

**Arksey Old Cemetery,
Bentley-With-Arksey, South Yorkshire
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



136 PRIVATE

E. J. MARTIN

AUSTRALIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

28TH APRIL, 1917 Age 27

Ernest James MARTIN

Ernest James Martin was born in Pontypool, Monmouthshire, Wales in 1890 to parents Caleb and Annie Martin (nee Higgs).

The 1891 Wales Census recorded Ernest J. Martin as a 1 year old, living with his family at Bridge Street, Trevethin, Monmouthshire, Wales. His parents were listed as Caleb Martin (Pickler – Galvanising work, aged 51, born Pontypool, Monmouthshire) & Annie Martin (aged 32, born Herefordshire). Ernest was the youngest of four children listed on this Census – Maud Martin (aged 9, born Stockton on Tees), Annie S. Martin (aged 7, born Stockton on Tees), Albert Edward Martin (aged 5, born Pontypool, Monmouthshire) then Ernest.

Ernest James Martin attended School at Park Terrace, Pontypool, Wales.

The 1901 Wales Census recorded Ernest James Martin as an 11 year old, living with his family at Crane Street, Pontypool, Monmouthshire, Wales. His parents were listed as Caleb Martin (Insurance Agent, aged 61) & Annie Martin (aged 41). Ernest was one of seven children listed on this Census – Maud Martin (Dressmaker, aged 19), Annie Sophia Martin (aged 17), Albert Edward Martin (Assistant Reporter, aged 15), then Ernest, Ella Mary Martin (aged 8, born Pontypool, Wales), Elsie Persis Martin (aged 6, born Pontypool, Wales) & Gladys Irene Martin (aged 2, born Pontypool, Wales).

The 1911 Wales Census recorded an “*Ernest Martin, aged 21, born Pontypool, Wales*” as a Labourer below ground lodging with Owen Williams (Assistant Timberman below ground, aged 21) who was head of household at 23 Thornwood Terrace, Lower Merthyr Tydfil, Wales. Another Lodger & Visitor were also listed.

According to information supplied by his mother for the Roll of Honour, Ernest James Martin came to Australia when he was 21 years of age.

Ernest James Martin enlisted under the name of Ernest James- with “James” as his surname. He stated he was a 24 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Upper Pakenham, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 18th August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 136 & his religion was Baptist. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs Whitley, 264 Bentley Rd, Doncaster. Another Attestation has next-of-kin listed as “Nil” then in red pen – father Mr C. Martin, 109 Watch House Lane, Bentley Road, Doncaster, England.

Private Ernest James embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Wiltshire (A18)* on 19th October, 1914 with the 2nd Field Ambulance (A.M.C.).

Field Ambulance

A Field Ambulance (FA) was the name used by the British Army and the armies of other Commonwealth nations to describe a mobile medical unit that treated wounded soldiers very close to the combat zone. In the British military medical system that developed during the First World War, the FAs formed an intermediate level in the casualty evacuation chain that stretched from the Regimental Aid Posts near the front line and the Casualty Clearing Stations located outside the range of the enemy's artillery. FAs were often assigned to the brigades of a division. (*Wikipedia*)

Private Ernest James proceeded to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) at Gallipoli on 5th April, 1915.

Private Ernest James was admitted to Hospital - 2nd Field Ambulance on 2nd May, 1915 at Gallipoli with Indigestion. He was discharged to the Line on the same day.

Private Ernest James was admitted to Hospital - 2nd Field Ambulance at Dardanelles on 18th June, 1915 with Diarrhoea & discharged on 20th June, 1915.

Private Ernest James was admitted to 2nd Field Ambulance at Anzac on 12th July, 1915 due to his teeth. He was transferred to 1st Casualty Clearing Station the same day then transferred to Hospital Ship *Gloucester Castle* & admitted to Military Hospital at Cottonera, Malta on 20th July, 1915.

Private Ernest James was invalided to England from Malta on 16th September, 1915 on Hospital Ship *D'Italia*.

Private Ernest James was A.W. Leave (Absent without Leave) from 23rd November, 1915 to 30th November, 1915. He was posted to A & NZ Base Depot at Monte Video, Weymouth, England & was written up for being A.W.L. on 2nd December, 1915. Pte James forfeited 8 days' pay & was confined to Barracks for 7 days.

Private Ernest James rejoined No. 2 Field Ambulance at Tel-el-Kebir on 15th January, 1916 from Hospital.

Private Ernest James was marched out from Tel-el-Kebir to Serapeum on 24th February, 1916.

Private Ernest James was transferred from 2nd Field Ambulance to 14th Field Ambulance on 25th February, 1916.

Private Ernest James was written up on 20th April, 1916 for absencing himself without leave from 23.00 on 15th April, 1916 to 18.00 on 19th April, 1916. He was awarded 7 days confined to Barracks & forfeited 4 days' pay.

Private Ernest James embarked from Alexandria for Overseas with B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) with 14th Field Ambulance on 19th June, 1916 on *Royal George*. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th June, 1916.

Private Ernest James was sent to Hospital – 14th Field Ambulance on 31st October, 1916. (Note: the next entry could not be read).

Private Ernest James was sent sick to Hospital – 14th Field Ambulance in France on 5th December, 1916. He was transferred to 36th Casualty Clearing Station on 5th December, 1916 then transferred * admitted to 26th General Hospital on 6th December, 1916 with Catarrh. Pte James was transferred to No. 6 Convalescent Depot at Etaples, France on 15th January, 1917. He was transferred & admitted to 4th General Hospital at Etaples, France on 8th February, 1917 with Bronchitis. Pte James was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Dieppe* from Calais, France on 20th February, 1917.

Private Ernest James was admitted to Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, Norwich, England on 20th February, 1917.

Private Ernest James Martin died at 12.45 pm on 28th April, 1917 at Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, Norwich, England from Tuberculosis of Larynx.

A death for Ernest J. Martin, aged 27, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Norwich, Norfolk, England.

Private Ernest James Martin was buried on 5th May, 1917 in Arksey Old Cemetery, Bentley–With-Arksey, South Yorkshire, England – Plot number A. 51 (Family Grave) and has a Private Headstone. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Ernest James Martin contains a letter to the Red Cross from The Secretary, Norfolk & Norwich Hospital which reads : *"I am somewhat surprised by your request that we should give you some particulars of the last hours and death of the above man, as his mother and married sister were staying in Norwich for some weeks previous to his death at this Hospital, and were, in fact, present when he passed away, and I concluded that if any relatives in Australia were anxious for information it would have been forwarded to them by Mrs James herself. If you desire any information I must refer you to Pte James' relatives at:- Mrs Whitley (Sister) 264, Bentley Rd., Doncaster. I enclose a copy of a letter which was sent you containing this information on the 30th April last."*

"I regret to have to inform you of the death of 136 Pte E. James 13th Field Ambulance, A.A.M.C. which occurred at 12.45 pm on the 28th inst. The cause of death has been certified to have been due to tuberculosis of larynx. Pte James' mother and sister have been here with him for the last two or three weeks and were present when he died. Arrangements are being made for his burial in their family grave at Doncaster."

A War Pension was awarded to Annie Martin, of 109 Watch House Lane, Bentley Rd, Doncaster, England, mother of the late Private Ernest James, in the sum of 15/- per fortnight commencing 7th July, 1917 & to be revised on 4th July, 1918. A War Pension was applied for by Caleb Martin, 109 Watch House Lane, Bentley Rd, Doncaster,

England, father of the late “Private Ernest James (proper name Ernest James Martin)” but was declined as “any award would interfere with old age pension.”

Private Ernest James would have been entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque would also have been sent to Private James’ next-of-kin but there is no record in his file of any Medals or other memorabilia being dispatched or receipts signed for by the next-of-kin – which is normally the case in a soldier’s Service Record file.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Ernest James Martin – service number 136, aged 27, of 14th Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps. He was the son of Caleb and Annie Martin, of 109 Watch House Lane, Doncaster.

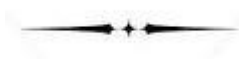
Private E. J. Martin is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 183.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(25 pages of Private Ernest James Martin’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

THE 297th CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private E. James; no record

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 19 May, 1917)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Private Ernest James Martin has a Private Headstone.

Arksey Old Cemetery, Bentley–With-Arksey, South Yorkshire, England

The Old Cemetery, which includes all ten burials from the First World War, is on the North side of the road. The New Cemetery, which includes all fourteen casualties from the Second World War, is just opposite it, on the South side of the road.



Arksey Old Cemetery (Photos by Iain MacFarlane)

Photo of Private Ernest James Martin's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Arksey Old Cemetery, Bentley-With-Arksey, South Yorkshire, England.



(Headstone Photos by Iain MacFarlane)

ERNEST JAMES

Beloved Son Of

C & A MARTIN

*Who Died For His Country, At The
Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, Norwich
April 28TH 1917, Aged 27 Years.*

*He Suffered Much But Murmured Not
With Aching Hearts We Watched
Him Day By Day.*

*He Grew Less & Less
Until He Passed Away
Like Ivy On The Withered Oak
When Other Things Decay,
Our Love for Him Will Still
Keep Green
And Never Fade Away.”*



