

**Burngreave Cemetery,  
Sheffield, South Yorkshire**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3766 PRIVATE**

**A. GRAY**

**6TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**16TH AUGUST, 1916**

## Alfred GRAY

Alfred Gray was born at Long Gully, Bendigo, Victoria around 1871.

Alfred Gray was a 44 year old, single, Labourer from 112 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne, Victoria when he enlisted on 5th July, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his brother – Mr R. Gray, of 112 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne, Victoria. (Alfred Gray's next-of-kin – his brother Richard John Gray enlisted on 31st January, 1916, aged 43 & was posted to 6th Battalion with a service number of 5392. He embarked on 4th April, 1916 & was returned to Australia for discharge on 31st October, 1917.)

Alfred Gray was posted to 9th Depot Battalion on 9th July, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 12th Reinforcements of 6th Battalion on 22nd October, 1915.

Private Alfred Gray, Service number 3766, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 23rd November, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements.

Private Alfred Gray was written up on 26th February, 1916 while posted at Zeitoun for disobedience of orders – leaving camp improperly dressed. He forfeited 1 days' pay.

Private Alfred Gray embarked from Alexandria on 29th March, 1916 on H.T. *Transylvania* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 4th April, 1916.

Private Alfred Gray proceeded from 1st Australian Base Depot at Etaples on 10th June, 1916 to join his Unit & was taken on strength of 6th Battalion from Reinforcements in France on 11th June, 1916.

Private Alfred Gray was admitted to 1st Field Ambulance on 24th June, 1916 with Haemorrhoids then transferred & admitted to 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 30th June, 1916. He was transferred to No. 1 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 3rd July, 1916. Private Gray was discharged to duty at Base Details on 4th July, 1916 as unfit. He was admitted to 1st Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples on 7th July, 1916.

Private Alfred Gray was admitted to No. 26 General Hospital at Etaples, France on 21st July, 1916 with Piles. He was marked for transfer to England on 12th August, 1916 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Dieppe* from Calais, France on 13th August, 1916.

### 6th Battalion

The 6th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 7th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

.....

The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916.

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Private Alfred Gray was admitted to 3rd Northern General Hospital, Sheffield, England on 13th August, 1916 with haemorrhoids.

Private Alfred Gray died on 16th August, 1916 at 3rd Northern General Hospital, Sheffield, England from "dilation of heart and anaesthesia arrest cardiac function." (Note: some forms in the Service record file have that Private Gray died from wounds – but there are others where this has been crossed out & replaced with "died of disease." There is no mention at all that he was wounded.)

A death for Alfred Gray, aged 45, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Sheffield, Yorkshire, West Riding, England.

Private Alfred Gray was buried in Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England. Due to the number of deaths and lack of available space in some cemeteries, numerous burials took place in what are known as common

or mass graves. Private Gray was buried in a one of these common or mass graves. Behind the Cross of Sacrifice in plot JJ is a Screen Wall commemorating those First World War casualties whose graves could not be marked by headstones, most of them buried in the plot of ground immediately in front of it. A Granite Memorial Cross was erected by the Royal British Legion at the common grave site where Private Gray was buried – Memorial F9. "C" 5. The names of those buried in this plot were engraved on the Granite Memorial Cross however, the names on the Granite Memorial Cross are not included on the CWGC Screen Wall. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Chaplain D. Ross Hewton, St. Luke's Vicarage, South Melbourne, wrote to Base Records in September, 1916 stating that he had been sent a telegram on 6th August regarding that death of the late Private Alfred Gray & that his brother R. Gray of 112 Thistlewaite St. South Melbourne be advised of his brother's death. The Chaplain explained that Mr R. Gray had enlisted to go to the front & that at the address of 112 Thistlewaite St resided a very old woman named Mrs Josephine Grieves who was the intimate friend of the deceased A. Gray & with whom he had left all his belongings. The Chaplain explained that any information that could be provided to Mrs Grieves would be greatly received and that R. Gray also resided with her. As a result of this letter Mrs Grieves was added to the records as another next-of-kin for the late Private A. Gray.

Mrs Josephine Grieves, of 112 Thistlewaite St. South Melbourne, requested the death certificate of the late Private Alfred Gray in December, 1916.

Josephine Grieves, of Thistlewaite St. South Melbourne applied for a War Pension in regards to her connection to Private Alfred Gray, 3766, 6th Battalion. Her claim was rejected on the grounds that she was not a dependant (& no relation).

Base Records contacted Mr R. J. Gray, 146 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne, in July, 1920 asking if there were any nearer blood relatives than himself & specifically if his father and mother were 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. Mr R. J. Gray replied stating he was the eldest & only brother of Pte A. Gray, No. 3766 & that their parents were deceased.

The personal effects of the late Private Alfred Gray were sent to his brother - Mr R. J. Gray, 112 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne.

Communications to Mr R Gray, of 146 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne & c/o Mr S. Gray of Gammond Street, Footscray, were returned so a notice was prepared for the Press for 22nd September, 1922 for Mr R. J. Gray, formerly of Footscray, and next-of-kin of No. 3766 Private A. Gray, 6th Battalion, A.I.F. to communicate with the Officer in Charge, Base Records, Melbourne as early as possible.

Private Alfred Gray was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Alfred Gray's brother – Mr R. J. Gray, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private A. Gray – service number 3766, of 6th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

A. Gray is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.



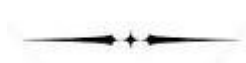
Private A. Gray is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 46.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

(63 pages of Private Alfred Gray'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) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **TWO CASUALTY LISTS**

The 206th and 207th casualty lists, received simultaneously,.....

DIED OF CAUSE NOT STATED

Private A. Gray, South Melb.

*(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 9 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)*

A letter from Base Records, dated 13th July, 1921, to Mr R. J. Gray, 146 Thistlewaite Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his brother, the late Private A. Gray, 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 A. Gray does not have a headstone.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Due to the number of deaths and lack of available space in some cemeteries, numerous burials took place in what are known as common or mass graves. Private A. Gray was buried in a one of these common or mass graves. A Granite Memorial Cross was erected at the common grave by the Royal British Legion, on which the names of casualties who were buried there were engraved.

## **Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England**

During the First World War there were two substantial war hospitals in Sheffield, the Wharnccliffe, in the Wadsley Asylum, and the 3rd Northern General, housed in 15 separate buildings. The city, a centre for war industry during the Second World War, suffered heavy enemy air-raids during the Blitz with 600 people killed in a single raid in December 1940. Sheffield (Burngreave) Cemetery contains scattered war graves of both wars. Behind the Cross of Sacrifice in plot JJ is a Screen Wall commemorating those First World War casualties whose graves could not be marked by headstones, most of them buried in the plot of ground immediately in front of it. In front of the Screen Wall are a number of Special Memorial headstones for Second World War casualties buried elsewhere in the cemetery whose graves could not be marked. In all, the cemetery contains 235 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 57 from the Second. *(Information from CWGC)*

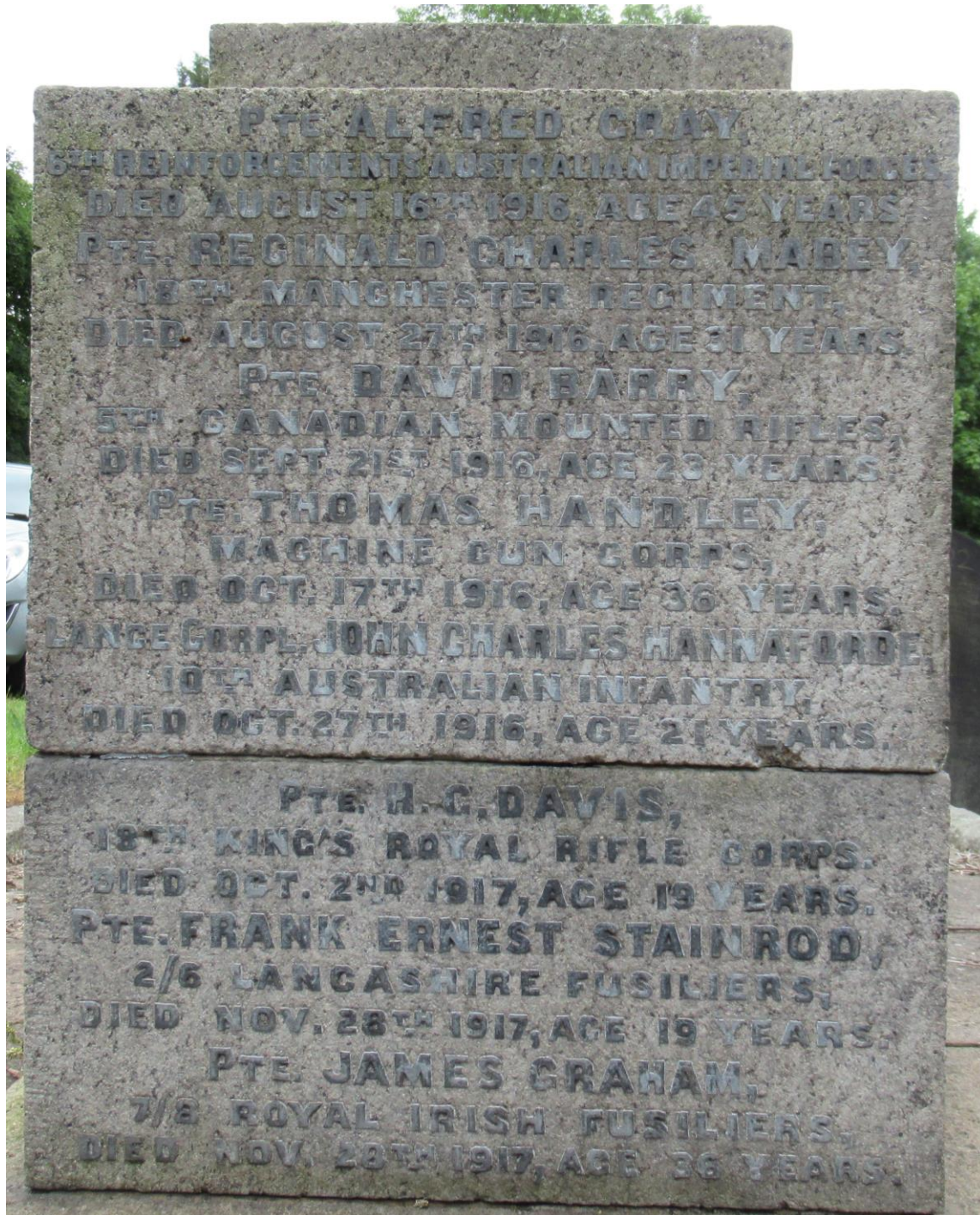


**Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield** (Photo by Paula Lloyd – Find a Grave)



**Cross of Sacrifice & Screen Wall** (Photo by Joaquin O'Ryan)

Photo of Private A. Gray's name on the Granite Memorial Cross in Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England.



*Pte ALFRED GRAY*

*6TH Reinforcements Australian Imperial Forces*

*Died August 16TH 1916, Aged 45 Years*





IN HONORARY MEMORY OF  
SERG. FRANK WILSON TRADE  
DIED MAY 20<sup>TH</sup> 1918, AGE 26 YEARS  
DIED MAY 20<sup>TH</sup> 1918, AGE 26 YEARS  
Pvt. ARTHUR GEORGE KENNETH SWINEY  
DIED APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> 1918, AGE 25 YEARS  
SERGT. HENRY BOWCHEN,  
2<sup>ND</sup> BATT. WILTS. REGT.  
DIED MAY 30<sup>TH</sup> 1918, AGE 26 YEARS  
SERGT. JAMES WYNNIE,  
2<sup>ND</sup> BATT. GUESWIRE REGT.  
DIED JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup> 1918, AGE 26 YEARS  
Pvt. WILLIAM DAVIDSON,  
2<sup>ND</sup> BATT. CAMBERG WILKINSONS  
DIED JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> 1918, AGE 22 YEARS  
Pvt. GEORGE FOSTER,  
2<sup>ND</sup> NORFOLK REGT.  
DIED MAY 19<sup>TH</sup> 1917, AGE 19 YEARS  
Pvt. SIDNEY HERBERT FOREMAN,  
2<sup>ND</sup> NORFOLK REGT.  
DIED JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> 1917, AGE 18 YEARS  
CAPTAIN GEORGE WILLIAM TAPSELL  
ROYAL ENGINEERS  
DIED JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup> 1917, AGE 27 YEARS



**Granite Memorial Cross** (Photo courtesy of Christine Steers)

**\*\*The CWGC was advised at the time of researching (2019) that the Cross on the Memorial was not attached (see photo below).**

CWGC have advised: *“the cross will have been laid recumbent on the ground as a result of what is known as 'topple testing'. This is a procedure undertaken by all local cemetery authorities in the UK, who regularly assess private memorials for safety. If any are viewed as possible health and safety hazards to the public, in that they could be pushed over and injure someone, then whether in the form of stone crosses, or any other privately owned memorial headstone of any shape or size, they are laid down recumbent on the graves. Today, we as the Commission are not responsible for the repair of the private memorials, such as the one concerned, however please be assured that this memorial will continue to be monitored during our scheduled 2-3 year inspection visits to ensure the legibility of the names.”*

**\*\*See 2022 Update below**



**Granite Memorial Cross** (Photos courtesy of Wayne Tyke – taken 2019)

**Update – 24 April, 2022:** The following photos were taken of the Granite Memorial Cross which now has the Cross re-attached.



*(Photo courtesy of Wayne Bywater – 24 April, 2022)*



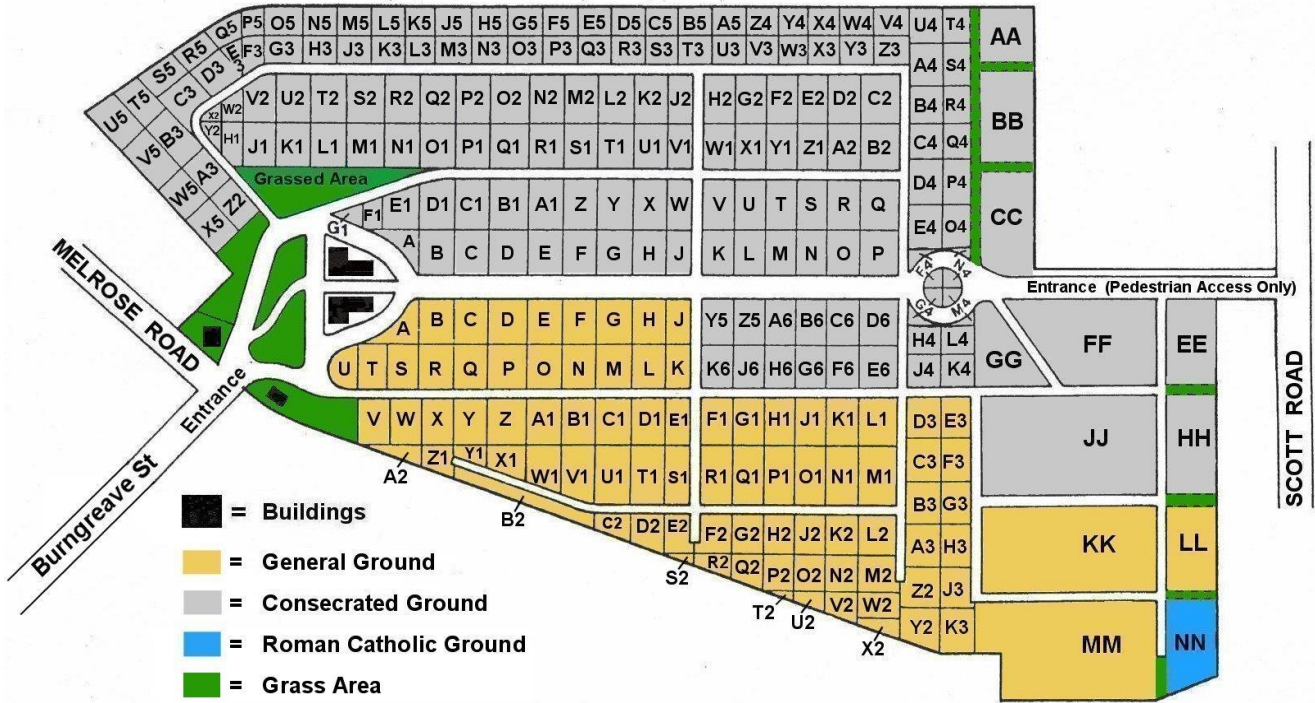
*(Photo courtesy of Wayne Bywater – 24 April, 2022)*

**Update – October, 2023:** I was advised by Neil Jennions that the Memorial had been cleaned earlier this year by CWGC – EOHO Project (Eyes On, Hands On – where volunteers clean up CWGC Headstones & Memorials on behalf of the CWGC).



*(Photo with permission from Neil Jennions – CWGC EOHO Volunteer for this section of the Cemetery)*

# Burngreave Cemetery



(Photo from Meersbrook – Find a Grave)