

Tidworth, Wiltshire

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



10301 SAPPER

P. MAHER

AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

25TH MARCH, 1919

He Died An Australian Hero

The Grandest Death Of All

Patrick MAHER

Patrick Maher was born at Mollongghip, near Ballarat, Victoria in 1880 to parents John & Mary Ann Maher (nee Carroll).

Patrick Maher attended the State School at Mollongghip, Victoria.

Patrick Maher served in the Boer War with the 10th New Zealand Contingent and was discharged on 1st September, 1902.

Patrick Maher married Elizabeth Capper in New Zealand in 1904.

Patrick & Elizabeth Maher had the following children in New Zealand – Ida Maher (born 1904), Margaret Maher (Marguerite) (born 1906), William Maher (born 1908) & Patrick George Maher (born 1911).

The Maher family of six returned to live in Australia around 1912.

A birth was registered in 1914 in Victoria for Daisy Maher.

Patrick & Elizabeth Maher were listed on the Australian Electoral Roll for 1916, in the division of Echuca, subdivision of Numurkah. Patrick was listed as a Railway Employee & Elizabeth as home duties.

Patrick Maher was a 35 year old, married, Labourer from Numurkah, Victoria when he enlisted at Melbourne on 17th February, 1916 with Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 10301 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Elizabeth Maher of Numurkah, Victoria.

In Patrick Maher's Service Record file – the Statement of Service Form records that he was a Private- 21690 with Light Horse at Seymour from 17th February, 1916 to 23rd March, 1916. He was transferred to the 10th Field Company Engineers on 23rd March, 1916 & given the rank of Sapper & a new service number of 10301.

Sapper - also called pioneer or combat engineer, is a combatant or soldier who performs a variety of military engineering duties such as bridge-building, laying or clearing minefields, demolitions, field defences and general construction, as well as road and airfield construction and repair. They are also trained to serve as infantry personnel in defensive and offensive operations. A sapper's duties are devoted to tasks involving facilitating movement, defence and survival of allied forces and impeding those of enemies.

Sapper Patrick Maher embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Runic* (A54) on 20th June, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 10th August, 1916.

Sapper Patrick Maher proceeded overseas to France from England on 23rd November, 1916.

Sapper Maher was sent sick to Hospital & admitted to 10th Australian Field Ambulance with Bronchitis on 3rd December, 1916. He was transferred to D.R.S. (Divisional Rest Centre) on 4th December, 1916 & discharged to duty & rejoined his Unit in the field on 9th December, 1916.

Sapper Maher was admitted to 9th Australian Field Ambulance on 19th May, 1917 with Gingivitis & discharged to duty on 26th May, 1917. He rejoined his Unit in the field the same day.

Sapper Maher was sent to 10th Australian Field Ambulance sick on 14th July, 1917. He was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station suffering from Pyelitis (inflammation of the pelvis or outlet of the kidney). He was transferred & admitted to 3rd Australian General Hospital at Abbeville on 19th July, 1917. Sapper Maher was transferred by Ambulance Train on 30th July, 1917 & transferred to Hospital Ship "*Jan Breydel*" for England. Sapper Maher was admitted to Woking Military Hospital on 31st July, 1917 & his condition was reported as severe. Sapper Maher was transferred to 1st A.A.H. (1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital) at Harefield on 27th August, 1917.

Sapper Maher was discharged to furlo on 31st August, 1917 & to report to Depot at Weymouth, Dorset at end of his furlo.

Sapper Maher was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 14th September, 1917. He was marched out to No. 4 Command Depot at Codford, Wiltshire on 19th September, 1917.

Sapper Maher was marched out from No. 4 Command Depot, Hurdcott, (No. 4 Command Depot moved from Codford to Hurdcott in November, 1917) Wiltshire to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 29th December, 1917.

Sapper Maher was marched out to Brightlingsea on 18th January, 1918. Brightlingsea, Essex became home to thousands of Australian Soldiers during WW1 as they trained for the frontline. It was the only Australian base or camp on the east coast of Britain. The area was selected for the Australian Field Company of Engineers due to its geography of tidal creeks which offered practice for bridge building for the Engineers & the soft soils & mud could be used for trench digging.

Sapper Maher was On Command at School of Cookery, Tidworth, Wiltshire on 1st March, 1918.

Sapper Maher was admitted to Tidworth Military Hospital on 14th March, 1918 suffering from Mumps. He was discharged on 3rd April, 1918 & marched back in at Brightlingsea on 4th April, 1918.

Sapper Maher proceeded overseas to France from Brightlingsea via the port of Southampton on 30th June, 1918. He was marched in at Havre on 1st July, 1918 & marched out to his Unit on 3rd July, 1918. Sapper Maher joined his Unit – 10th Field Company Engineers in the field on 4th July, 1918.

Sapper Maher was sent to Hospital – 9th Australian Field Ambulance on 9th September, 1918 with Gastritis. He was transferred to 5th Casualty Clearing Station then transferred on 12th September to Ambulance Train – AT 30. Sapper Maher was admitted to 3rd Stationary Hospital at Rouen on 14th September, 1918 & embarked on Hospital Ship *Formosa* for England on 15th September, 1918.

Sapper Maher was admitted to 1st Southern General Hospital, Stourbridge section, Birmingham in 16th September, 1918. He was discharged to furlo on 24th October, 1918 & to report to No. 4 Command Depot at end of his furlo.

Sapper Maher was marched in from Australian Headquarters, London from furlo to No. 1 Command Depot, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 7th November, 1918.

Sapper Maher was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Lonbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 23rd November, 1918.

Sapper Maher was marched out to E.T.D. (Engineers Training Depot) at Brightlingsea on 29th November, 1918.

Sapper Maher was marched out to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Heytesbury, Wiltshire on 29th January, 1919.

Sapper Maher was sent sick to 1st Australian General Hospital, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 9th February, 1919 & admitted the next day with Influenza. He was marched in to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Heytesbury, Wiltshire from Hospital on 19th February, 1919.

A letter written by Sapper Patrick Maher on 14th March, 1919 to his wife & children in Australia reads:

Heytesbury, Salisbury Plain

Dear Wife and Children

I think it is about time I started writing to you again. I thought I would be home or nearly home by now but I am still in this God forsaken place. It is now nearly 3 months since I last wrote to you. I was expecting to get away anytime after the middle of February but my bad luck was in the way. I was not keeping very well during my last weeks at Brightlingsea. I left there as I thought for home on 29/1/1919 and ended here in camp on Salisbury Plain. I was only here a few days when I got on a boat roll and was ever so pleased with myself, but while waiting for the boat to go I got influenza and was sent to hospital and was there 3 weeks. I asked the doctor every day to let me out as I was on a boat roll and at last he let me go. When I got back to camp by boat had sailed that every morning and I was too late for the next boat as the roll had gone in. I paraded before the C.O. but he told me he could do nothing and now I

am here waiting for the next boat but there is no sign of any as yet. The last boat that took the boys from here left on Saturday and all my mates are gone on it and I am here now and I do not know a solitary soul.

Joe White and I went up to Chester for a few days after Christmas. Joe was very pleased at the way they treated us but no more pleased than I was. The weather here is something awful these last few months with frost, hail, rain and snow. How did Miss Ida enjoy herself at Warrnambool? I am sure I will not know them all when I see them. Mag and Daisy are springing up and Daisy will just about be starting school and George will be as big a trick as ever. Old sober sides, Master William, will still be looking after his chicks. If Daisy is going to school you must be very lonely – well you wont be lonely any more when I come home. Forgive me for not writing but I really expected to be on my way by this time. SO nothing more this time and I hope you hear I am on my way before you receive this. So au revoir, big kisses and best of love to the little kiddies and your dear self.

I remain your fond husband Pat. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

(Letter kindly shared by David Farrell)

Sapper Maher was admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire from Demobilisation Camp at Heytesbury on 22nd March, 1919 with Appendicitis.

Sapper Patrick Maher died at 10.20 am on 25th March, 1919 at 1st Australian General Hospital, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire from Appendicitis.

A death for Patrick Maher, aged 39, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Sapper Patrick Maher was buried on 28th March, 1919 in Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number A. 82 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sapper Maher - *Coffin was Elm with Brass Mounts – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours. The coffin draped with the Australian flag being borne to the graveside on a Gun-carriage, preceded by a Firing Party from Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom. Six Australians supported the Pall. The “Last Post” was sounded and volleys fired over the grave. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral. Friends present at the Funeral – Mrs Cliffe, Broadfield, Edingale, Tamworth, Staffs, Mrs Holland, Edingale House, Tamworth, Staffs & Mrs Bliffe Broadfield Farm, Edingale, Tamworth, Staffs.*

Sapper Patrick Maher requested in his Will, dated 6th May, 1916, that all his estate be left to his wife Elizabeth Maher, who he also appointed as Executrix.

Sapper Patrick Maher was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sapper Maher's widow – Mrs E. Maher (Scroll sent April, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper Patrick Maher – service number 10301, of 10th Field Coy., Australian Engineers. He was the son of John and Mary Ann Maher; husband of E. Maher, of 121 Clyde St., Ballarat. Born at Mollonghip, Victoria.



Sapper P. Maher is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 24.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

P. Maher is remembered on the Mollonghip State School Honor Roll for World War 1.



Mollonghip State School Honor Roll (Photo by Kevin Cameron)

Patrick Maher is remembered on the Mollonghip Roll of Honor located in Mollonghip Hall.



Mollonghip Roll of Honor (Photo by Kevin Cameron)

P. Maher is remembered on the World War 1 Avenue of Honour Arch in Ballarat, Victoria.



Patrick Maher is also remembered with a tree as part of the Avenue of Trees, Ballarat that was planted in his honour on 16th August, 1919 – Tree no. 3796.

A total of 3,771 trees were originally planted in the Avenue between June 1917 and August 1919 – one for each soldier, sailor and nurse from the district who served during the First World War. Original criteria for inclusion in the Avenue was a person to have enlisted and resided in the City of Ballarat or Township of Ballarat East, although this was later towards the end of the war to include the names of those who enlisted interstate and overseas.

The trees were named and numbered, as close as was possible at the time, in the order of enlistment from the Ballarat end, odd numbers on the south side and even numbers on the north. Only exotic deciduous species were used, mostly Elms, Oaks, Poplars and Ash. In 1934 the Bronze Memorial Plaques were added to the Avenue and located at the base of the trees. Each plaque contains a name, battalion and tree number.



World War 1 Victory Arch at the entrance to Avenue of Honour Trees in Ballarat (Photos from Carol's Headstones)



P. Maher's Memorial Plaque for his tree

(59 pages of Sapper Patrick Maher's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

** Special thanks to David Farrell for the information on Patrick Maher in New Zealand & for the photos of Patrick Maher & his family.

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





Sapper Patrick Maher

(Photo kindly supplied by David Farrell)



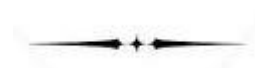
Sapper Patrick Maher & his wife Elizabeth & children
(L to R – Marguerite, Daisy, Patrick, Ida, George, Elizabeth & William)

(Photo kindly supplied by David Farrell)



Elizabeth Maher & four of her children

(Photo kindly supplied by David Farrell)



Newspaper Notices

ROLL OF HONOUR

DIED OTHER CAUSES

Spr. Patrick MAHER, Ballarat, 25.3.19 ill (P.R. ill)

(*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 May, 1919)

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*)

Sapper P. Maher does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Died An Australian Hero

The Grandest Death Of All



Original Cross Marker for Sapper P. Maher in Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire

(*Photo supplied by David Farrell*)

Photo of Sapper P. Maher's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)

Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire

Tidworth Military Cemetery, which contains burials of both wars, was directly connected with training grounds on, or near, Salisbury Plain.

During the First World War, the cemetery was used for burials from Tidworth and Fargo Military Hospitals and the 417 graves, many of them of Australian or New Zealand servicemen, are scattered throughout the cemetery.

There are 106 Second World War graves in the cemetery, two substantial groups of which can be found in sections F and D. The rest are scattered.

The cemetery also contains 40 war graves of other nationalities, many of them Polish.

(Information & Photo from CWGC)



Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire



Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire (Photo by Chris Talbot 2009)

