

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2400 PRIVATE

R. S. ELLIS

55TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

12TH JUNE, 1918 Age 25

*In Memory Of
The Dearly Loved Son Of
Mrs Ellis Of Candelo*

Raymond Stanley (Ray) ELLIS

Raymond Stanley Ellis was born at Eden, New South Wales in 1891 to parents Joseph and Mary Ann Ellis.

Raymond Stanley Ellis was a 25 year old, single, Coachbuilder from Candelo, NSW when he enlisted at Goulburn, NSW on 11th April, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2400 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Mary Ann Ellis, Candelo, NSW.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was posted to “D” Company, Depot Camp on 11th April, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to “C” Company, 55th Battalion at Goulburn, NSW on 6th May, 1916 then transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 55th Battalion on 11th July, 1916.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Aeneas (A60)* on 30th September, 1916 with the 55th 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 Raymond Stanley Ellis proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 21st December, 1916 on *Princess Victoria* (as per handwritten Casualty form – Active Service & Purport card. The typed version of this form recorded he embarked on *Princess Henrietta*) from 14th Training Battalion. He was marched in to 5th 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 & was taken on strength of 55th Battalion in the Field on 8th February, 1917 from 5th Reinforcements.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was wounded in action on 2nd April, 1917. He was admitted to 9th Casualty Clearing Station on 2nd April, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to left shoulder then transferred to Ambulance Train on 3rd April, 1917. Private Ellis was admitted to 3rd Canadian Stationary Hospital at Boulogne on 4th April, 1917 & marked for transfer to England on 6th April, 1917. He embarked from Boulogne, France on 7th April, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Princess Elizabeth*.

55th Battalion

The 55th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 12 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 3rd Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 3rd, the 55th 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 55th 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 – 55th Battalion

Attack on DOIGNIES – 2nd April, 1917

At midnight 1/2nd April Battalion was in position on Sunken Road J.8.C.2.2 to J.7.b.8.3, where it rested until 4.25 am at which hour “B”, “C” & “D” Companies moved forward to “jumping off” line J.8.C.6.4 to J.8.a.7.3. At 4.30 am the 3 Companies moved forward in artillery formation in echelon – D Coy on right flank B Coy in centre & C Coy on left flank. They moved in direction of LOUVERVAL following 56th Bn. A halt was made in J.9.a. for about 15 minutes whilst 56th Bn went forward. At 5.20 am when in vicinity of J.9.b.2.3 “D” Coy disturbed a dog which gave the alarm and rifle and machine gun fire was encountered from direction of Beetroot Factory and from trench at J.9.b.5.5. “D” Company immediately stormed and captured these two points and left a platoon to garrison same. “D” Company then re-organised on MAIN BAPAUME-CAMBRAI Road at J.9.b.80.25 and moved in extended ___ towards DOIGNIES. Rifle & Machine gun fire came fairly heavily from the village, and enemy artillery shelled intermittently. “D” Company entered the village at the N.E. corner and drove the enemy out of that part. “B” & “C” Companies had

in the meantime moved past the Beetroot Factory and approached the village in 2 waves, and entering it between J.10.C.1.2 and J.10C.90.05. They then advanced through to S.E. end of village, driving the enemy out. A position was then consolidated on the south & east sides of the village. Villages was captured at 5.45 am. Dispositions on consolidating were as follows:-

“D” Coy J.16.C.3.8 to J.16.a.30.95 “B” Coy J.16.a.30.95 to J.16.b.7.7 “C” Coy J.16.b.7.7 through J.16.b.50.95 to J.10.C.6.3.

The 2 platoons of “A” Coy in reserve went forward at 7 am to reinforce the line. 7 or 8 enemy mines exploded in DOIGNIES between 6 am and 6.10 am.

Enemy shelled our new positions throughout the day. Between 11 and 11.30 am very heavy shelling was experienced and enemy was seen to mass as if for a counter-attack. Our artillery quickly dispersed this. For carrying supplies, ammunition, stores etc, 1 Company of the Supporting Battalion was placed at the disposal of 55th Battalion. 3 Platoons of this were sent forward at 2 (?) pm to reinforce the line to resist any counter attack which might develop.

At 4 pm enemy was again seen to mass, but were again dispersed by our artillery. Throughout the night the enemy shelled intermittently, but no counter attack developed.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was admitted to Kitchener Military Hospital, Brighton, England on 7th April, 1917 with G.S.W. to left shoulder. The Hospital Admissions form recorded *“On April 2/17 hit by machine gun bullet left shoulder. Bullet not removed, but Xray did not show any F.B. Wounded healed, fairly good movement in shoulder joint.”*

Mrs Mary Ellis, Candelo, NSW, mother of Private Ellis, was advised by Base Records on 25th April, 1917 that No. 2400 Private R. S. Ellis had been admitted to the Kitchener Military Hospital, Brighton, England on 7th April, 1917 suffering from gunshot wound to left shoulder – mild.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was transferred from Kitchener Military Hospital to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital, Southall on 21st May, 1917 for Xray examination. *“A scan was made of upper and ant- aspect of left shoulder. No exit wound. Nil felt in palpation over “painful” area. The Xray photograph showed no evidence of a bullet being present in the left side of the thorax.”* He was discharged to furlo on 26th May, 1917 & was to then report to Perham Downs.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis joined No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Down, Wiltshire on 12th June, 1917 from furlo. No F.B. (foreign body) was visible, his wound was healed & no disability. He was medically classed as A3 (medically & dentally fit. Fit for overseas training camp, to which transferred for hardening, prior to rejoining unit overseas).

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 20th June, 1917 from Overseas Training Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire. He was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 21st June, 1917 from England. Private Ellis was marched out to his Unit on 5th September, 1917 & rejoined 55th Battalion in the Field on 7th September, 1917 from being wounded.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was wounded in action (2nd occasion) on 15th May, 1918. He was admitted to 14th Field Ambulance on 15th May, 1918 with Shrapnel wounds to Back – penetrating chest. Private Ellis was transferred & admitted to 61st Casualty Clearing Station on 15th May, 1918 then transferred to Ambulance Train 32 on 17th May, 1918. He was admitted to 1st General Hospital, Etretat on 18th May, 1918. Private Ellis was invalided to England on 26th May, 1918 on Hospital Ship *St. David*.

An X-Ray was completed on Private Raymond Stanley Ellis on 19th May, 1918. The history of his case was recorded as *“G.S.W. of back. F.B. in patient. Complete paraplegia; loss of sensation below umbilicus. X-ray for fracture lower dorsal & upper lumbar vert. X-ray for F.B.”* The result of the X-ray was *“Some evidence of injury to the right 12” rib and body of the 12” dorsal vertebra, one small metallic foreign body 2 ½ inches to the left of the mid-line at a level of*

the 11" rib, another larger F.B. 1 x 1 ½ cm near the posterior wall of the chest 7 cm to the left of the mid-line at the level of the 5" rib at a depth of 15.1 cm from costo-chondral junction of the second rib. Chest clear."

55th Battalion

.... The 55th's major battle here was at Polygon Wood on 26 September.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This came in late March and the 5th Division moved to defend the sector around Corbie. The 14th Brigade took up positions to the north of Villers-Bretonneux and held these even when the village fell, threatening their flanks.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 55th Battalion

France near Villers Bretonneux – Right Reserve

15th May, 1918

Enemy artillery activity continued. It is reported that enemy is strengthening his forward defences opposite our front.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was admitted to Horton County of London War Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England on 27th May, 1918 with shell wound to Back (severance of Spinal Cord) & was severely ill. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Patient admitted here in hopeless condition. Cord severed at kevel of 9th Dorsal, supra pubic opening into bladder – bladder full of pus – large bed sores. Placed on water bed – bladder washed out daily – sore dressed with flavine. Rapidly sank and died of ascending urinary infection.*"

Mrs Mary Ellis, Candelo, NSW, mother of Private Ellis, was advised by Base Records on 30th May, 1918 that Private R. S. Ellis had been wounded, 2nd occasion.

Base Records contacted Mrs Mary Ellis, Candelo, NSW, mother of Private Ellis, on 4th June, 1918 to advise that Private Raymond Ellis had been admitted to 61st Casualty Clearing Station on 15th May dangerously wounded. She was advised again on 5th June, 1918 that Private Raymond Ellis had been admitted to Horton County of London War Hospital, Epsom, England on 27th May with gunshot wound to back – severe & spinal cord – severed.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis died at 5.40 am on 12th June, 1918 at Horton (County of London) War Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England from wounds received in action - 1. G.S.W. Back 2. Paraplegia 3. Septic absortion 4. Pyelo-Nephritis.

A death for Raymond S. Ellis, aged 27, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Epsom, Surrey, England.

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was buried at 1.30 pm on 5th June, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground – Grave number 181, 135.

From the burial report of Private Raymond Stanley Ellis - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths. Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were in attendance. The "Last Post" was sounded by the A.I.F. Bugler. Prior to the interment a service was held by Chaplain the Rev. Lewis, A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives and friends present at Funeral – Cousins Mrs & Miss L. Bird, 149 Ancona Rd, Plumstead, Kent.

Base Records wrote to Mrs M. A. Ellis, Candelo, NSW on 14th May, 1923 stating that the site of No. 2400 Private R. S. Ellis's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row D Grave 15.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. D. 15. Private R. S. Ellis has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

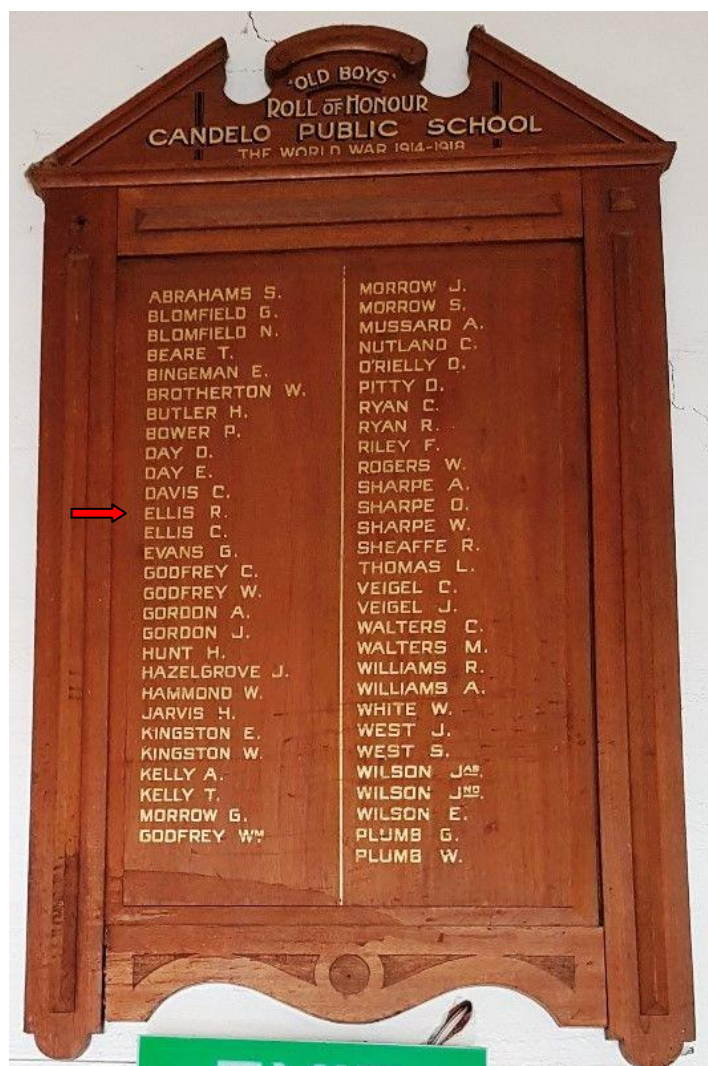
Base Records contacted Mrs A. Ellis, Candelo, NSW on 29th March, 1921 stating she was registered on the records of the late Private R. S. Ellis as the next of kin but requested to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked if his father was still alive due to the “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Mrs M. A. Ellis, Candelo, NSW, replied to Base Records on 5th April, 1921 to advise *“there is no nearer blood relation than myself. I am his Mother, his father is dead & he was not married.”*

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Ellis’ widowed mother – Mrs M. A. Ellis, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Raymond Stanley Ellis – service number 2400, aged 27, of 55th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Joseph and Mary Ann Ellis, of Candelo, New South Wales.

R. Ellis & his brother – C. Ellis are both remembered on the Candelo Public School Roll of Honour located in Candelo Hall, William & Eden Streets, Candelo, NSW.



Candelo Public School Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Stephen Woods)

R. Ellis & his brother – C. Ellis are both remembered on the Candelo War Memorial, located in John Gordon Memorial Park, William Street, Candelo, NSW.



Candelo War Memorial (Photos from War Memorials Register NSW)



Private R. S. Ellis is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 160.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

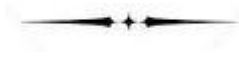
(74 pages of Private Raymond Stanley Ellis' Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Connected to Private Raymond Stanley Ellis:

Younger brother – Clarence Millington Ellis – Enlisted as Clarrie Ellis on 20th November, 1914 as a 21 year old Farrier. Embarked with 8th Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements with service no. 1541. Died of wounds 22nd April, 1917 & was buried in Red Cross Corner Cemetery, Beugny, Nord Pas de Calais, France.



LAST POST CEREMONY

Private Raymond Stanley Ellis was remembered in the Last Post Ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on 6th December, 2017.

Commencing at approximately 4.55 pm AEST, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony in the Commemorative Courtyard. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the [Roll of Honour](#).

The ceremony begins with the Australian national anthem followed by the piper's lament. Visitors are invited to lay wreaths and floral tributes beside the Pool of Reflection. An individual's story is told, and the Ode is recited by Australian Defence Force personnel. The ceremony ends with the sounding of the Last Post.

(Information from The Australian War Memorial)



Speech transcript

2400 Private Raymond Stanley Ellis, 55th Battalion, AIF
DOW 12 June 1918

Story delivered 6 December 2017

Today we remember and pay tribute to Private Raymond Stanley Ellis.

Raymond Ellis was born in Eden, New South Wales, in 1891, one of six sons and two daughters born to Joseph and Mary Anne Ellis. When he was a boy, his family moved to Candelo, where he grew up and attended the local state school. Raymond went on to become a wheelwright and coachbuilder. Fondly known as “Ray”, he was a prominent figure in the Candelo district. While he was an active participant in athletics competitions and the local tennis club, he was best known as a footballer. It was reported that “no better player or cleaner sport ever donned the jersey in this district”. He also spent some time as a member of a juvenile temperance society, and continued to live by those principles.

In 1913 Raymond Ellis’s father died at the age of 79. His brothers were living interstate at the time, so Raymond became the primary source of support for his widowed mother. In 1914 his younger brother, Clarrie, who was working on the mines in Victoria, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force. Raymond also desperately wanted to go to war, but stayed at home to look after his mother. But by 1916 he felt that “for her sake he must obey his country’s call”. He enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force, and entered training camp in Goulburn in April 1916. A number of clubs and associations held farewell functions for him. At an event at the tennis club, the chairman said that Ellis

“was one of the most upright and respectable young men in the community... [and wished him] every success and a speedy return”.

Private Ellis left Australia on 30 September 1916 with reinforcements to the 55th Battalion. He was first sent to England, where he continued training for a month before being sent to fight on the Western Front. In early April 1917 he was wounded in the shoulder while fighting near the French village of Bullecourt.

He wrote to his mother to say,
We had been following Fritz for three weeks through a lot of villages he had been leaving, till at last we struck him about 8 or 10 miles behind his original line ... the bullets were falling as thick as hail and putting dozens out of action. I was wounded about 200 yards from the village. I lay on the ground and watched them until our boys (or what was left of them) reached the village, then I made my way back with a few more wounded.

He added, “it is nothing serious. The bullet went through the muscle of the left shoulder and the joint is stiff. I think the bullet stopped just near the shoulder blade, but the doctors cannot find it with the x-rays.”
Raymond Ellis was sent to hospital in Brighton, England. In his letter he mentioned that he had not yet seen his brother Clarrie, who was serving in the 8th Battalion. Less than two weeks later Clarrie was wounded in France, dying in hospital on 22 April 1917.

Raymond Ellis did not return to his battalion until September 1917. The following year the 55th Battalion played an important role in stopping the German advance towards Amiens. Ellis, clearly proud of his battalion’s achievements, wrote somewhat melodramatically:

Wherever the Australians met [the enemy] they stopped him. The French papers call us the saviours of France. The reason why we could not be relieved was that the French did not have enough to spare and they would not trust the Amiens front to any other troops.

In May 1918 the 55th Battalion was in the front line near Villers-Bretonneux. Ellis wrote, “we had been under shell fire for 120 days, and could see no chance of getting relieved”. Sometime around 18 May, he was caught in the fire, and was wounded in the back. He was evacuated to hospital in London, writing to his mother that he had received, “two small wounds in the back, not at all painful. I am paralysed from the waist down, but don’t know how long it will last. As far as I can hear I think they will send me back to Sydney before they start to cure me. At present, they are just letting the wounds heal.”

Private Ellis never received the cure he hoped for, and died on 12 June 1918. The sister in charge of his ward wrote to Raymond’s mother to say “of course we knew from the first that his case was hopeless, but I can assure you that everything possible was done for his comfort and happiness. He was very bright up to two or three days before he died.” She went on to say, “it seems very hard on you poor mothers who are so far away.”

Raymond Ellis was buried in the Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, England. In Australia, a friend wrote, “the friendship of a man of such good nature, manly bearing, and loveable disposition is among the best privileges of life. His fine qualities shine with their true brightness out of the shadows of death, and his memory will be cherished by all who knew him for what he was.”

Raymond Ellis was 27 years old.

His name is listed on the Roll of Honour on my right, among almost 62,000 Australians who died while serving in the First World War.

This is but one of the many stories of service and sacrifice told here at the Australian War Memorial. We now remember Private Raymond Stanley Ellis, who gave his life for us, for our freedoms, and in the hope of a better world.

Meleah Hampton
Historian, Military History Section

Newspaper Notices

FOR AUSTRALIA

LATEST CASUALTY LIST

The 293rd list of Australian casualties was issued to-day...

NEW SOUTH WALES WOUNDED

Pte R. S. ELLIS, Candelo

(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 7 May, 1917)

LOCAL AND GENERAL

Among the latest list of wounded are the following: Private H. Matthews, Upper Delegate River; Private W. A. Warburton, Bombala; Private R. S. Ellis, Candelo.

(The Bega Budget, NSW – 12 May, 1917)

Rev. Wesley Stocks on Monday received word from the Defence Department that Private Ray Ellis, of Candelo, had died from wounds on June 12th. Mr Stocks had the sad duty of going to Candelo to break the news to Mr Ellis, who has now lost two sons at the war. The poor mother had previously received word that Ray had been badly injured in the spine. This is the second Candelo family to make a double sacrifice, Mr and Mrs F. J. Ryan having lost two sons.

(Southern Star, Bega, NSW – 19 June, 1918)

Personal

Pte Ray Ellis, of Candelo died from wounds on 12th June. Another brother had previously lost his life at the war.

(The Twofold Bay Magnet: and South Coast and Southern Monaro Advertiser, NSW – 22 June, 1918)

Died of Wounds

PRIVATE RAY ELLIS

The sad news that Pte Ray Ellis had succumbed to his wounds on the 12th instant was conveyed to his mother on Monday last by Rev. Wesley Stocks. The unspeakable sadness of all such news is accentuated in this instance by the fact that he is the second son of Mrs Ellis to make the supreme sacrifice, his brother Clarrie dying of wounds some few months ago. It is the second Candelo home which has sent two sons to the front, and lost them all, the other being M. and Mrs F. J. Ryan. Ray's death is also made more grievous when it is remembered how deeply attached he was to his widowed mother and his home. Pte Ellis was 27 years of age, and enlisted in March 1916. A finer specimen of young Australian manhood never donned the honorable, uniform of the brave defenders of this country. It is fitting, now that he is "wrapped in the dreamless drapery of eternal peace," to recall that at the public farewell given him and several other recruits prior to their departure for the front, every speaker made special

reference to Pte Ellis. The Chairman (Mr. Blomfield) said that "Pte Ellis was one of whom they were particularly proud. He was one of the most upright and respectable young men in the community, and they felt deeply for his mother, who had depended so much upon him." Mr Godfrey said that "he knew Pte Ellis to be a man of fine strength of character; and of his mother, whom everybody respected highly, he could only speak in terms of sympathy and admiration. It behoved the community to stand by all such mothers." The writer is proud to have called him Friend. The friendship of a man of such good nature, manly bearing, and lovable disposition is among the best privileges of life. His fine qualities shine with their true bright ness out of the shadows of death, and his memory will be cherished by all who knew him for what he was. Footballers throughout the southern centres of that great game will regret his decease. No better player or cleaner sport ever donned the jersey in this district. For his mother and sister Ivy we feel the deepest sympathy, but the splendor of his life is glorified by the death he has died, and in this fact the loved ones of all such men will find sweet consolation in the days to come.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 22 June, 1918)

413th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte RAYMOND STANLEY ELLIS, Candelo

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 2 July, 1918)

Local and General

On Sunday night last a large congregation attended the Candelo Methodist Church for the memorial service to the memory of the late Corporal Ray Ellis. The Church was suitably draped with flags and mourning, and over the organ hung an enlarged photo of the deceased soldier. Rev. Wesley Stocks was the preacher, and the service was most impressive, including appropriate hymns and the "Te Deum Laudamus" by the choir, special war intercessions, and at the close, the Dead March in Saul and the National Anthem. The preacher took for his text the passages of scripture : "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" We propose to publish his eloquent discourse in next issue, as a mark of respect to our deceased friend.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 10 August, 1918)

In Memoriam

A Sermon preached in the Candelo Methodist Church by Rev. Wesley Stocks on Sunday 4th August, in memory of the late Cpl. Ray Ellis.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." — Jno. 15 : 13.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' — Matt. 25 : 21.

In these momentous days of cruel war, when battalion after battalion of the bravest men that ever appeared in any period of the world's history pass over the dangerous seas into the jaws of death, the words of our Lord burn themselves with irresistible force into our minds: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." And as we read the casualty lists, and the blow strikes nearer home for some of us, we know that that same dear Lord has once more uttered His "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Sacrifice always has been the supreme test of character. It is the noblest element of life. The glorious self-giving which marks these tragic days will pass into the treasury of the nation's imperishable memories. But while that is true, the immediate poignancy of grief is none the less real. The casualty lists in the papers are almost daily crowded with names, each of which is the centre of a circle of weeping friends. We read these lists, frequently unmoved, but when the name of a dear friend appears, we are awakened, startled, overwhelmed ! This is how many of you are feeling in this church to-night. One of the brightest and best of our lads has fallen at the front, and has joined hands in the Beyond with his soldier-brother Clarrie. We meet to-night to honour the memory of one whose place in the home from which he came can never be filled, but who, to preserve inviolate the sacredness of his and every other home, was prepared to "lay down his life for his friends." We cannot pay our last respects around the open grave, but in God's House, the next most sacred spot, we honour our dead hero and console his honoured and grief-stricken mother and sister.

Corporal Ray Ellis enlisted in March 1916. He had long desired to go, but duty to a widowed mother, stayed his hand till it was borne in upon him that for her sake he must obey his country's call, and leave her in the hands of One who would be to her more than he could ever be. And it stands to his undying credit that he had ears to hear and a will to will. What though risk, privation, hardship, sickness awaited him ? What though it meant the rupture, certainly for a time, and perhaps for life, of human ties? What though he knew that he might add to the number of "the unreturning brave" ? All was carefully weighed and his decision arrived at — he went, and with him went his mother's prayers and benediction, "Go, and the Lord be with thee." Once he was severely wounded and the bullet never extracted, but when fit again he stood in the front lines; but his thoughts were ever of his home folks and their welfare, and his tender letters home bore eloquent testimony of the grief he experienced at the knowledge of his brother's death causing heart-break at home. He was fatally wounded in the spine during the month of May, and was removed to England, where, on the 12th June, he was promoted to the ranks of the King of Kings, in the 25th year of his age. When the news came to me I had borne in upon me the words of one I pass on to you, suggested by his death: The appeal of Duty; the hallowing of Courage; the sacrament of Liberty.

When thinking of the first I want to say that in Ray Ellis it found a quick response. The call of his country haunted him day and night, and he could do no other than obey. The beauty of life is not in mere living, nor in buoyant health, nor in vigor of mind : but in a whole nature which finds delight in answering to the call of Duty. As Emerson says:

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man ;
When Duty whispers low, 'Thou must!'
The youth replies, ' I can ! ' "

Never did the burden of sorrow lie so near the world's heart as during these blood-soaked years. The tragedy of the hour is not that those who have run their allotted span are ' laying down their lives; but the young, and the fair, and the promising. Ray had his life before him, and yet, having so much to lose and live for, he did not weigh his own pleasures and interests in the scale of Duty. His sacrifice was a noble response to life's brightest demands, and a withering rebuke to those who sit idly in selfish ease while the world goes through its Gethsemane. Could any epitaph emblazoned upon noble monument express anything higher than the one we place o'er his memory to-night: "Greater love, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" ?

The next thought is that this hour of the world's history illustrates the Hallowing of Courage. We sometimes confound courage with coarseness—coarseness of blood, coarseness of nerve, coarseness of feeling — but it is not so. Courage is the strength of the heart, strength that is bent to victory. The courage of the thief, the courage of the tyrant, the courage of the desperado, is prostituted courage ; but courage devoted to a noble cause is hallowed. There is a striking sentence in Isaiah 34: 5 — "My sword shall be bathed in heaven." This is the hallowing, of courage— a sword drawn in a holy cause — strength devoted to the restoration of the oppressed, the outraged, the disinherited. And every man who has his part in a conflict for these ideals belongs to the knighthood of chivalry ; his soul and his sword are "bathed in heaven." "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure."

The noblest courage of all is that which ever has before its eyes love and reverence for God in the great moments of life. God is very real to many of the men in the trenches. They tread the margin of the unseen. Theirs are solemn hours. No one who knew Ray Ellis ever imagined that he went to the front with his soul filled with a lust to slay ! His sword was "bathed in heaven," and that magnificent courage our dead hero has grandly shown. Ray was human in all wholesome sympathies. He loved life and sought not for death. His eye was clear, his complexion fresh, if tanned,

every physical power was like a piano tuned to concert pitch. He dared do all “that doth become a man.” And as, on the deck of the transport, he bade his native land good-night, the love he bore his kith and kin was touched with the melancholy of parting. But if there was an ache in his heart he smiled his farewell, and perhaps God gave you grace to smile farewell in return.

A young man, since fallen, writing to his mother during the dark days of Gallipoli, said: “Mother, during the next few days we shall be facing death every minute. If I am taken off, do as the Roman matrons of old, keep your tears for privacy, steel your heart, and try and get a dozen recruits to fill my place!” Holy courage! As one reads words like these he might well say —

“Mother, why do you weep so long?

O, sister, why do you sigh?

Louder in heav'n is the angels' song

As the hero souls go by.”

A friend of mine was killed. His sister, a beautiful girl in body and mind, dreamt three days afterwards that she went to her brother, and found him in a big messroom with his companions. She said: 'I thought you were dead!' At which he flung back his head and replied, “Dead, no; we are only waiting for new uniforms — we are going to parade before the King.” Ray has received his new uniform, and with many another has paraded before the King.

The last point is this: the precious blood-shedding of these times is a Sacrament of Liberty. An English journalist said some time ago, “This is not a Royal war, a Government war, a war made by diplomats : it is a war of free nations against a devilish system of despotism and spoliation.” These are strong words, but they are true, Liberty is ours by inheritance, but what was the cost to our fathers? Faggot fires and dungeon gloom, the scaffold, the guillotine, the cross — these were the price of Liberty. To us it is a precious thing, and we must hand it on inviolate to succeeding generations. To guard this holy treasure committed to our keeping is the noble thing our boys have done. This is the meaning of the glorious sacrifices they are making. Their blood is the Sacrament of Liberty. I know war is cruel, horrible — but so was the Cross of Calvary, and yet the Cross was the instrument of deliverance, and war will usher in the rich and peaceful years.”

Time would fail me to say all I would say, but I must add this closing word. We are here to mourn, but not as those who have no hope. Count Bernstorff doesn't believe much in churches, but it is Christ's Church that is comforting mourners by the million in keeping alive the blessed hope of immortal life and reunion beyond the grave. Earthly hopes are shattered, bright lives are cut off, but heavenly hope lives.

In the dawn of a splendid manhood,
When the tide of his youth ran high:
With courage and hope in his bearing,
He waved us a last good-bye.

In our dreams we were with him ever,
O'er the distance leagues of the sea ;
Through thunder and clashing of battle
And onward to victory.

We saw him in visions of glory,
Return with the men from the fray;
With the enemy conquered and broken,
The thunder of guns died away.

But our dreams were all shattered and ended.
Our hero is silent and still ;
And “Dead on the Field of Honour”
Is all that is left to fill.

The void that his passing causes ;
The lonely ache in our heart ;
The days that will stretch in greyness
Till evening, and dawn depart.

England, whom he loved and fought for,

Will gather him close to her breast ;
And jealously guard his sleeping,
And the Father will do the rest.

The Father will do the rest ! And what will the Father do ? Nay, I cannot tell. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard." I can only guess. Do you know what happens when a transport brings a battalion home? The long wharf where she berths is kept almost empty ; the crowd of waiting friends are kept without the gate. Only a few officers and Red Cross officials are allowed inside with the band. As the huge liner draws inshore, and when the music can be heard by the incoming troops, it strikes up the tender strains of 'Home, Sweet Home.' Heaven has its welcomes for the weary as well as earth, for "There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven" -and don't you think the angels of God are waiting to welcome your dear ones home, and the Master waiting to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 17 August, 1918)

Candelo's Roll of Honor

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Cpl. Ray Ellis died of wounds

.....

Cpl Clarrie Ellis died of wounds

.....

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 24 August, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In sad but loving memory of our dear son and brother, Ray, died of wounds in England June 12thm 1918.

I cannot say, and will not say,
That he is dead – he is just away.
With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand
He wandered away to an unknown land,
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be since he lingers There.
And we –oh, we, who the wildest yearn
For the old time step and the glad return,
Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here;
Think of him still as the same, I say,
He is not dead – He is just away.

Inserted by his sorrowing Mother, Brothers and Sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 14 June, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In loving memory of my dear son and our brother, RAY, who died of wounds in County of London War Hospital, 12th June, 1918.

All his long life lies behind
Like a dimly blending dream;
There is nothing left to bind
To the realms that only seem,
By still water he would rest,
In the shadow of the tree;
After battle, sleep is best,
After noise, tranquillity.

-Inserted by his sorrowing mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Canelo, NSW – 12 June, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In loving memory of Ray, who died of wounds in England, 12th June, 1918.

We long to understand, and in our yearning,
O God, we stretch out anguished hands to Thee,
Till Thou shalt soothe the fever of our sorrow,
With tender visions of the life to be.

Inserted by his sorrowing mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Canelo, NSW – 11 June, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In loving memory of Ray, who died of wounds in England, 12th June, 1918.

Sleep on, sleep on, dear Ray, sleep!
Thy days of strife are o'er;
Let Him who made thee guard and keep
Thy soul unsullied ever more.
Sleep on, dear Ray, and be at rest
In England's peaceful clime;
For her thou gavest of thy best,
Thy life blood in its prime;
She takes thy gift and sheds a tear,
O'er her colonial sons,
Yet proudly holds the banner dear
In splendour to the sun.

Inserted by his mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Canelo, NSW – 10 June, 1922)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In loving memory of RAY, who died of wounds in England, JUNE 15th 1918.

“Dead!” did you say? Nay, only Heaven sped;

Just safe in God’s home port. They are not dead!

“Lost!” did you think ? How can such lives be lost?

Just gathered up: His jewels, rare of cost!

“Gone!” Nay, just waiting on God’s wide shore line.

The coming of life-vessels – yours and mine.

Inserted by his loving mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 16 June, 1923)

IN MEMORIAM

ELLIS – In loving memory of RAY who died of wounds in England, 12th June, 1918.

And with the morn those angel faces smile,

Which we have loved long since, and lost awhile.

-Inserted by his sorrowing mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Southern Record and Advertiser, Candelo, NSW – 14 June, 1924)

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)

Private R. S. Ellis does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of The Dearly Loved Son Of Mrs Ellis Of Candelo

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private R. S. Ellis' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

