

**Bournemouth East Cemetery,
Bournemouth, Dorset
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2397 LANCE CPL.

H. EDWARDS

54TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

29TH MAY, 1918 Age 21

We Loved Thee Well

God Loved Thee Best

Good-Night Good-Night

Harold EDWARDS

Harold Edwards was born at Penrith, NSW in 1897 to parents George and Malvina Edwards.

Harold Edwards attended Superior Public School, Penrith, NSW.

Harold Edwards was a 19 year old, single, Baker from Henry Street, Penrith, NSW when he enlisted on 18th April, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2397 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr George Edwards, of Henry Street, Penrith, NSW. Harold Edwards stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served in Cadets for 6 months. As Harold Edwards was under the age of 21 years – his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. Mr Geo. Edwards & Mrs M. Edwards both signed their consent.

Private Harold Edwards was posted to Depot Battalion, Dubbo on 18th April, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to "A" Company on 23rd June, 1916 then transferred on 7th July, 1916 to 5th Reinforcements, 54th Battalion at Bathurst, NSW.

Private Harold Edwards was admitted to Hospital with Influenza while in Camp from 29th August, 1916 & discharged on 1st September, 1916.

Private Harold Edwards embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Aeneas (A60)* on 30th September, 1916 with the 54th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 19th November, 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 Harold Edwards proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 21st December, 1916 on SS *Princess Victoria* from 14th Training Battalion.

Private Harold Edwards was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 22nd December, 1916. He was marched out to his Unit on 6th February, 1917 & taken on strength of 54th Battalion in France on 8th February, 1917 from Reinforcements.

Private Harold Edwards was written up for an Offence on 13th December, 1917 – "*Absent from Fatigue from 2 am to 8 pm (8 hours)*" on 8th December, 1917. He was awarded 5 days confined to Camp as punishment.

Private Harold Edwards was appointed Lance Corporal to complete establishment on 11th January, 1918.

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards was on leave to UK from 27th February, 1918. He rejoined his Battalion from leave on 15th March, 1918.

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards was wounded in action on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 55th Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 having been gassed. He was transferred & admitted to 61st Casualty Clearing Station then transferred on 18th April, 1918 to Ambulance Train. Lance Corporal Edwards was admitted to 5th General Hospital, Rouen, France on 18th April, 1918. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Essequibo* on 23rd May, 1918.

54th Battalion

The 54th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 16 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 2nd Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 2nd, the 54th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.....

After a freezing winter manning trenches in the Somme Valley, in early 1917 the 54th Battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. It was spared the assault but did, however, defend gains made during the second battle of Bullecourt. Later in the year, the AIF's focus of operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 54th Battalion

17th April, 1918

The day was misty giving very poor observation. The wind was blowing from 5 to 8 miles per hour. At about 4 am the enemy commenced shelling C29B and D. and the village of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX with 8", 9.9, 4.2 and 77 gas shell. Yellow cross and green cross were used.

At about 10 am men began to feel the effects of the gas and by 5 pm every man in three platoons of D. Company (Nos. 13, 15, 16) had been evacuated and the majority of Battalion Head Quarters as well.

Captain J. H. Crombie took command at 3 pm and at 7.30 pm handed over to Major A.C.S. Holland who reported from the 55th Battalion to Command. During the previous day the relief was arranged with the 53rd Battalion and all advance parties sent in. An Operation Order – No. 12 – was issued at 10 am to-day and forms Appendix L. Under instructions from Brigade Head Quarters App. L. this Order was cancelled at 6.30 pm.

At 5 pm a message was received from Captain Lindsay 53rd Battalion, who was Liaison Officer with the 174th Brigade to the effect that a prisoner captured by them had stated that the enemy intended to fill VILLERS-BRETONNEUX with Gas so as to make it untenable and then to take it, avoiding the village itself in doing so. The tip was taken, the C.O. deciding to shift Head Quarters from the Chateau and the Engineers started digging a new Head Quarters in the sunken road at C29a3.6.....

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards was admitted to Military Hospital, Boscombe, Hampshire, England (affiliated with Alexandra Hospital, Casham) on 24th May, 1918 with Gas Poisoning (Mustard) – dangerously ill. The Hospital Admissions form has the following recorded: "*Active Service – Had old pleurisy & Bronchitis. Pneumonia & Dilated Heart, Conjunctivitis & Laryngitis.*"

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards died at 11 am on 29th May, 1918 at Military Hospital, Boscombe, Hampshire, England from Gas Poisoning (Mustard).

A death for Harold Edwards, aged 21, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Christchurch, Hampshire, England.

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards was buried at 2 pm on 3rd June, 1918 in Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England (listed on Statement of Service form as East Boscombe Cemetery, Bournemouth) – Plot number P. I. 143 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Lance Corporal Harold Edwards - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the "Union Jack" and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths. Gun Carriage, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were present. Prior to the interment a service was held by Chaplain the Rev. Stead, C.F. in the Chapel at the Cemetery. The grave will be turfed later and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives and friends present at the Funeral – Brother – No. 2328 Pte J. E. Edwards, 30th Battalion, A.I.F. (Patient 3rd Auxiliary Australian Hospital, Dartford).

Newspaper item – Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 8 June, 1918:

Our Soldiers

The sad news came to hand during the week that Corporal Harold Edwards, of the 54th Battalion, and fifth son of Mr and Mrs George Edwards of Henry Street, Penrith, who was recently severely gassed (second time) in France, had died on May 29, in the 5th General Hospital, Rouen. The late heroic soldier was born in North Street, Penrith, and his age was 21 years and 5 months. He enlisted at Parramatta, and left Australia on 30th September, 1916. He went direct to England, where he was in training for six weeks, when he volunteered as a bomb thrower and was accepted. Corporal Edwards was a baker and pastrycook by trade. His brother, Private Jim Edwards (who was

recently wounded) was fighting in France when he crossed the Channel, and the two brothers met on several occasions. The late Corporal Edwards was a strong muscular lad and of a cheery and bright disposition.

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Edwards' father - Mr G. Edwards, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Harold Edwards – service number 2397, aged 21, of 54th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George and Malvina Edwards, of Henry St. Penrith, New South Wales.

H. Edwards is remembered on the Penrith Superior Public School Honor Roll, located in Penrith Public School, Cnr High & Doonmore Streets, Penrith, NSW.



Penrith Superior Public School Honor Roll (Photo from War Memorial Register NSW – Pearl Brown)

Newspaper item – Nepean Times, NSW – 7 September, 1918:

PENRITH SUPERIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

THE HONOR ROLL

The following names appear on the Honor Roll, erected at the above school:-

.....
Edwards, H.

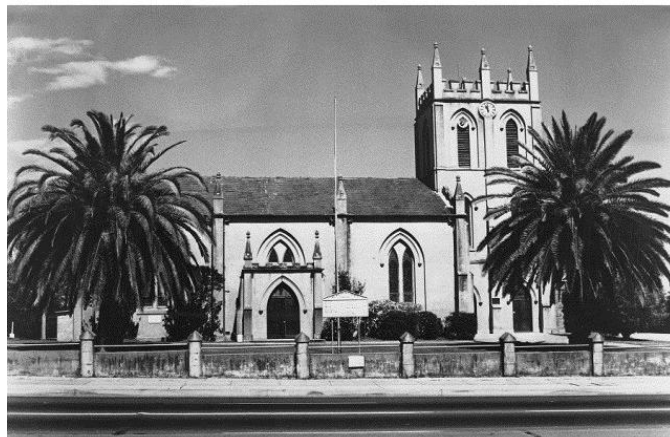
H. Edwards is remembered on the Penrith City Memory Park War Memorial, located in Memory Park, High & Woodriff Streets, Penrith, NSW.



Penrith City Memory Park War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride - Ross Manuel)



Harold Edwards is remembered on St. Stephen's Anglican Church Honor Roll, Penrith, NSW.



(Photo from Penrith City Local History website)

Lance Corporal Harold Edwards is remembered on the Penrith City Local History website.



(Photo from Penrith City Local History website)

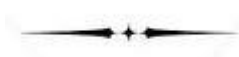
Lance Corporal H. Edwards is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 159.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(43 pages of Lance Corporal Harold 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





Lance Corporal Harold Edwards (*Photo from Discovering Anzacs*)



Newspaper Notices

644 CASUALTIES

78 DEAD, 516 WOUNDED

N.S.W. FIGURES

The 400th list of casualties was issued last night

WOUNDED

EDWARDS, H., Penrith (gas)

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 18 May, 1918)

Wauchope

Mr Thos. Edwards has received word that his brother, Corporal Harold Edwards, who was on active service in France, died from the effects of gas on 29th May, and that his other brother, Private Jas. Edwards, had been wounded. I extend my sincere sympathy to the bereaved relatives.

(The Port Macquarie News and Hastings River Advocate, NSW – 15 June, 1918)

Roll of Honor

EDWARDS – May 29, at Fifth General Hospital, Rouen, France (gassed). PTE HAROLD EDWARDS, fifth dearly beloved son of Mr and Mrs Geo. Edwards, Henry-street, Penrith; aged 21 years and 5 months.

His duty done.

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 8 June, 1918)

410th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte HAROLD EDWARDS, Penrith

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 20 June, 1918)

Late Lance-Cpl. H. Edwards

Mr G. Edwards, Henry-street, Penrith, has received the following from Base Records Office, Melbourne : With reference to the regrettable loss of your son, the late No. 2397 Lance-Corporal H Edwards, 54 Battalion, advice shows that he died from the effects of gas poisoning on 29/5/18 at the Military Hospital, Boscombe, Bournemouth, and was buried at 2 p.m. on 3/6/18 at East Boscombe Cemetery, Bournemouth, consecrated ground, grave No. P

1143, Church of England section. The late soldier's brother, Private J E Edwards, 30th Battalion, A.I.F. (patient at 3rd Auxiliary Australian Hospital, Bedford) was present at the funeral. The deceased soldier was accorded a military funeral. The coffin, which was of good polished elm, was mounted on a gun carriage, and draped with the Union Jack. It was surmounted by several beautiful wreaths. Firing party, bugler, and pall bearers were present. Prior to the interment the officiating chaplain, the Rev C F Stead, conducted a service in the chapel of the cemetery. The grave will be turfed later, and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F., London. Administrative headquarters, London, were represented at the funeral. The utmost care and attention is being devoted to the graves of our soldiers where possible. It is understood that photographs are being taken as soon as is possible, and these will be transmitted to the next-of-kin when available.

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 9 November, 1918)

Roll of Honor

EDWARDS – In Loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corpl. Harold Edwards, who died in Boscomb, England, from the effects of gas poisoning on the 29th May, 1918.

Thy Will be Done.

Inserted by his loving father and mother, brothers Tom, George, Will James (on active (service), Albert and Benjamin, and sister Violet May.

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 31 May, 1919)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corpl. Harold Edwards, who died in Boscomb, England, from the effects of gas poisoning on the 29th May, 1918.

Thy Will be Done.

Inserted by his loving father and mother, brothers Tom, George, Will, James (on active service), Albert, Benjamin, and sister, Violet May.

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear brother, Corp Harold Edwards, died of gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

A young life nobly ended.

Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, Willand Amy.

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 31 May, 1919)

Roll of Honor

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning at Boscombe, England, May 29th, 1918.

Thy Will be Done.

Inserted by his loving parents, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 29 May, 1920)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 28 May, 1921)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 27 May, 1922)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 31 May, 1924)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 30 May, 1925)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 28 May, 1927)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 26 May, 1928)

ROLL OF HONOR

EDWARDS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Harold Edwards, who died from gas poisoning, 29th May, 1918.

Inserted by his loving father and mother, brothers and sister

(Nepean Times, Penrith, NSW – 25 May, 1929)

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)

Lance Corporal H. Edwards does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

We Loved Thee Well God Loved Thee Best

Good-Night Good-Night

Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England

Some of the 120 First World War burials in this cemetery are those of soldiers who died in Bournemouth's auxiliary and private hospitals. 75 of these graves are in a special plot on the main path and include a Special Memorial to 2 soldiers drowned off Bournemouth in January 1915, whose bodies were not recovered. The plot also contains 7 of the 68 Second World War burials, the rest being scattered throughout the cemetery. One of the First World War burials is unidentified. There are 4 Foreign National war burials here.

The war plot is enclosed by a hedge, and the War Cross is on the West side of it.

(Information from CWGC)



Bournemouth East Cemetery *(Photo from CWGC)*



Bournemouth East Cemetery (*Photos from CWGC*)

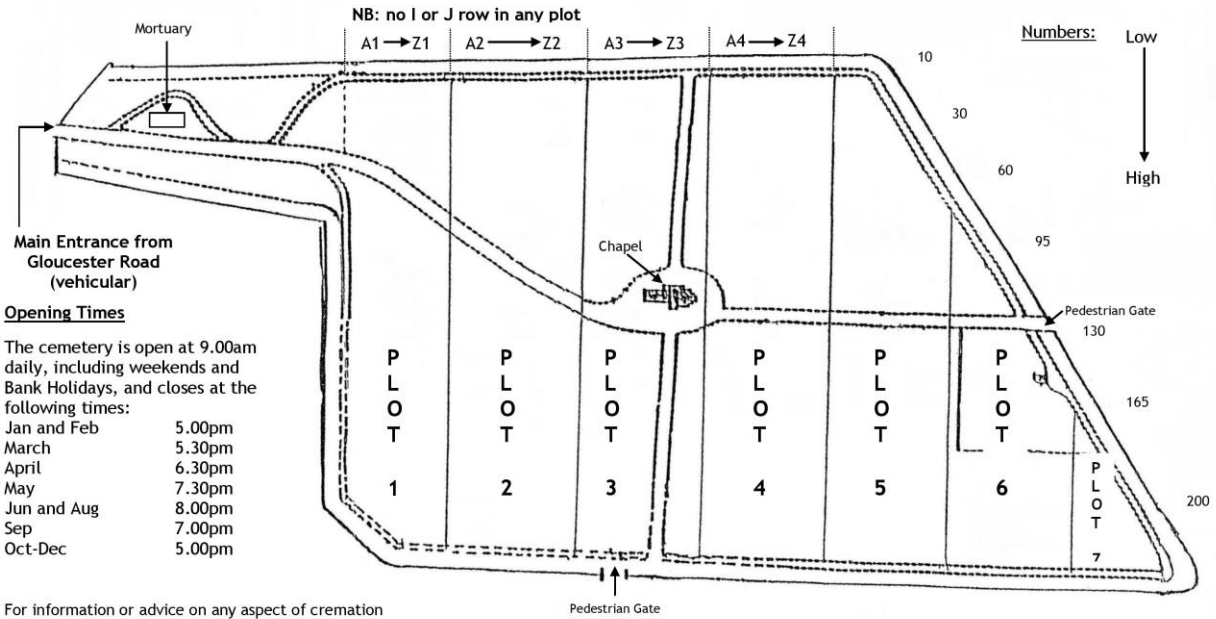


Photo of Lance Corporal H. Edwards' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Bournemouth East Cemetery, Bournemouth, Dorset, England



(Photo by Julia&keld – Find a Grave)

East Cemetery, Gloucester Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH7 6JB



Opening Times

The cemetery is open at 9.00am daily, including weekends and Bank Holidays, and closes at the following times:

Jan and Feb	5.00pm
March	5.30pm
April	6.30pm
May	7.30pm
Jun and Aug	8.00pm
Sep	7.00pm
Oct-Dec	5.00pm

For information or advice on any aspect of cremation or burial please contact:

Bournemouth Bereavement Services
 Bournemouth Crematorium
 Strouden Avenue
 Bournemouth
 BH8 9HX

Tel: 01202 526238
 Email: crematorium@bournemouth.gov.uk

