

**St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard,
Harlow, Essex
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2412 PRIVATE

W. MARSH

4TH AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

7TH OCTOBER, 1917

Walter MARCH

Walter Marsh was born at Saffron Walden, Essex, England around 1886 to father Oliver Marsh.

[An "Oliver Marsh" had married Emily Dyer in the December quarter, 1874 in the district of Saffron Walden, Essex. An "Oliver Marsh" married Alice Sophia Star on the June quarter of 1885 in the district of Saffron Walden, Essex. Assuming that these are the same man then Walter Marsh's mother was most probably Alice Sophia Star.]

The 1891 England Census recorded Walter Marsh as a 5 year old, living with his family at Main Road, Littlebury Green, Saffron Walden, Essex. His father was listed as Oliver Marsh (Agricultural Labourer, aged 40, born Littlebury Green, Essex). Walter's mother was not listed on the Census. Walter was the youngest of 4 children listed on this Census (all born Littlebury Green, Essex) – Kate Marsh (Domestic General Servant, aged 15), Frank Marsh (agricultural Labourer, aged 14), Ada Marsh ((Scholar, aged 12) then Walter.

The 1901 England Census recorded Walter W. Marsh as a 15 year old Houseboy living at The Green, Littlebury, Saffron Walden, Essex. Also listed was his father – Oliver Marsh (Horsekeeper in Farm, aged 51) & Alice Marsh (aged 54).

Walter Marsh was a 28 year old, single, Labourer from Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 6th May, 1915 with the 9th Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2412 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Oliver Marsh, of "Mayfield Cottage", Harlow, Essex, England.

Private Walter Marsh embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Shropshire (A9)* on 20th August, 1915.

Private Walter Marsh was taken on strength from Reinforcements with his Unit at Mudros on 18th November, 1915.

Private Walter Marsh was sent to Hospital sick on 13th December, 1915. He was admitted to 2nd Field Ambulance at Lemnos & discharged to duty on 18th December, 1915. He rejoined his Unit on 18th December, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh disembarked from Troop Ship *Grampian* at Alexandria from Mudros on 4th January, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh was transferred from 9th Battalion to 49th Battalion at Habeita on 25th February, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh was transferred to 4th Pioneers at Tel-el-Kebir on 16th March, 1916.

4th Australian Pioneer Battalion

The 4th Pioneer Battalion was an Australian infantry & light engineer unit raised in Egypt in March, 1916. The Battalion was made up from infantrymen & they were also tasked with some engineer functions with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. The group was mainly drawn from Queensland.

Private Walter Marsh proceeded to join the B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 4th June, 1916 on *Scotian* & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 11th June, 1916. He was marched in to 2nd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 14th June, 1916. Private Marsh was marched out to 4th A.D.B.D. on 18th June, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh was wounded in France on 5th August, 1916. He was admitted to 22nd General Hospital at Camiers on 5th August, 1916 with gunshot wounds to head. He was transferred to Convalescent Depot on 26th August, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. at Etaples from Hospital on 9th September, 1916.

Private Walter Marsh was admitted to 26th General Hospital at Etaples, France on 16th November, 1916 with varicose veins. He was marked for transfer to England on 21st November, 1916 & embarked for England from Calais on 22nd November, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Dieppe*.

Private Walter Marsh was admitted to 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, England on 22nd November, 1916. He was discharged on 23rd March, 1917 & was to report to Command Depot at Weymouth.

Private Walter Marsh was marched in to No. 2 Australian Command Depot at Weymouth on 24th March, 1917 with varicose veins. He was marched out to Draft at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 11th May, 1917.

Private Walter Marsh was marched in to Pioneer Training Depot at Fovant, Wiltshire on 14th May, 1915 from Drafting Depot at Perham Downs.

Private Walter Marsh proceeded overseas to France via Southampton from Pioneers Training Battalion on 10th September, 1917 to reinforce 4th Pioneers in France. Private Walter Marsh was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. at Havre on 11th September, 1917. He was marched out to his Unit on 19th September, 1917 & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 22nd September, 1917.

Private Walter Marsh was wounded in France on 24th September, 1917. He was admitted to 2nd Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 25th September, 1917 with gunshot wounds to back. He was transferred & admitted to Hospital at Etaples on 26th September, 1917. Private Marsh embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Peter de Conick* on 29th September, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to back.

War Diary – 4th Pioneer Battalion

24.9.1917 – Battalion burying cables.

Appendix No. 1 listed 1 Private killed on 24th September & 23 other men wounded on that day.

24.9.17 2412 Pte Marsh W. Wounded, back, H. E. Shell

(War Diary information from The Australian War Memorial)

Private Walter Marsh was admitted to The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London on 29th September, 1917 with gunshot wounds to back - severe. The Hospital Admissions from reads "*Paraplegia with retention of urine after shrapnel wound of spine. Operated on the same night. Fracture of 11th & 2th DV & fracture 10th & 11th ribs. Pleura opened & FO [foreign object] removed. Irregular anaesthesia. Incontinence. Dyspnoea. Cystitis.*"

Private Walter Marsh died at 7.30 am on 7th October, 1917 at The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wounds to Spine.

A death for Walter Marsh, aged 30, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, Surrey/London, England.

Private Walter Marsh was buried at 3 pm on 11th October, 1917 in St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow, Essex, England and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Walter Marsh - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party and Bugler being supplied by Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London. A service was held prior to the interment by Chaplain Richard of the A.I.F. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. Floral tributes were sent from relatives. An oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. Names of relatives present at the funeral – (Father) Mr C. Marsh, Mayfield Cottages, Harlow, two sisters and brother-in-law, Mayfield Cottages, Harlow.*

Private Walter Marsh requested in his Will, dated 28th July, 1917, that all his personal estate be bequeathed to his father – Oliver Marsh, of Harlow, Essex, England.

Private Walter Marsh was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Marsh's father - Mr C. Marsh, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque both sent September, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private W. Marsh – service number 2412, of 4th Australian Pioneers. No family details are listed.

Private W. Marsh is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 174.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(35 pages of Private Walter Marsh'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

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

208th List of Australian Casualties

WOUNDED

Pte W. Marsh, England

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 11 September, 1916)

ROLL OF HONOUR

Casualty List No. 347

DIED OF WOUNDS

Walter Marsh, England, 7/10/17 (p.r.w.)

(The Telegraph, Brisbane, Queensland – 30 October, 1917)

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).

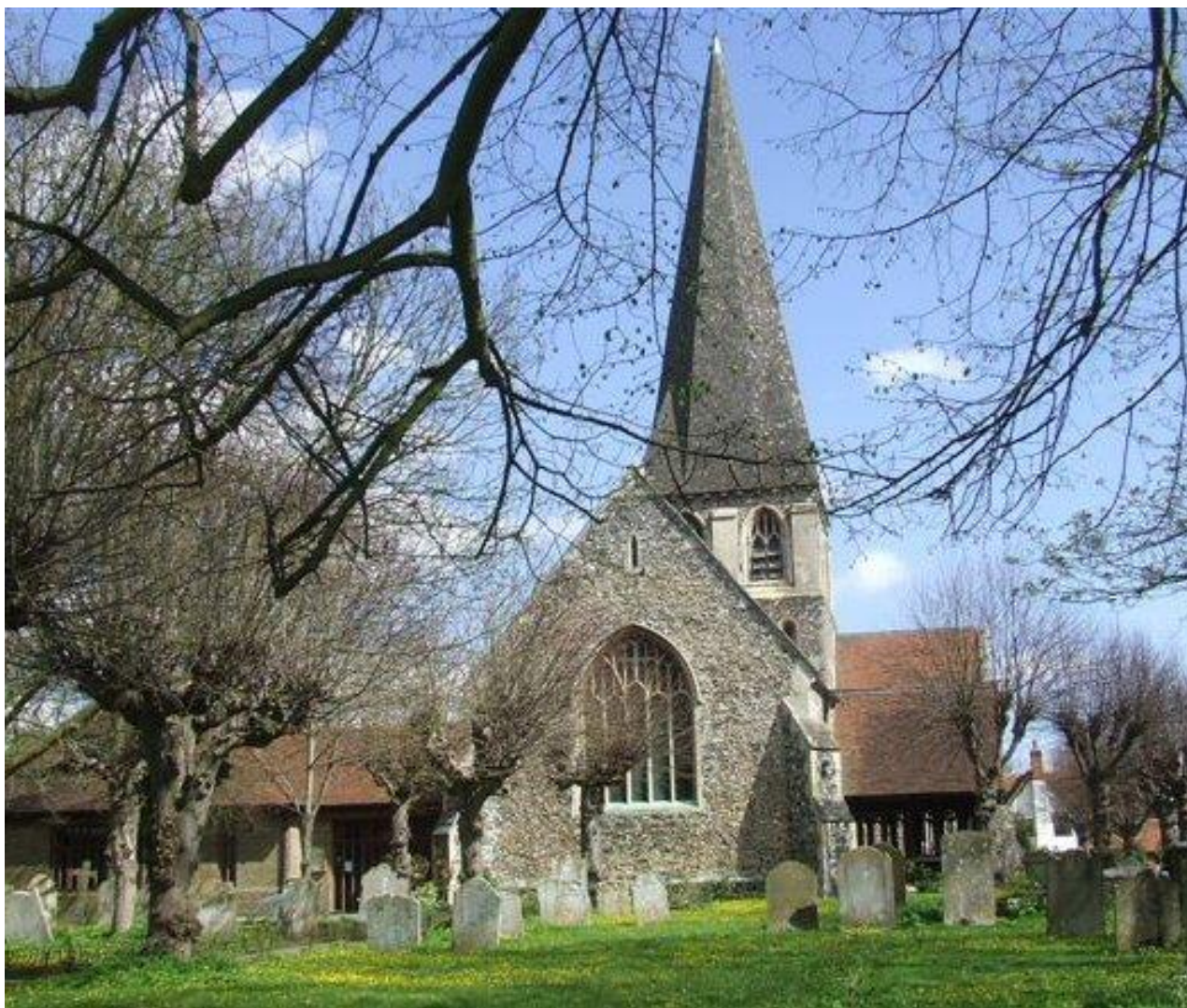
The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Private W. Marsh does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow, Essex, England.

St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow contains 9 Commonwealth War Graves – 6 relating to World War 1 & 3 from World War 2.



St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow *(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)*



(Photo by SuzNut Motovlogs – Paul Keys)



St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow *(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)*

Photo of Private W. Marsh's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary & St. Hugh Churchyard, Harlow, Essex, England.

(CWGC were advised at the time of researching that the Service number engraved on headstone was incorrect)

SEE UPDATE BELOW



(Photo by scotssheat – Find a Grave)

UPDATE – New Headstone with correct Service number:



(Photo courtesy of CWGC – Eyes On, Hands On Volunteer)