

**Comely Bank Cemetery,
Edinburgh, Scotland
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



29728 DRIVER

W. C. FAIRWEATHER

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

2ND DECEMBER, 1918 Age 28

In Loving Memory Of

Our Dear Son

Who Died

That Others May Live

William Charles FAIRWEATHER

William Charles Fairweather was born at Crossover, Victoria in 1890 to parents David & Ann Fairweather (nee Little).

William Charles Fairweather attended Crossover State School.

William Charles Fairweather was a 26 year old single, Labourer from Crossover, Gippsland, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne on 11th April, 1916 with the 119th Howitzer Battery, Australian Field Artillery of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 29728 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr D. Fairweather of Crossover Post Office, via Warragul, Gippsland, Victoria. William's younger brother – Edward Gordon Fairweather enlisted the same day & was given the service number of 29727.

Pte William Charles Fairweather was at Camp at Royal Park from 25th April, 1916. Pte William Fairweather was admitted to Clearing Hospital, Royal Park from 19th May to 20th May, 1916 suffering from Influenza. He was transferred to Maribyrnong to Reinforcements Field Artillery Brigade as Gunner on 7th June, 1916. Gunner Fairweather was sent to Clearing Hospital at Maribyrnong from 14th July to 24th July, 1916 due to Measles contact. Gunner Fairweather was sent to Isolation Camp from 24th July, 1916 to 28th July, 1916. Gunner Fairweather was appointed Driver with 119 Howitzer Battery on 31st August, 1916.

Driver William Charles Fairweather, & his brother Edward Gordon Fairweather, both embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Aeneas* (A60) on 3rd October, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 19th November, 1916. Driver William Fairweather had been admitted to the Ship's Hospital on 17th November, 1916 with Mumps.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was admitted to Devonport Military Hospital on 19th November, 1916, with Mumps & discharged to Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 23rd November, 1916.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was marched in to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery). He proceeded overseas to France from Larkhill, Wiltshire via Folkestone on 2nd January, 1917 aboard *Princess Henrita*.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was marched in from England to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Etaples. Driver Fairweather was transferred to 4th Divisional Artillery Column on 10th January, 1917 & taken on strength in the field on 11th January, 1917.

Driver William Charles Fairweather departed on leave on 24th January, 1918 & returned from leave on 8th February, 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E01980

Group portrait of No. 3 Section of 4th Divisional Ammunition Column – taken on 16th March, 1918 at Belgium (Flanders, West-Vlaanderen, Heuvelland, Locre)

Identified: 1464 T/Bombardier (Bdr) F. Stringer (1); 33761 Driver (Dvr) L. J. Wilmot (2); 12300 Dvr H. Langhorne (3); 2059 Dvr C. W. Nelson (4); 28392 Dvr D. M. Clarke (5); 34338 Dvr L. F. Rogel (6); 2076 Dvr L. W. Snell (7); 3332 Shoeing Smith (SSth) W. Fuller (8); 13755 Gnr W. C. Aird (9); 3808 Wheeler F. Bowler (10); **29728 Dvr W. Fairweather (11)**; 28892 Trumpeter (Tptr) J. W. Pike (12);

Driver William Charles Fairweather was detached to 13th Infantry Brigade on 24th April, 1918.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was on leave to UK from 19th November, 1918 to 3rd December, 1918.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was admitted to 2nd Scottish General Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland on 27th November, 1918, seriously ill with Influenza. He developed Pneumonia (left lung) on 29th November, 1918. On 30th November, 1918 Driver Fairweather became very restless and slightly delirious.

Driver William Charles Fairweather died at 1.20 am on 2nd December, 1918 at 2nd Scottish General Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland from Influenza & Pneumonia.

Driver William Charles Fairweather was buried on 6th December, 1918 in Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland – Plot number D. 50 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Driver Fairweather - *Coffin was good Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance, supplied by the Black Watch Regiment. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and surmounted by beautiful flowers sent by – Mr & Mrs Smith. The “Last Post” was sounded at the graveside, and the Rev. Capt. C. N. Hannan officiated. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. Relatives & friends in attendance at the funeral – Brother – 29727 Dvr. Fairweather, 54th D.A.C., A.I.F.; Mr Paton; Mrs & Miss McConnell; Miss McGeorge & Mr Snith.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Driver William Charles Fairweather contains a letter from Sister Brown, 2nd Scottish General Hospital, Craighleith, Edinburgh, in a reply for information regarding the death of Driver Fairweather. The letter reads: *Gnr, Fairweather was admitted to this hospital on the night of 28-11-18, suffering from influenza with pneumonia. He was very ill during the three following days and died 2-12-18. We understood he had just been spending a furlough in Scotland with his brother who was then on his way back to France. We got from a little notebook of Gnr. Fairweather his cousin's address in the south of England, and wired there. The wire was in time to get his brother before he left England but unfortunately, his brother did not arrive here in time to see Gnr. Fairweather alive. Gnr. Fairweather was buried in Comely Bank Cemetery here & his brother was present at the funeral. One of two friends he had made in Edinburgh visited him here each day. I am sorry we have not now the address of these friends. They might have been able to give you fuller particulars.”*

Driver William Charles Fairweather requested in his Will, dated 22nd October, 1916, that he bequeathed all his real and personal property to his mother – Annie Fairweather, of Crossover, via Warragul, Gippsland, Victoria & he appointed his mother sole executrix of his Will.

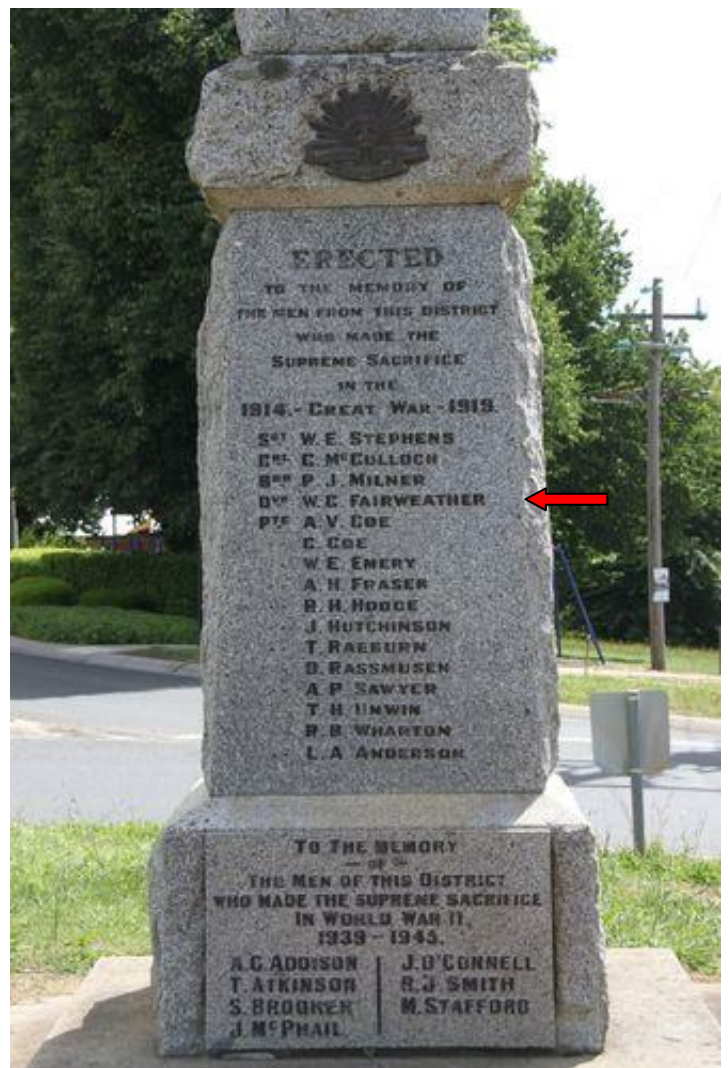
Driver William Charles Fairweather was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Driver Fairweather's father – Mr D. Fairweather, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Driver William Charles Fairweather – service number 29728, aged 28, of 4th Div. Ammunition Col., Australian Field Artillery. He was the son of David and Annie Fairweather of Crossover, Gippsland, Victoria, Australia.

Driver W. C. Fairweather is remembered on the Neerim South War Memorial, located at Main Neerim & Neerim East Roads, Neerim South, Victoria.



Neerim South War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Nancy Alford)



W. C. Fairweather & his brother, E. G. Fairweather, are both remembered on the Crossover State School Honour Roll. (Last known location was Crossover Pre-school, Baw Baw Shire).



Crossover State School Honour Roll (Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

Driver W. C. Fairweather is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 21.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(59 pages of Driver William Charles Fairweather'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 William Charles Fairweather:

Younger brother – Driver Edward Gordon Fairweather, 29727, 4th Divisional Artillery Column. Returned to Australia from England on 2nd January, 1919. He was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal.



Newspaper Notices

WAR CASUALTIES

LIST No. 453

DIED OTHER CAUSES

FAIRWEATHER, W. C., Crossover, 2/12/18

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 27 December, 1918)

DIED ON SERVICE

FAIRWEATHER – Died on the 2nd December, 1918, at 2nd General Hospital, Scotland, of influenza, after two years' active service, William C., dearly loved third son of David and Annie Fairweather (Crossover), beloved brother of George, David, Edwin (on active service), and Elsie.

(The Australasian, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 December, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

FAIRWEATHER – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, William Charles, who died of pneumonic influenza, December 2, 1918.

Ever in our thoughts,
Sadly missed.

- (Inserted by his loving mother, father, brothers, and sisters.)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 2 December, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

FAIRWEATHER – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Driver William Charles, of the 4th D.A.C., who died of pneumonic influenza on December 2, 1918, while on furlough.

Sadly missed.

- (Inserted by his loving mother, father, brothers, and sisters.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 2 December, 1921)

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*)

Driver W. C. Fairweather does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Loving Memory Of Our Dear Son Who Died That Others May Live



Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland contains 302 War Graves. There are only seven Australians buried in this cemetery from World War 1.

During the First World War, Edinburgh was headquarters to the 4th, 5th, 6th and 9th Battalions of the Royal Scots, with the 7th Battalion at Leith. The 2nd Scottish General Hospital (1,000 beds) occupied Craighleith Poorhouse, the Edinburgh War Hospital (2,600 beds) was in the Asylum buildings at Bangour and the Leith War Hospital (585 beds) in the infirmary at Leith. The port of Leith was used by hospital ships from north Russia and about 4,500 officers and men passed through it.

Second World War military hospitals were in Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and Bangour. The city was also Scottish Command Headquarters.

Edinburgh (Comely Bank) Cemetery contains 225 burials of the First World War, most of them forming a war graves plot in Section D. The Second World War plot is immediately in front and contains more than half of the 76 Second World War burials. The cemetery also contains a Finnish war grave and two non-war service burials.

(*Information & photos from CWGC*)



Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland



Communal Commonwealth War Graves plot in Section D

An unusual feature of the War Graves plot is that the granite headstones lie flat. This was a decision made by the architect, Sir Robert Lorimer. The plot contains WW1 and WW2 casualties/Spanish Flu victims and a member of the Finnish Legion.

Photo of Driver W. C. Fairweather's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Drysdale)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J00524

Australian Graves at Comely Bank Cemetery in Edinburgh, Scotland.

(From the collection of Mr Alfred Thomas Sharp, who was the Commonwealth Immigration Officer of Victoria and was based in the London Office during the First World War.)