

**St. James Churchyard Cemetery,
Dover, Kent
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1931 PRIVATE

W. S. HELSON

45TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

12TH OCTOBER, 1916 Age 23

*The Lord Gave
And The Lord Hath Taken Away*

William Stanley HELSON

William Stanley Helson was born at Liverpool, Lancashire, England on 5th May, 1892 to parents William Henry and Phillis Maria Helson (nee Jeffcott). He was baptised at St. Clement's Church, Toxteth, Lancashire, England on 24th July, 1892. The family lived at 86 Northbrook Street & William Henry Helson (father) was listed as a Slater & Plasterer.

The 1901 England Census recorded Stanley Helson (born Liverpool) as an 11 year old patient at the Children's Convalescent Home at Meols Drive, Central Ward, Hoylake cum West Kirby, Cheshire, England. The Convalescent home was described as "*to receive children of poor parents convalescent from illness of non-infectious character.*" Stanley Helson was one of 104 children listed as patients.

[The 1901 England Census recorded William's family living at 86 Northbrooks St, Toxteth Park, Lancashire. His parents were listed as William H. Helson (Slater & Plasterer, aged 40) & Phillis M. Helson (aged 42). Also listed were two of William & Phillis' children – Hilda M. Helson (aged 12) & Alberta Helson (Son, aged 4, born Liverpool, Lancashire). William Henry Helson's brother was also listed – Fred Helson (Slater & Plasterer, aged 28) & a boarder – Herbert Murrin (Slater & Plasterer, aged 20).

The 1911 England Census recorded William Stanley Helson as an 18 year old Apprentice Slater & Tiler living with his family in a 5 roomed dwelling at 8 Liscard Road, Waverton, Lancashire, England. His parents were listed as William Henry Helson (Foreman Slater & Tiler, aged 50) & Phillis Maria Helson (aged 51). William & Phillis had been married for 25 years, having had 5 children with only 3 children still living. Also listed was William's younger brother – Albert Edward Helson (Apprentice Joiner, aged 14).

William Stanley Helson came to Australia when he was 19 years old, according to information supplied by his mother for the Roll of Honour.

William Stanley Helson was a 23 year old, single, Slater from Croydon, NSW when he enlisted on 21st February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1931 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his father – William Henry Helson, of "Liscard" Wellington Street, Croydon, NSW.

Private William Stanley Helson was posted to "J" Company at Bathurst Depot on 21st February, 1916. He was transferred to 3rd Reinforcements of 45th Battalion on 16th April, 1916.

Private William Stanley Helson embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Warilda* (A69) on 22nd April, 1916 with the 45th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements (according to the Embarkation Roll at The Australian War Memorial & 22nd May, 1916 as per the Service Record file) & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 18th July, 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 William Stanley Helson was marched in & taken on strength of 12th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire on 19th July, 1916.

Private William Stanley Helson proceeded overseas to France on 16th September, 1916 & joined the 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples on 17th September, 1916

Private William Stanley Helson joined 45th Battalion in the Field on 29th September, 1916 from 4th Australian Divisional Base Depot.

Private William Stanley Helson was sent to Hospital 3rd October, 1916. He was admitted to 12th Australian Field Ambulance with Pulmonary Tuberculosis then transferred to 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. Private Helson was transferred to Ambulance Train 28 on 5th October, 1916 & admitted to 32nd Stationary Hospital at Wimereux on 6th October, 1916. Private Helson embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St. Dennis* from Boulogne on 11th October, 1916 with Pleurisy.

Private William Stanley Helson was admitted to Military Hospital, Dover, Kent, England on 12th October, 1916 with Pneumonia.

Private William Stanley Helson died at 9.30 pm on 12th October, 1916 at Military Hospital, Dover, Kent, England from Pneumonia.

A death for William S. Helson, aged 24, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Dover, Kent, England.

Private William Stanley Helson was buried on 16th October, 1916 in St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England – Plot number M. K. 40 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Newspaper report in *Dover Express*, Dover, Kent, England - 20 October, 1916:

FUNERAL OF AN AUSTRALIAN

The funeral took place on Monday, in the Nonconformist portion of St. James's Cemetery, of Private Helson, of the 45th Australian Regiment, who died at the Western Heights' Hospital. The Rev. H. G. Fiddick was the officiating clergyman. The band and firing party were from the East Surrey Regiment, and the "Last Post" was sounded over the grave. The funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr Pepper, of Victoria Crescent, Dover.

A War Pension was granted to Phyllis Maria Helson, mother of the late Pte William Stanley Helson, in the sum of 20/- per fortnight from 17th December, 1916.

Private William Stanley Helson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Helson's father – Mr W. H. Helson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent March, 1922 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Stanley Helson – service number 1931, aged 23, of 45th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of William Henry and Phyllis Helson, of "Liscard" Wellington St., Croydon, New South Wales. Native of Liverpool, England.

Private W. S. Helson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 139.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

S. W. Helson is remembered on the Burwood War Memorial Arch, located in Burwood Park, Burwood Road, Burwood, Sydney, NSW.



Burwood War Memorial Arch (Photos with permission of Peter Miller)



(53 pages of Private William Stanley Helson's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

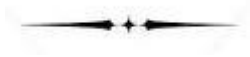
Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



Connected to Pte William Stanley Helson:

Younger brother - Private Albert Edward Helson, 3808– Enlisted 10th September, 1915 at Holsworthy, NSW with 13th Battalion. Embarked 20th December, 1915. Transferred to 4th Field Ambulance.

Embarked 12th June, 1919 for return to Australia. Entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal.



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED FROM WOUNDS AND OTHER CAUSES

Pte W. HELSON, Croydon

(Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga, NSW – 27 October, 1916)

238TH CASUALTY LIST

Died of Illness

NEW SOUTH WALES

Pte HELSON, W. S., Croydon, 12/10/16

(The Herald, Melbourne, Victoria – 26 October, 1916)



PTE. W. S. HELSON,
Croydon and England,
Died of Illness.

PTE W. S. HELSON
Croydon and England
Died of Illness

(*Sydney Mail*, NSW – 27 December, 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*)

Private W. S. Helson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away

St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England

St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover contains 719 identified casualties. There are 8 Australian servicemen from World War 1 buried here – 7 Australian Imperial Force soldiers & 1 Royal Flying Corps.

During the First World War, Dover was a port of embarkation for troops bound for the Western Front and between August 1914 and August 1919 some 1,300,000 Commonwealth sick and wounded were landed there. The port was bombed in 1915 and again in August 1916.

There are 373 identified burials of the 1914-1918 war here. In addition there are 19 unidentified burials, 9 of whom can be named as victims of the Zeebrugge Raid, and these 9 are inscribed on a Special Memorial on the Cross of Sacrifice in the Zeebrugge Plot.

In 1940, Dover was the headquarters for the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk and nearly 200,000 of the 366,000 British and Allied troops brought back during the operation were landed there. Throughout the war Dover was a particular target for the long range guns on the French coast and between September 1939 and May 1945 there were no less than 742 attacks by air raid and shelling.

Most of the 356 Second World War burials are contained in a special war graves plot at the far end of the cemetery. The plot, known as the Dunkirk plot, contains many graves from the Dunkirk operation. 22 of these burials are unidentified. There are also 8 Foreign National war burials and 3 non war service burials in the cemetery.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Photo of Private W. S. Helson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. James' Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England.



(Photo courtesy of Kyle Tallett)



Private Helson marked with arrow (Photo courtesy of Ralph Surry)



St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover