

**Seafield Cemetery,
Edinburgh, Scotland,
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



9932 CADET

E. S. KIRBY

AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY

2ND FEBRUARY, 1918

"In Paradise"

Ernest Seymour KIRBY

Ernest Seymour Kirby was born at Pebmarsh, near Colchester, Essex, England in 1885 to parents Reverend Augustus George Kirby & Edith Kirby (nee Smith-Dorrien). His birth was registered in the June quarter, 1885 in the district of Halstead, Essex.

The 1891 England Census listed Ernest Seymour Kirby as a 6 year old living with his family at the Rectory, Pebmarsh, Essex. His parents were listed as Augustus George Kirby (Rector of Pebmarsh, aged 43, born London) & Edith Kirby (aged 37, born Gt. Berkhamstead, Herts). Ernest was one of four children listed in this Census, all born Pebmarsh, – Alma Edith Kirby (aged 7), then Ernest, Mary Evelyn Kirby (aged 5) & Eric Dorrien Kirby (aged 2). Also listed was Alma Pauline Smith-Dorrien – sister-in-law of Augustus (aged 35) & 4 servants – Jean Burgiss (Nurse, aged 37), Charlotte Eaves (Cook, aged 25), Eliza Eldred (Parlour Maid, aged 21) & Mary Ann Heath (Nurse Maid, aged 16).

The 1901 England Census listed Ernest Kirby as a 17 year old living with his family at the Rectory, Pebmarsh, Essex. His parents were listed as Augustus Kirby (Clergyman, Church of England, aged 53) & Edith Kirby (aged 47). Ernest was one of four children listed in this Census – Horace Kirby (aged 20, born Newnham, Hants), then Ernest, Gwendolin Kirby (aged 8, born Pebmarsh, Essex) & Frances (aged 4, born Pebmarsh, Essex). Three servants were also listed – Ada March (Governess, aged 30), Laura Gardner (Housemaid, aged 28) & Louisa Emberson (Cook, aged 30).

The 1911 England Census listed Ernest Seymour Kirby as a 26 year old, Solicitor, visiting with the Henry Barham Dickinson (Private Means & Farmer, aged 61) & his wife Emily Frances Dickinson (aged 36) at The Moat, Pebmarsh, which was a twenty three roomed dwelling. The Dickinson's had no children & 5 servants.

[The 1911 England Census listed Ernest's parents living at Bude Vicarage, Bude near Cornwall. His parents had been married for 31 years & had 8 children in total.]

According to information supplied by Mr Augustus Kirby, father of Ernest Kirby, for the Roll of Honour, his son came to Australia when he was 25 years old.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the district of Murray, subdivision of Hay, NSW listed Ernest Seymour Kirby, Overseer living at Gunbar Road, Galah.

Ernest Seymour Kirby was a 30 year old, single, Station Manager from Gundaline, Hay, NSW when he enlisted on 1st November, 1915 with the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, 13th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 9932 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – A. G. Kirby of South Weald, Brentwood, Essex, England. Ernest Kirby stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 3 years with Inns of Court Mounted Infantry.

Gunner Ernest Seymour Kirby embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Berrima* (A35) on 17th December, 1915.

Gunner Ernest Seymour Kirby was taken on strength of D.A.C. from Reinforcements at Cairo on 24th January, 1916.

Gunner Ernest Kirby was transferred to 5th Div. Artillery at Tel-el-Kenir on 14th March, 1916.

Gunner Ernest Kirby was taken on strength & posted to 53rd Battery at Moascar on 1st April, 1916.

Gunner Ernest Kirby was promoted to Temporary Corporal on 17th April, 1916 while at Ferry Post.

Temporary Corporal Ernest Kirby was promoted to Corporal on 14th May, 1916 while at Ferry Post.

Corporal Ernest Kirby embarked from Alexandria on *Rhesus* on 16th June, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 24th June, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Kirby was transferred to 25th F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade) in the field on 9th July, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Kirby was detached for duty at Artillery School of Instruction on 10th August, 1916 & rejoined on 23rd August, 1916.

Corporal Ernest Kirby was promoted to Sergeant on 1st September, 1916.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was admitted to 36th Casualty Clearing Station on 6th January, 1917 & then taken by Ambulance Train on 7th January, 1917. Sergeant Ernest Kirby was admitted to 5th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 7th January, 1917. He was transferred to No. 2 Convalescent Depot on 17th January, 1917. Sergeant Kirby was medically classified as Class A – ready for Active Service & transferred to Base Details on 26th January, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby joined A.G.B Depot (Australian General Base Depot) at Etaples from Hospital on 9th February, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby joined No. 5 Division A.F.A. (Australian Field Artillery) on 2nd March, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was taken on strength with 14th F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade) & posted to 53rd Battery in the field on 17th April, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was sent to School of Instruction on 5th May, 1917 & rejoined on 2nd June, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was transferred to 55th Battery on 9th July, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was wounded on 31st July, 1917 but remained on duty.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby proceeded on leave on 29th August, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 6th September, 1917.

Sergeant Ernest Kirby was selected to attend Royal Artillery Cadet School, St. John's Wood, England & to be supernumerary to establishment on 21st September, 1917.

Cadet Ernest Seymour Kirby was admitted to New End Military Hospital at Hampstead on 9th October, 1917 with rupture of Muscle. He was discharged to duty on 21st December, 1917.

Cadet Ernest Seymour Kirby was admitted to Leith War Hospital, Seafield, Leith, Edinburgh, Scotland on 30th December, 1917 suffering from acute endocarditis.

The Medical Case Sheet for Cadet Ernest Seymour records that the *“patient stated he has been perfectly healthy up till October, 1917 when he had a blow on the abdomen and an abscess developed. Patient was in New End Hospital till 20th Dec. when he was discharged.*

While he was on sick leave near Edinburgh on Dec. 24th 1917 he took ill with symptoms of chill, dyspnoea, pain in chest, cough and night sweats.”

Sergeant/Cadet Ernest Seymour Kirby, aged 32, died at 8.15 am on 2nd February, 1918 at Leith War Hospital, Seafield, Edinburgh, Scotland from Acute Endocarditis complicated by acute Nephritis.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Cadet E. S. Kirby contains a letter from The Matron, Leith War Hospital, Seafield, Leith, Scotland which reads:

“In reply to your letter regarding Cadet E. S. Kirby late 14th F.A.B., A.I.F., I beg to say he was in this Hospital about five weeks prior to his death. His heart was in a very bad condition and most of the time he was too ill to take any interest in surroundings. Mr Kirby was buried in the Cemetery immediately adjoining the Hospital, this was at the earnest wish of his friends by whom he was constantly surrounded. I write you very briefly as the whole time of his illness his relations were with him, his Mother, two sisters and one brother were here at the time of his death and His Mother came to Edinburgh so I feel it is for the family to discuss the matter with other relations.”

Sergeant/Cadet Ernest Seymour Kirby was buried at 2 pm on 5th February, 1918 in Seafield Cemetery, Leith, Edinburgh, Scotland – Plot number B. 626. He has a private headstone but his death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. From the burial report of Cadet Kirby - *Coffin was good polished Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths which were sent by the following:*

Father and Mother

Admiral Sir J. Storton, K.C.B & Lady Storton

Sister of Ward, Seafield Hospital

Brother & Sister (Eva and Eric)

Lieut. & Mrs Gerald Moore

Mr & Mrs Kenneth Walker

Gun Carriage, Firing Party, Buglers and Pallbearers, under the command of an officer were supplied by the 39th Bty Royal Field Artillery stationed at Leith. 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 present at the funeral: MOTHER – Mrs Kirby, South Weald, Brentwood, Essex. SISTER – Mrs Strachon, Priory Mansions, London, FRIENDS – Admiral Sir J. Storton, K.C.B. Edinburgh and Lieut. Oates, R.N.V.R., Lieut. & Mrs Gerald Moore, R.N.V.R.

Sergeant Ernest Seymour Kirby was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sgt Kirby's father – Mr A. G. Kirby, as the closest next-of-kin (Scroll & Plaque both sent to England in October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Cadet Ernest Seymour Kirby – service number 9932, of 14th Field Artillery Brigade, Australian Field Artillery. No family details are listed.

Sergeant E. S. Kirby is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 18.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

E. S. Kirby is remembered on the Brentwood War Memorial, Essex, England.

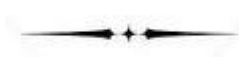


Brentwood War Memorial



(37 pages of Sergeant Ernest Seymour Kirby'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



Newspaper Notices

ESSEX ROLL OF HONOUR

Ernest Seymour Kirby, Australian Artillery, son of the Rev. A. G. and Mrs Kirby, South Weald, has died from poison contracted abroad.

(*Essex Newsmen*, Chelmsford, Essex, England – 16 February, 1918)

CASUALTIES

383rd LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

Died of Illness

Sgt. E. S. Kirby, England

(*The Land*, Sydney, NSW, Australia – 22 February, 1918)

Seafield Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Seafield Cemetery, Edinburgh contains 184 First World War burials, some of them in the military plot in Section B, others in the admiralty plot in Section M (marked by a screen wall bearing the names of those buried there or unmarked in other parts of the cemetery), the rest scattered. There are also 103 Second World War burials in the cemetery, most of them forming a plot in Section P, five of these are unidentified seamen.

There are also two war graves of other nationalities and one non-war service burial. There is only one Australian burial.

Seafield Crematorium, Edinburgh stands within the cemetery and 21 servicemen and women of the Second World War whose remains were cremated there are commemorated on a screen wall opposite the war graves plot in Section P.

(*Information & Photo from CWGC*)



Photo of Cadet E. S. Kirby's Private Headstone in Seafield Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland.



(Photo by PenDragon – Billion Graves)