

**St. Lawrence Churchyard,
Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2655 PRIVATE

N. F. EDMONDS

48TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

6TH FEBRUARY, 1917

Neil Flower EDMONDS

Neil Flower Edmonds was born at Diamond Creek, (listed as "Dimont" on Attestation Papers), Victoria on 1st December, 1891 to parents Charles Frederick Flower Edmonds & Francis Adelaide Edmonds (nee Kierce). His birth was registered in Victoria in 1892.

Neil Flower Edmonds married Harriet Jones at Coolgardie, Western Australia on 31st August, 1914. A son – Neil Flower Edmonds was born on 17th October, 1914. A daughter – Mavis Edmonds was born on 17th April, 1916 in the district of Kalgoorlie, Western Australia.

The 1915 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kalgoorlie, subdivision of Boulder, Western Australia recorded Neil Flower Edmonds, Barman, from 51 Davis Street. Charles Frederick Flower, Labourer, was also listed as the same address.

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kalgoorlie, subdivision of Boulder, Western Australia recorded Neil Flower Edmonds, Barman, from 51 Davis Street. Charles Frederick Flower, Labourer, was listed at 52 Davis Street.

Neil Flower Edmonds was a 24 year old, married, Miner (Occupation listed as Barman on Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force) when he enlisted at Kalgoorlie, Western Australia on 24th June, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2655 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Harriet Edmonds, 52 Davis Street, Boulder City, Western Australia.

Private Neil Flower Edmonds was posted to 75 Depot Battalion on 28th June, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements of 11th Battalion on 1st August, 1916 then transferred to 22nd Reinforcements of 16th Battalion on 4th August, 1916. Private Edmonds was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 48th Battalion on 5th September, 1916.

48th Battalion

The 48th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 16 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Roughly half of its new recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 16th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 16th, the men of the new battalion hailed mainly from regional South Australia and Western Australia. The new battalion formed part of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Neil Flower Edmonds embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Port Melbourne* (A16) on 30th October, 1916 with the 6th Reinforcements of 48th Battalion & disembarked at Devonport, England on 28th December, 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 Neil Flower Edmonds was marched in to 12th Training Battalion, Codford, Wiltshire from Australia on 28th December, 1916.

Private Neil Flower Edmonds was sent sick to Hospital on 7th February, 1917 (note – incorrect date) from No. 14 Camp, 12th Training Battalion. The Hospital Admissions form recorded that Private Edmonds was admitted to Salisbury Isolation Hospital, Wiltshire on 6th February, 1917 & died 4 hours after admission.

Private Neil Flower Edmonds died on 6th February, 1917 at Isolation Hospital, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis.

A death for Neil F. Edmonds, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Salisbury, Wiltshire, England.

Private Neil Flower Edmonds was buried on 9th February, 1917 in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England – Plot number 119 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Neil Flower Edmonds was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Edmonds' remarried widow – Mrs H. Harvey, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & re-dispatched January, 1922 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private N. F. Edmonds – service number 2655, of 48th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

N. F. Edmonds is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)

Private N. F. Edmonds is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 145.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(40 pages of Private Neil Flower Edmonds' 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



Private Neil Flower Edmonds

Newspaper Notices

Recruits sworn in at the Kalgoorlie Drill Hall, last week, were:-.....N. F. Edmonds....

(Kalgoorlie Western Argus, Western Australia – 4 July, 1916)

DEATHS

EDMONDS – At Salisbury Hospital, England, of meningitis, Private N. F. Edmonds, beloved husband of Harriet Edmonds, Gwalia, and eldest son of Mrs Edmonds, of 113 McDonald-street, Kalgoorlie.

(Kalgoorlie Miner, Western Australia – 22 February, 1917)

DEATHS

EDMONDS – At Salisbury Hospital (England), of meningitis, N. F. Edmonds (Neil), beloved husband of Harriett Edmonds (Gwalia), and eldest son of Mr and Mrs Charles Edmonds, formerly of Diamond Creek, Vic.

Victorian papers please copy.

(Kalgoorlie Miner, Western Australia – 23 February, 1917)

KILLED IN ACTION

EDMONDS – At Salisbury Hospital, England, of meningitis, Private N. F. Edmonds, beloved husband of Harriet Edmonds, Gwalia, and eldest son of Mrs Edmonds, of 113 McDonald-street, Kalgoorlie.

EDMONDS – At Salisbury Hospital (England), of meningitis, N. F. Edmonds (Neil), beloved husband of Harriett Edmonds (Gwalia), and eldest son of Mr and Mrs Charles Edmonds, formerly of Diamond Creek, Vic.

Victorian papers please copy.

(Western Argus, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 27 February, 1917)

Letters of Condolence

Mrs N. P. Edmonds, Gwalia, is in receipt of the following letter from Lieut Logan, in England, in respect of the death of her late husband, Private N. F. Edmonds:-

Dear Madam —It is with very great sorrow indeed that I write to you concerning the death of your dear husband. As you have been informed by the Defence Department, he died last Tuesday morning from meningitis. The attack was very sudden indeed, and the poor boy himself did not know he was seriously ill. I am sorry to say that both Lieut Potts and I were away at the schools, so were unable to be with him. Neil was very popular with officers, non commissioned officers, and men, and indeed he was one of our best, both as a man and a soldier. I personally liked him very much. I wish to convey to you the very deep sympathies of Lieut Potts and myself and every man in the company. If there is anything I can do for you at any time let me know, and I will be only too pleased to oblige you. Neil's last moments were greatly eased because he was so well and tenderly cared for by some of his many friends — Privates Brown, O'Brien, Collins, and others. He is buried in Salisbury, and was accorded a full military funeral. The firing party, which paid the last compliment to him, was composed of comrades from this and his own company. The 6-48th are having a memorial stone erected over his grave. Remember, dear lady, that we all feel very deeply for you. Knowing and respecting Neil as we did, we realise what a very great loss it will be to you and your family.

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He was a good, honest, upright, brave, and clean-living man. — Yours sincerely, Edgar Logan, 2nd Lieutenant, 12th Training Battalion,- A I F, Codford, Wiltshire, England, February 22, 1917.

Lieut Potts also wrote Mrs Edmonds expressing his deepest sympathy in her sad bereavement.

(*The Leonora Miner*, Western Australia – 12 May, 1917)

GWALIA SOLDIER'S DEATH

THE LATE PRIVATE EDMONDS

Second Lieutenant E. Logan, writing from Cadford, England, on February 12, to Mrs N. F. Edmonds, of Gwalia, respecting the death of her husband, says:-

“It is with very great sorrow indeed that I write to you concerning the death of your dear husband. As you will have been informed by the Defence Department, he died last Tuesday morning from meningitis. The attack was very sudden indeed, and the poor boy himself did not know he was seriously ill. I am sorry to say that both Lieutenant Potts and I were away at school, so were unable to be with him. Neil was very popular with officers, N.C.O.'s and men, and indeed he was one of our best, both as a man and a soldier. I personally liked him very much. I wish to convey to you the very deep sympathies of Mr Potts and myself and every man in the company. If there is anything I can do for you at any time let me know, and I will be only too pleased to oblige you.

Neil's last moments were greatly eased because he was so well and tenderly cared for by some of his many friends — Brown, O'Brien, and Collins. He is buried in Salisbury, and was accorded a full military funeral, the firing party, which paid the last compliment to him, being composed of comrades from this and his own company. The 6/48th are having a memorial stone erected over his grave.

“Remember, dear lady, that we all feel very deeply for you. Knowing and respecting Neil as we did, we realise what a very great loss it will be to you and your family. He was a good, honest, upright, brave, and clean-living man.”

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 22 June, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

EDMONDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private Neil Edmonds, who died of meningitis, at Salisbury, England, February 6, 1917.

His duty nobly done.

-Inserted by his loving mother, Charley, and Private Fred (Base Hospital, Fremantle), and sister and brother-in-law, and little niece, Myrtle, Stan., and Rose Hazeldine.

EDMONDS – In loving memory of Private Neil Edmonds, who died at England, February 6th, 1917, dear husband of Harriett Edmonds, and father of Mavis and Neil (Gwalia).

We prayed for your safe return, dear Neil,

And longed to clasp your hand;

But God postponed our meeting –

It will be in a better land.

-Inserted by his loving wife and children.

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 6 February, 1918) & (*Western Argus*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 12 February, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

EDMONDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private Neil Edmonds, died Salisbury England, February 6th, 1917. Father of Neil and Mavis Edmonds (Gwalia).

We who loved you best, miss you most.

-Inserted by his loving mother, brothers, sister and brother-in-law, Kalgoorlie.

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 6 February, 1919) & (*Western Argus*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 11 February, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

EDMONDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private Neil Edmonds, father of Neil and Mavis, Gwalia. Died February 6th, 1917, Salisbury, England.

Those who loved you

Sadly miss you,

-Inserted by his loving mother, brothers and sisters, Kalgoorlie.

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 6 February, 1920) & (*Western Argus*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 10 February, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

EDMONDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Pte Neil Edmonds, father of Neil and Mavis, (Gwalia), died Salisbury, February 6th, 1917.

Those who loved you, sadly miss you.

As it dawns another year.

-Inserted by his loving mother, brothers and sisters

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 5 February, 1921) & (*Western Argus*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 8 February, 1921)

**Notices were placed in the newspapers in 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929 & 1930

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 9th July, 1921, to Mrs H. Edmonds, Post Office Gwalia, Western Australia, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her husband, the late Private N. F. Edmonds, 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 N. F. Edmonds does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards. Most of the 47 First World War burials in Stratford-sub-Castle (St Lawrence) Churchyard were made from the local hospital and more than half of them are of Australian servicemen who were based at the many Australian depots and training camps in the area. There are also two burials of the Second World War in the cemetery. (*Information from CWGC*)



St. Lawrence Church, Stratford-sub-Castle



Churchyard of St. Lawrence, Stratford-sub-Castle with CWGC Cross of Sacrifice



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)

Photo of Private N. F. Edmonds' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)





Original Grave Markers in Churchyard of St. Lawrence, Stratford-sub-Castle (Photo AWM)

Stratford-sub-Castle War Graves

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	RAF	British Army			NZ	NZ	Rogers 3 AIF		Robson Nurse	NZ	
B			Nicol AFC	Mason 5 Aus Pioneer	Dundas 29 AIF	Thorsby 20 AIF	Walpole (Wilson) 3 AIF	O'Grady 10 AIF	Kubank 40 AIF	NZ	↓
C	NZ	Jacob 31 AIF	Wood 9 AIF	Smith 55 AIF	British Army	British Army	Smith Aus ASC	O'Donnell 16 AIF	Knight 52 AIF	Lawrence 54 AIF	Edmonds 48 AIF
D		Lewis 30 AIF	British Army	Whitchurch 51 AIF	British Army	Dee 52 AIF	Greenslade 17 AIF	British Army	Thorburn 13 AIF	Knight 13 AIF	Hannabry 16 AIF
E					Adams 13 AIF	Crow Aus FA	British Army	Bolton 40 AIF	British Army	British Army	
F		British Army		British Army	British Army	British Army		Canada		British Army	

(Information for layout of graves – courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)