

**St. Mary's New Churchyard,
Codford, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6/2382 PRIVATE

T. W. KEARSE

N.Z. CANTERBURY REGT.

25TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 23

Thomas Walker KEARSE

Thomas Walker Kears was born on 15th December, 1893 at Westport, New Zealand, the son of Thomas Fowler Kears & Rosanna Kears (nee Walker). Thomas's birth was registered in 1893.

Thomas Walker Kears was a 22 year old, (Attestation Papers show date of birth as Dec 15th, 1891) single, Labourer from Kaikohe, New Zealand when he enlisted on 24th January, 1915 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 6/2382 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr T. W. Kears c/- Mrs J. Daryl, 25 Owen St, Newtown, Wellington, New Zealand.

Private Thomas Walker Kears embarked with 4th Reinforcements, Canterbury Infantry Battalion from Wellington, New Zealand on 17th April, 1915. Three troop ships left Wellington that day carrying a total of 2,254 men - on HMNZT (21) *Willochra*, HMNZT (22) *Knight Templar* and HMNZT (23) *Waitomo*.

Private Thomas Walker Kears joined his Battalion in the Dardanelles on 16th August, 1915. He was admitted to St. David's Hospital in Malta on 31st August, 1915 with Enteritis. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship on 18th September, 1915 & admitted to 2nd War Hospital at Birmingham on 25th September, 1915 with Debility.

On 17th January, 1916 Private Thomas Walker Kears was attached to New Zealand Base Depot at Hornchurch, Essex. On 9th February, 1916 Private Kears was admitted to Depot Hospital & discharged to duty on 13th February, 1916.

Private Thomas Walker Kears rejoined his Unit at Ismailia, Egypt on 1st March, 1916 & embarked for France on 6th April, 1916.

Private Thomas Walker Kears forfeited 28 days pay on 19th August, 1916 for absenting himself without leave from 9 p.m. on 19th until 7 p.m. on 21st August, 1916.

Private Thomas Walker Kears was wounded in action in France on 20th September, 1916 with a gun shot wound to his hand & wrist (slight). He was admitted to No. 5 General Hospital at Rouen on 28th September, 1916 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship on 29th September, 1916. Private Kears was admitted to 3rd S. General Hospital at Oxford on 30th September, 1916.

Private Thomas Walker Kears was attached to Command Depot at Codford, Wiltshire on 1st November, 1916 & on 17th November, 1916 was admitted to Venereal section of Hospital. He was discharged on 28th November, 1916 but again admitted to Hospital – No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital (Venereal Section) on 5th December, 1916. Private Kears was discharged on 16th December, 1916.

Private Thomas Walker Kears proceeded to Res. Group at Sling Camp on 5th January, 1917. He was appointed Cook on 11th February, 1917 with 1st Canterbury Coy.

Private Thomas Walker Kears married Catherine Louise Goodwin (Kitty) on 21st March, 1917 at Southwark Registry Office, London.

Private Thomas Walker Kears was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire on 19th June, 1917 & transferred to New Zealand Convalescent Hospital at Hornchurch on 28th June, 1917.

Private Thomas Walker Kears forfeited 2 days pay while at Codford on 28th July, 1917 for being absent without leave from 6 p.m. on 27th July until 8 p.m. on 28th July, 1917.

Private Thomas Walker Kears was marched in to Sling Army Camp on 4th September, 1917 & appointed Cook on 7th September, 1917 with 4th Reserve Battalion, Canterbury Regiment.

Private Thomas Walker Kears was admitted to Hospital at Codford (No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital) on 19th October, 1917 with Pleurisy & so relinquished his appointment as Cook.

Private Thomas Walker Kearsé was reported as seriously ill with Pneumonia on 21st October & then dangerously ill on 24th October, 1917.

Private Thomas Walker Kearsé died on 25th October, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire, England of Pneumonia.

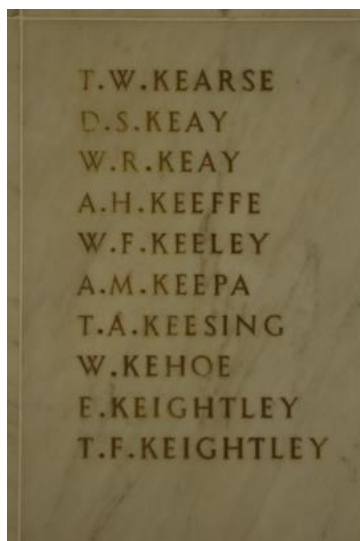
A death for Thomas Kearsé, aged 23, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Private Thomas Walker Kearsé was buried in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England on 27th October, 1917.

Private Thomas Walker Kearsé was entitled to 1914-15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal as he had entered a Theatre of War – Egypt, Balkans & Western European. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Mrs Asselin – Private Kearsé's widow now remarried & living at 25 Homer St, Newtown, Sydney, NSW, Australia (July, 1921 & March, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Walker Kearsé, 6/2382 of Canterbury Regiment, N.Z.E.F. as the husband of Mrs C. L. Asselin (formerly Kearsé) of 25 Holmwood St, Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

T. W. Kearsé is remembered on the Auckland War Memorial Museum, World War 1 Hall of Memories Panels.



World War 1 Hall of Memories Panel, Auckland War Memorial Museum (Photo by J. Halpin 2010)

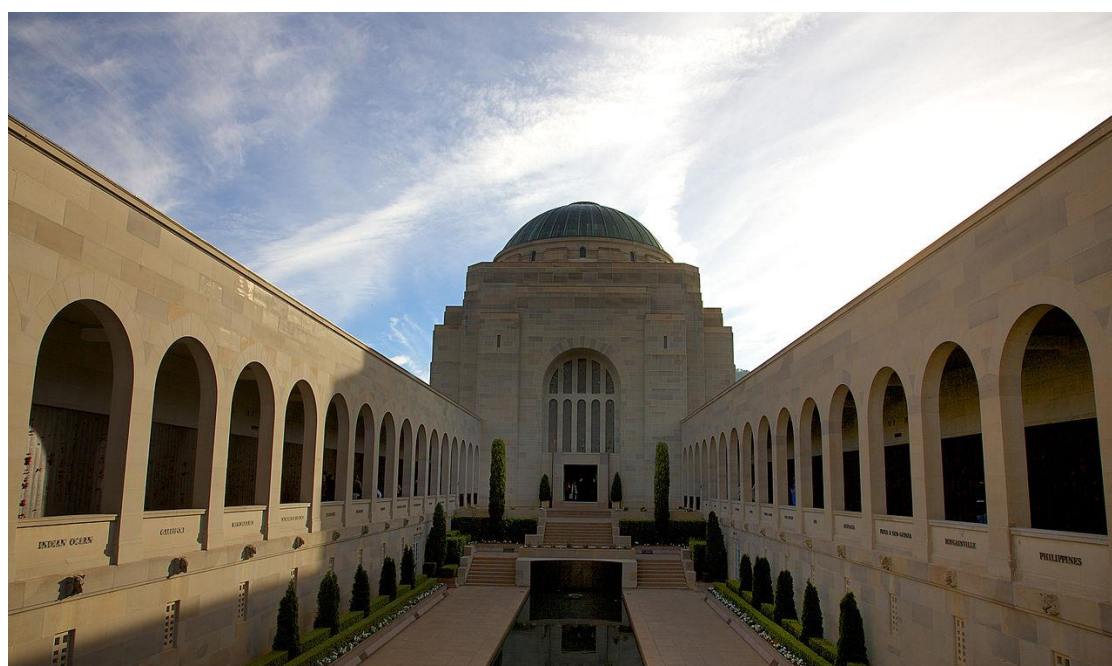


Private Thomas Walker Kearse is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

(Note: It appears that Private Thomas Walker Kearse's name on the Commemorative Roll was in error & was based on the information that his remarried widow's address was listed as Australia & therefore the soldier concerned, it was assumed, would be Australian.)



Commemorative Roll (Photo from AWM)



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial (Capital Photographer)

(25 pages of Private Thomas Walker Kears's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand & The Australian War Memorial (Commemorative Roll).



(Auckland Weekly News 1917)

[Connected to Private Thomas Walker Kears:](#)

Older brother - Rifleman Bertie Ernest Kears, 25/1771, New Zealand Expeditionary Force, died of Broncho Pneumonia on 26th July, 1918.

Both brothers are buried in Codford St. Mary's New Cemetery, Wiltshire, England.

Newspaper Reports

HOSPITAL REPORT

Wellington, Oct 26

Reported seriously ill: T. Kears

(Marlborough Express, Volume LI, Issue 255, 27 October, 1917)

KEARSE – On the 25th October, 1917, in Codford Hospital, died of pneumonia. Private Tom Kears, 4th Reinforcements, beloved son of T. F. Kears, 25 Owen-street.

(Evening Post, Volume XCIV, Issue 103, 29 October, 1917)

DIED OF SICKNESS

Canterbury Infantry Regiment

Kears, T. W. (T. W. Kears, c/o 25 Owen Street, Newtown, f. October 25)

(Dominion, Volume 11, Issue 31, 31 October, 1917)

St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England

The New Zealand Command Depot was established at Codford in June 1916 and the No 3 New Zealand General Hospital followed in July. The New Churchyard was established by deed of gift as the "Military Burial Ground," with a small part reserved for future burials from the parish. The war graves plot contains 98 burials, mostly of New Zealand and Australian forces. There is only one burial of the Second World War in the New Churchyard.

(Information from CWGC)

There are 31 WW1 Australian War Graves & 66 WW1 New Zealand War Graves located here. There is one WW1 British Royal Army Medical Corp Grave & one WW2 Welsh Guards grave located in this Churchyard.



(Photo by Romy Wyeth)



St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford (Photos courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



Photos of Private T. W. Kearse's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England. Also known as Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.

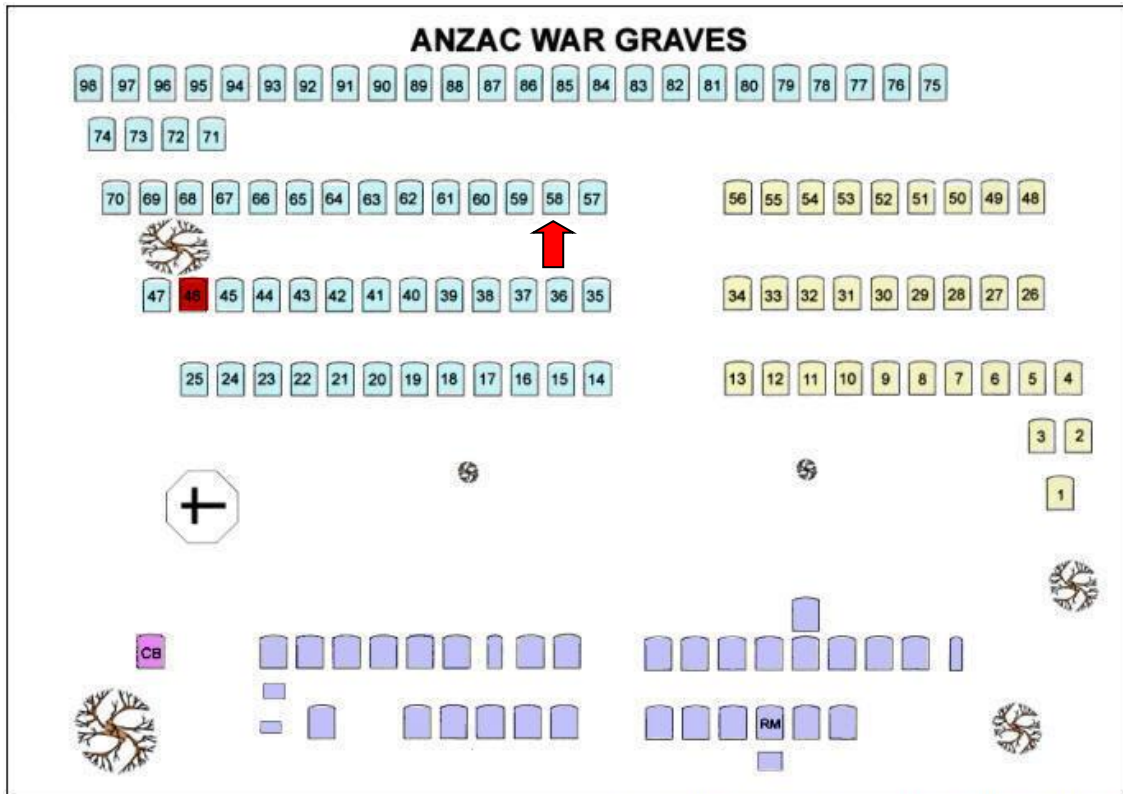


(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Private T. W. Kears is located in Third Row (Left Hand Side) Grave Plot # 58 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (CWGC Reference - Grave # 101)



- Australian Soldiers
 - Welsh Soldier
 - New Zealand Soldiers
 - Local Burials
 - UK Soldier
- Codford War Graves map adapted from Brian Marshall
courtesy of Romy Wyeth





New Zealand Section of Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery *(Photo by Romy Wyeth 2013)*