

**Fort Pitt Military Cemetery,
Rochester, Kent
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2015 PRIVATE

J. B. EDWARDS

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

6TH AUGUST, 1916 Age 23

Faithful Unto Death

Rev. 2. 10

Mother

Joseph Buxton EDWARDS

Joseph Buxton Edwards was born at 28 Duke Street, Ballarat West, Victoria in January, 1893 to parents David Joseph and Sarah Edwards (nee Brannigan).

Joseph Buxton Edwards attended Pleasant Street State School, Ballarat.

Joseph Buxton Edwards was a 22 year old, single, Ironmonger from 28 Duke Street, Ballarat, Victoria when he enlisted at Melbourne on 7th July, 1915 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2015 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr David Joseph Edwards, of 28 Duke Street, Ballarat, Victoria. Joseph Edwards stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 2 years in 7th A I R Ballarat. He was discharged as he had left the district.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards was posted to 19th Depot Battalion at Geelong, Victoria on 14th July, 1915. He was transferred to "C" Company at Geelong on 29th November, 1915. Pte Edwards was transferred to 3rd Reinforcements of 29th Battalion at Broadmeadows on 16th December, 1915.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ballarat (A70)* on 18th February, 1916 & disembarked at Suez on 22nd March, 1916.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards was taken on strength with 3rd Reinforcements, 29th Battalion on 1st April, 1916 at Brighton Beach.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards embarked from Alexandria on 16th June, 1916 on *Tunisian* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) and disembarked at Marseilles on 23rd June, 1916.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards was wounded in action in France on 19 or 20th July, 1916. He was admitted to 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 20th July, 1916 with gunshot wound to upper extremity (slight). Pte Edwards was transferred to No. 7 Ambulance Train then admitted to 3rd Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 21st July, 1916 with shrapnel wounds & fracture of radius. Pte Edwards was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Cambria* on 22nd July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to left arm.

29th Battalion

The 29th Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria on 10 August 1915. Having enlisted as part of the recruitment drive that followed the landing at Gallipoli, and having seen the casualty lists, these were men who had offered themselves in full knowledge of their potential fate.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916. The 29th Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916. The nature of this battle was summed up by one 29th soldier: "the novelty of being a soldier wore off in about five seconds, it was like a bloody butcher's shop". Although it still spent periods in the front line, the 29th played no major offensive role for the rest of the year.

(Information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 29th Battalion

19th July –

8pm – Moved to position at Croix Blanch 2 Coy being detailed to carry bombs & stores to front trenches (D & A Coys). Received order to send 1 Coy "D" to front trench & 1 "C" to support line.

10pm – At 10 pm Cpl Clerk 30th asked for assistance

11 pm – “C” Coy moved to front line. B & C Coys were at this time carrying supplies of ammunition & bombs along Cellar Farm Avenue. Parties of D & C doing same over NO MANS LAND. A large number of hand grenades carried were not fused.

19/20th July –

At 2 o'clock the enemy counter attacking & over line retiring, by this time D & A Coys were drawn in the fight and C & D who had manned the front line of our trenches were covering their retirement. At this stage the whole battalion was engaged.

After a struggle in NO MANS LAND the enemy were content to stop at their own trenches.

The 29th Bn remained in the front line during the remainder of the fight,

As soon as bombardment ceased the companies were reorganised & told off to hold the front line – about 500 __

Large number of wounded brought both day & night.

(Information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards was admitted to Fort Pitt Military Hospital, Chatham, England on 23rd July, 1916. The Hospital report reads “GSW Forearm (Lft) Compound fractures Humerus, Radius & Ulna.” He developed Lobar Pneumonia on both sides on 25th July, 1916.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards died at 2.45 am on 6th August, 1916 at Fort Pitt Military Hospital, Chatham, England from wounds received in action in France & from exhaustion.

A death for Joseph B. Edwards, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Medway, Kent, England.

Private Joseph Buxton Edwards was buried in Fort Pitt Military Cemetery, Rochester, Kent, England – Plot number 1403 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Sarah Edwards, mother of the late Private Joseph Buxton Edwards, wrote to Base Records in November, 1916 enquiring into the personal effects of her deceased son – No. 2015 Pte J. B. Edwards, D Company, 29th Battalion. A package was despatched to Mr D. J. Edwards on 22nd December, 1916.

A War Pension was granted to Sarah Edwards, mother of the late Private Joseph Buxton Edwards, in the sum of £1 per fortnight from 12th October, 1916 & increased 30/- per fortnight from 17th January, 1917.

Pte Joseph Buxton Edwards was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Edwards' father - Mr D. J. Edwards, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Joseph Buxton Edwards – service number 2015, aged 23, of 29th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of David Joseph and Sarah Edwards, of 28 Duke St., Ballarat West, Victoria, Australia.

Private J. B. Edwards is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 115.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Joseph B. Edwards is also remembered on the Ballarat Avenue of Honour (1917-1919) where almost 4,000 trees were planted to represent the number of men and women from the Ballarat district who served in World War 1. The trees were planted at intervals of 12 metres along 22 kms of the Ballarat-Burrenbeet Road. Tree number 821 which was planted on 4th June, 1917 by Miss N. Oates is dedicated to Private Joseph B. Edwards.



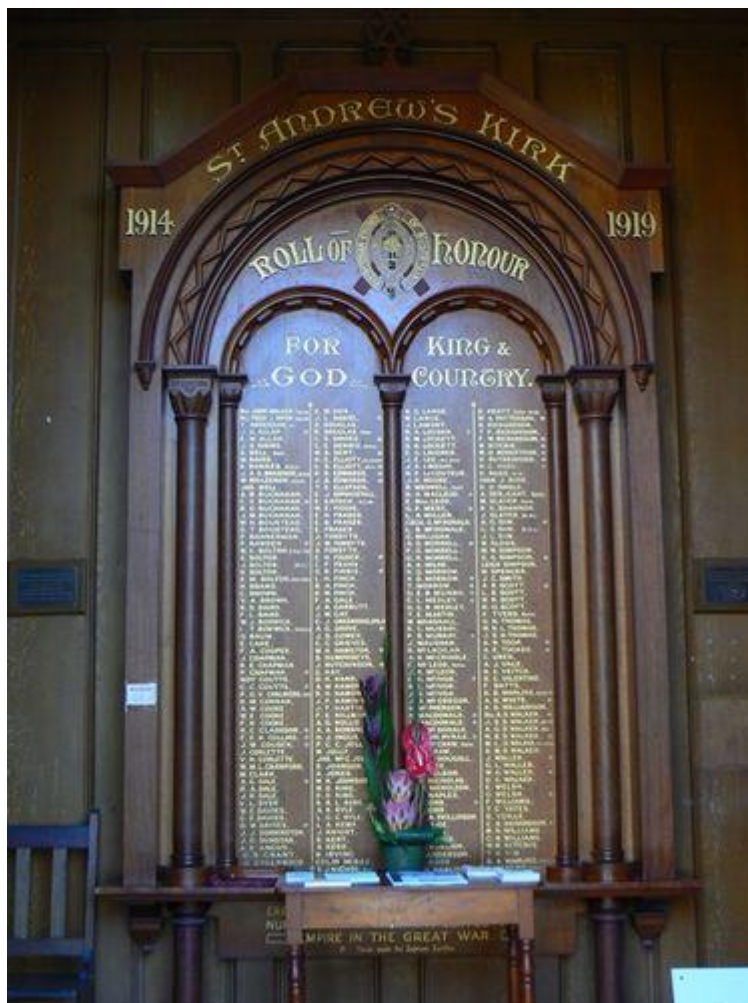
Ballarat Avenue of Honour (Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

J. B. Edwards is remembered on the Ballarat Memorial Wall & Rotunda located at Sturt Street and Learmonth Avenue, Ballarat, Victoria.



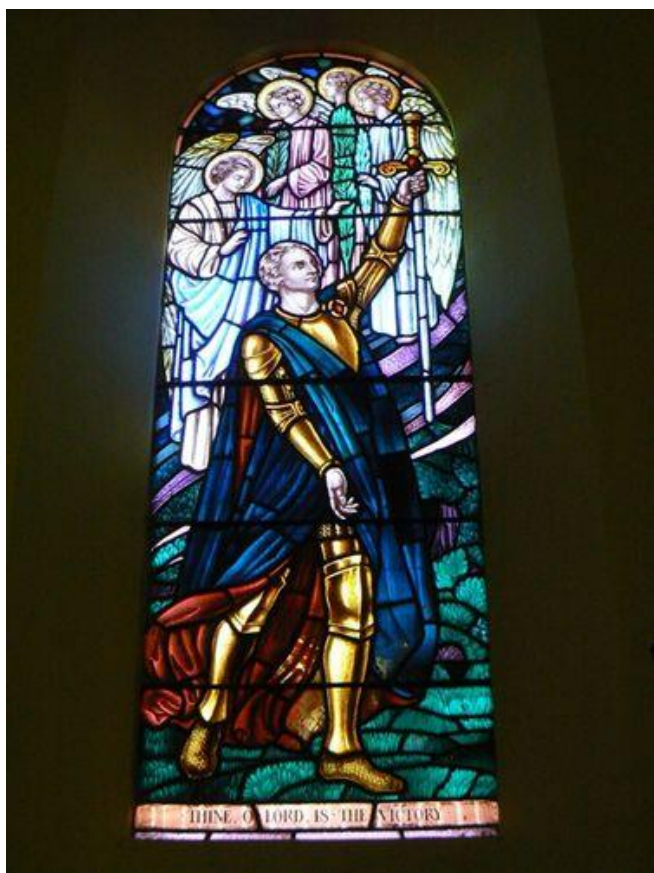
Ballarat Memorial Wall & Rotunda (Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

J. B. Edwards is remembered on the St. Andrew's Kirk Honour Roll, located in St. Andrew's Church, Sturt & Dawson Streets, Ballarat.



St. Andrew's Kirk Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

J. B. Edwards is remembered on the St. Andrew's Kirk Memorial Window, located in St. Andrew's Church, Sturt & Dawson Streets, Ballarat.



St. Andrew's Kirk Memorial Window (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

(37 pages of Pte Joseph Buxton Edwards' 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



Newspaper Notices

THESE HAVE TAKEN PAPERS

The following, in addition to this morning's list, have taken out attestation papers at the "Advertiser" Office or municipal halls for the fortnight for June 29.

Joseph Buxton Edwards, 128 Autumn Street

(*Geelong Advertiser*, Victoria – 12 July, 1915)

FALLEN AND WOUNDED

PRIVATE J. B. EDWARDS

Mr D. J. Edwards, of Duke street, has been notified that his son, Private J. B. Edwards has been wounded in France. Private Edwards was attached to the 29th Battalion.

(*The Ballarat Star*, Victoria – 11 August, 1916)

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FALLEN AND WOUNDED

BALLARAT CASUALTIES

PRIVATE JOSEPH EDWARDS

Mr D. Edwards, of Duke street, was yesterday officially informed that his son, Private Joseph Edwards, who was reported a few days ago as having been wounded, has died of his wounds. Private Edwards, who was 24 years of age, was a member of the choir of St. Andrew's Branch Church, and he was employed in Geelong before he enlisted.

(The Ballarat Star, Victoria – 15 August, 1916)

AUSTRALIA'S HEROES

193rd CASUALTY LIST

BALLARAT AND DISTRICT

WOUNDED

Pte Edwards, J. B., Ballarat

(The Ballarat Star, Victoria – 15 August, 1916)

THE 202nd CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private J. B. Edwards, Ballarat

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 2 September, 1916)

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)

Pte J. B. Edwards does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Faithful Unto Death Rev. 2. 10 Mother

Fort Pitt Military Cemetery, Rochester, Kent, England

Fort Pitt Military Cemetery, Rochester, Kent contains 289 identified Commonwealth War Graves.

During both wars there were naval and military establishments in the neighbourhood of Rochester, and some fishing and shipping at the port.

Fort Pitt Military Cemetery contains a plot of 266 First World War graves. The 25 Second World War graves (two of them unidentified) are north of the plot. All save two of them are together in a group.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Photo of Pte J. B. Edwards' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Fort Pitt Military Cemetery, Rochester, Kent, England.



(Photo courtesy of Kyle Tallett)