,
Norwich, Norfolk
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6254 PRIVATE

J. F. DONOVAN

14TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

25TH MARCH, 1917 Age 32

*In Loving Memory
Of My Dear Husband
And Our Dear Daddie*

James Francis DONOVAN

James Francis Donovan was born at West Melbourne, Victoria in 1885 to parents William and Johanna (Hannah) Donovan (nee Connole).

James Francis Donovan attended school at St. Augustine's Yarraville, Victoria.

James Francis Donovan married Sarah Elizabeth McDonnell in Victoria in 1912.

A birth was registered in 1912 for James Francis Donovan, son of James & Sarah Elizabeth Donovan. A birth was registered in 1914 for Marie Claire Donovan, daughter of James & Sarah Elizabeth Donovan. A birth was registered in 1915 for Hannah Ellen Donovan, daughter of James & Sarah Elizabeth Donovan. Hannah Ellen Donovan died in December, 1916.

James Francis Donovan was a 31 year old, married, Trimmer from 64 Nelson Street, Yarraville, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 10th February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 6254 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs E. Donovan, of 64 Nelson Street, Yarraville, Victoria. According to information provided by his wife for the Roll of Honour - James Francis Donovan had served for 7 or 8 years with Citizen Forces.

Private James Francis Donovan was posted to 10th Depot Battalion on 21st February, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Permanent Guard Domain on 3rd February, 1916. Pte Donovan was transferred to Broadmeadows on 10th August, 1916 with 20th Reinforcements of 14th Battalion.

Private James Francis Donovan embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Port Sydney (A15)* on 7th September, 1916 with the 14th Infantry Battalion, 20th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 29th October, 1916.

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 James Francis Donovan proceeded overseas via Folkestone on 21st December, 1916 on *Princess Clementine* from 4th Training Battalion. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 22nd December, 1916.

Private James Francis Donovan joined 14th Battalion in the field on 4th January, 1917 from 4th A.D.B.D.

Private James Francis Donovan was wounded in action in France on 29th January, 1917. He was admitted to Anzac M.D.S. (Main Dressing Station) on 25th January, 1917* with gunshot wounds to back & chest then transferred to 45th Casualty Clearing Station on 26th January, 1917*. Pte Donovan was transferred to 25th Ambulance Train on 26th January, 1917* & admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 29th January, 1917. Pte Donovan was marked for transfer to England on 1st February, 1917 & embarked on Hospital Ship *Warilda* from Havre on 3rd February, 1917 with gunshot wounds to chest & right buttock. (*Note: - dates marked with an * are as recorded on the "Casualty Form – Active Service". According to the War Diary for 14th Battalion – Pte J. F. Donovan was wounded in action on 29th January, 1917.*)

War Diary – 14th Battalion

Casualty Report for 29th January, 1917:

1 Sgt listed as sick & 6 Privates listed as sick (all named)

2 Privates Killed (both named)

4248 Pte Mathews J. A. "C" Unit Shell shock

6254 Donovan J. F. "D" Unit Wounded

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private James Francis Donovan was admitted to Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, England on 4th February, 1917.



Private James Francis Donovan died at 8.30 pm on 25th March, 1917 at Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, Norfolk, England from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wounds to chest & right Buttock & Septicaemia.

A death for James F. Donovan, aged 32, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Blofield, Norfolk, England.

Private James Francis Donovan was buried at 12.30pm on 30th March, 1917 in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England – Plot number 205 Section 25. From the burial report of Pte J. F. Donovan - *Coffin was Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the Pall bearers and Gun Carriage were provided by the Depot Norfolk Regiment. A Memorial Service, conducted by the Rev. R. Hissenhoven, was held in the Roman Catholic Chapel in the Cemetery.*

A letter was sent on 19th April, 1920 from Base Records to Mr E. Donovan, 7 Greig Street, Seddon, Victoria, widow of the late Private J. F. Donovan, advising that *"now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from the former site, and re-interred in Grave No. 704, Section 54, Norwich Cemetery, Norwich. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain."*

Private James Francis Donovan has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Newspaper item – Weekly News, Yarraville, Victoria – 7 April, 1917

AT HOME AND ABROAD

Private James Francis Donovan of Greig street, Seddon, has died in the Norfolk War hospital, from wounds received in France. He is the son of Mr and Mrs Donovan of Percy street, Seddon. Describing the manner in which he was wounded Private Donovan states in a letter to his wife that whilst he and 3 companions were leaving their dugout for dinner on 3-2-17 a shrapnel shell burst near them killing two immediately and the third member having his right hand blown off. Private Donovan was wounded in the chest and buttock and was removed to the Norfolk Hospital and after lingering for 7 weeks passed to the great beyond on 25-3-17. Private Donovan leaves a wife and two children and previous to enlisting was employed at the Sugar Works, Yarraville, at which place flags were flown at half-mast in his honor. His parents have resided in this district for upwards of 30 years and are much respected by all who know them. Private Donovan leaves several sisters and brothers one of whom is at present a member of the 7th Battalion and has been on active service for the past two years. Two other brothers have volunteered for active service but are specially retained for service with the Royal Australian Navy.

A War Pension was granted to Elizabeth Donovan, 7 Greig St, Seddon, Victoria, widow of the late Private James Francis Donovan, in the sum of £2 per fortnight as from 29th May, 1917. A pension was also granted to William James Donovan, son of the late Private James Francis Donovan, in the sum of £1 per fortnight as from 29th May, 1917. A pension was also granted to Margaret Clare Donovan, daughter of the late Private James Francis Donovan, in the sum of 15/- per fortnight as from 29th May, 1917.

Private James Francis Donovan was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Donovan's widow - Mrs E. Donovan, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent March, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private James Francis Donovan – service number 6254, aged 32, of 14th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of William and Hannah Donovan; husband of Elizabeth Donovan, of 7 Greig St., Seddon, Victoria, Australia.

Private J. F. Donovan is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 72.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

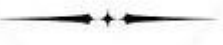
The Yarraville Cenotaph, located at RSL Club, Stephen & York Streets, Yarraville does not list individual names.



Yarraville Cenotaph (Photo from Monument Australia – Myles Dowling)

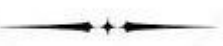
(54 pages of Private James Francis Donovan's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Connected to Private James Francis Donovan:

Younger brother – Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, 2788, 7th Battalion, A.I.F. Enlisted 1st July, 1915. Killed in action in Belgium on 20th September, 1917. Remembered on Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium.



Newspaper Notices

FUNERAL NOTICES

DONOVAN – The Friends of Mr and Mrs JAMES FRANCIS DONOVAN are respectfully informed that the remains of their dearly beloved youngest child will be interred in the Footscray Cemetery. The funeral is appointed to move from the residence of her grandparents, Mr and Mrs William Donovan, 16 Percy-street, Seddon, THIS DAY (Saturday), 30th December, at 11 o'clock am.

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 30 December, 1916)

THE 274th CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

Private J. F. Donovan, Yarraville

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 28 February, 1917)

THE 286th CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private J. F. Donovan, Yarraville

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 11 April, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

DONOVAN – In sad and loving remembrance of our dearly loved son and brother, Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, who was killed in action at Polygon Wood on the 20th September, 1917; and also our son and brother, Private James Francis Donovan, who died of wounds on the 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

A soldier ? Yes, a hero too,

He played his part through and through;

His actions speak though his voice is still;

Forget you, Mack? No, we never will.

Mother of Sorrows, to thee we pray,
Comfort the many sad hearts to-day,
And ask thy dear Son, at our request,
To grant our dear boys eternal rest.

-Inserted by their loving parents, Mr and Mrs William Donovan, and brothers and sisters, Nora, Will, Dan, Nell and Jack, of 16 Percy-street, Seddon.

DONOVAN – In sad remembrance of Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, 7th Battalion, killed in action in France on the 20th September, 1917; and also my beloved husband, Private James Francis Donovan, 14th Battalion, who died of wounds on the 25th March, 1917. R.I.P. Two of the best.

When the flags are over the roadway,
And the troops come marching home,
O God have pity on the watching ones
Whose boys will never come home.

-Inserted by their loving sister-in-law and wife, Elizabeth Donovan, and little Willie and Peggy, Greig-street, Seddon.

DONOVAN – In loving memory of our dear brothers and brothers-in-law, Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, 7th Battalion, killed in action on the 20th September, 1917, at Polygon Wood, and Private James Francis Donovan, 14th Battalion, died of wounds on the 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

We pictured your safe returning,
And longed for the clasp of your hands;
But God has postponed the meeting,
But it will be in better lands.

-Inserted by their loving sister and brother-in-law, Margaret and Ernest Shea, Glen Huntly-road, Elsternwick.

DONOVAN – In kind remembrance of Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, 7th Battalion, who was killed in action in France on the 20th September, 1917, true and faithful friend of Private Percy Cory (on active service abroad) and Jack Neville (Sydney).

He sleeps not in his native land,
But under foreign skies;
Far from those who loved him,
In a hero's grave he lies.

DONOVAN – In loving memory of our dear cousin Malachi Donovan, who was killed in action on the 20th September, 1917; also his brother, James, who died of wounds in March, 1917.

The supreme sacrifice.

-Inserted by the loving cousins, Manly, New South Wales

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 September, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

DONOVAN – In loving memory of our dear sons, Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, killed in action at Polygon Wood on 20th September, 1917, and Private James Francis Donovan, who died of wounds at Norfolk War Hospital on 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

There came a shock, an awful pain,
And the world has never seemed the same;
To have, to love, and then to part,
Is the saddest story of the human heart.

-Inserted by their loving parents, brothers and sisters, Percy-street, Seddon.

DONOVAN – In sad and loving memory of our dearly loved brothers, Private Malachi Donovan, killed in action 20th September, 1917, and Private James Francis Donovan, died of wounds 25th March. 1917. R.I.P.

Two lives made bright by kindly deeds,
Two helping hands for others needs;
Good were their hearts, their friendship sound,
Loved and respected by all round.

-Inserted by their loving sister and Brother-in-law, Margaret and Richard Shea, Elsternwick.

DONOVAN – In loving memory of my dear brother-in-law, Private Malachi Donovan, killed in action on 20th September, 1917; also my beloved husband, Private James Francis Donovan, died of wounds 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

Far from the home of their childhood,
Away o'er the ocean deep;
In a foreign land our dear ones
Are sleeping their last long sleep.
When the bells of peace are ringing,
And your hearts are thrilled with pride;
Give one kind thought to the sorrowing ones,
Whose boys have fought and died.

-Inserted by their loving sister-in-law and wife and children, Elizabeth Donovan, Greig-street, Seddon, and little Willie and Peggy.

DONOVAN – In loving memory of our dear cousins, Private Malachi Donovan, killed in action 20th September, 1917; also his dear brother, Private James Donovan, died of wounds on 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

Somewhere in France, no matter where,
They are just as near to heaven there.

-Inserted by his loving cousins, Manly, New South Wales

DONOVAN – A tribute to the memory of Private Malachi (Mark) Donovan, killed in action on 20th September, 1917; also Private James Francis Donovan, died of wounds 25th March, 1917. R.I.P.

The war is really over,
To some those words sound nice;
But, oh, the sad, sad, hearts of those
Whose loved ones paid the price.

-Inserted by C. Makepeace.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 September, 1919)

James & his brother Malachi (Mark) Donovan are both remembered on their parents' headstone in Footscray General Cemetery, Victoria.



Footscray General Cemetery (Photo by Beatts – Find a Grave)

In loving memory of my beloved husband and our dear father William Donovan,

who died 28th April 1926 aged 67 years.

Also Hannah, beloved wife of above, and our dear mother,

died 5th June 1931 aged 70 years.

R.I.P.

Also our dear son, late of A.I.F., James, died of wounds 25th March 1917, aged 32 years.

Malachi (Mark) killed in action 20th September 1917, aged 29 years.

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 8th July, 1921, to Mrs E. Donovan, 7 Greig Street, Seddon, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her husband, the late Pte J. F. Donovan, 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.

Private J F. Donovan does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Loving Memory Of My Dear Husband And Our Dear Daddie

Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England

Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich contains 533 Commonwealth War Graves.

The cemetery was laid out in 1856 and casualties of the South African War were buried in the oldest part. Nearly half of the 1914-1918 burials are to be found in two military plots; one in the North-Eastern part and the other in the Western part of the burial ground. Ground immediately adjoining the latter was reserved for service burials of the 1939-1945 War and is now combined with it to form the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 War Graves Plot. The Cross of Sacrifice, which honours the servicemen of both Wars who are buried in the cemetery, stands in the plot, and carved upon two of the panels of its base are the dates 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. There are now nearly 350, 1914-1918 and nearly 200, 1939-1945 war casualties commemorated in this site. In addition, a special memorial is erected to one soldier buried among civilian air raid victims in a grave on which it was not possible to erect a headstone.

(Information & photo from CWGC)



Photo of Private J. F. Donovan's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England.



(Photo by Jennifer Hart – Find a Grave)



Earlam Road Cemetery, Norwich

