

**Canwick Road Cemetery,
Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



349 PRIVATE

JAMES EWART MATHERS

28TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

12TH OCTOBER, 1916 Age 27

James Ewart MATHERS

James Ewart Mathers was born in parish of St. Andrews, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England in 1891 to parents James and Martha Mathers (nee Grundy).

Martha Mathers, mother of James Ewart Mathers, died in 1899 in Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England.

The 1901 England Census recorded James E. Mathers as a 10 year old, living with his family at 51 Cross Street, St. Peter at Gowts, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England. His father was listed as James Mathers – widower (Iron Furnaceman, aged 46, born Welton, Lincs). James Ewart Mathers was seven children listed on this Census – Nora Mathers (aged 18, born Dunholme, Lincs), Robert Mathers (Iron Moulders Apprentice, aged 16, born Lincoln), Rose Mathers (aged 15, born Lincoln), Ethel Mathers (aged 13, born Lincoln), then James, Stanley Mathers (aged 6, born Lincoln) & Harold Mathers (aged 2, born Lincoln).

According to information provided by his father for the Roll of Honour – James Ewart Mathers came to Australia when he was aged 19 years.

The 1913 & 1914 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Fremantle, subdivision of South Fremantle, Western Australia recorded James Ewart Mather, Labourer from 45 Suffolk Street.

James Ewart Mathers was a 24 year old, single, Labourer from Suffolk Street, Fremantle, Western Australia when he enlisted at Perth, Western Australia on 5th March, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 349 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs Nora Wright, Sunnyhurst, Scorer Street, West Lincoln, England. James Ewart Mathers stated on his Attestation Papers that he had been an Apprentice as an Iron Moulder for 12 months with Ruston & Proctor.

Private James Ewart Mathers was posted to 10th Depot Coy for recruit training on 5th March, 1915. He was transferred to D Company, 24th Battalion (no date) then transferred to B Company, 28th Battalion.

Private James Ewart Mathers embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 9th June, 1915 with the 7th Infantry Brigade, 28th Infantry Battalion "B" Company.

Private James Ewart Mathers embarked from Alexandria on 4th September, 1915 with 28th Battalion on H. T. *Ivernia* for Gallipoli.

Private James Ewart Mathers disembarked at Alexandria on 10th January, 1916 from *Ansonia* from Mudros (after evacuation of Gallipoli).

Private James Ewart Mathers proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 16th March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 21st March, 1916.

Private James Ewart Mathers was wounded in action in France on 29th July, 1916. He was admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station on 30th July, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Head. He was transferred & admitted to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 31st July, 1916 with Skull fracture & hands. Private Mathers embarked for England on 13th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Jan Brydel*.

28th Battalion

The 28th Battalion was raised at Blackboy Camp in Western Australia on 16 April 1915 from recruits previously earmarked for the 24th Battalion, which was instead being raised in Victoria. The battalion left Australia in June, and, after two months spent training in Egypt, landed at Gallipoli on 10 September.

At Gallipoli, the 7th Brigade, which included the 28th Battalion, reinforced the weary New Zealand and Australian Division. The 28th had a relatively quiet time at Gallipoli and the battalion departed the peninsula in December, having suffered only light casualties.

After another stint in Egypt, the 7th Brigade proceeded to France and the Western Front, as part of the 2nd

Australian Division. The 28th Battalion took part in its first major battle at Pozieres between 28 July and 6 August 1916.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 28th Battalion

29th July, 1916:

At 12.10 am enemy opened up a heavy fire with H. E. shrapnel & Machine Guns, causing a number of casualties. Our artillery placed a heavy barrage fire on enemy trenches. As soon as this lifted the men rushed forward in perfect order and were met with heavy fire from rifle, machine guns and artillery. The first wave was held up by the enemy's wire which was intact and very strong. The four waves reached the wire and unavailing efforts were made to find openings or make them in the face of intense machine gun fire. Heavy casualties resulted. A very intense artillery barrage of the enemy's prevented any reports of the situation getting through and it was not until 2.5 am that orders for withdrawal could be delivered. From this hour onwards the men were withdrawn and ordered to return to SAUSAGE VALLEY. Lieut -Col Collett was wounded, three Company Commanders killed, one severely wounded and 8 other officers killed or wounded. About 11 am the battalion marched to TARA HILL to bivouac.

CASUALTIES for JULY 1916

	Killed	Wounded	Sick to Hospital	Missing
Officers	5	6		1
Other Ranks	<u>58</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>256</u>
	63	151	52	<u>257</u>
			Total Casualties	523

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private James Ewart Mathers was admitted to King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 16th August, 1916 seriously ill with G.S.W. Head – severe. He was reported to be “*doing very well*” on 23rd September, 1916.

Base Records advised the Red Cross, Perth, Western Australia on 22nd September, 1916 that “*349 Mathers Twentyeighth Battalion reported seriously ill Gunshot wound head now improving.*”

Mrs N. Wright, Sunnyhurst, Scorer Street, W. Lincoln, sister of Private James Ewart Mathers, wrote to Brigadier-General V.C.M. Seblleieur (?), Commandant, Australian Imperial Force, London, on 2nd October, 1916 with the following letter regarding Private Mathers, No. 349, 28th Battalion, 7th Australian Infantry Brigade: “*Referring to the above who is at present an inmate of the King George Hospital, Waterloo, with a serious head wound.*

I understand there is not much likelihood of his being fit for service again & under the circumstances gather he will be sent back to Australia as soon as he is fit to travel. I therefore write to ask if you could arrange for him to spend a few weeks with me, his sister, before he goes back.

I may say I saw my brother on Saturday last and whilst he is anxious to go back to Australia for his discharge he would very much like to spend some time here before doing so, as all of his relations are in this county & it is several years since he saw them.

He has about 17 months service to his credit during which time he has had no leave having been to Egypt, Gallipoli & France.

There is the 4th Northern Military Hospital here & it could probably be arranged for him to have his wounds attended to there whilst he was on leave.

If necessary I should be pleased to come & see you upon the matter.

I trust you will pardon my troubling you but think you will realise the position."

Major K. Stuart Cross, D.M.S., A.I.F. wrote to D.D.M.S. (Deputy Director of Medical Services), London Command on 6th October, 1916, in regards to No. 349 Private Mathers, 28th Battalion, A.I.F., with the following: *"I beg to request that, if convenient, you will take the necessary steps for the transfer of the above named man from The King George Hospital, Waterloo Road to 4th Northern General Hospital, Lincoln in order to be near his relatives."*

The Surgeon-General, D.M.S., A.I.F., wrote to Mrs N. Wright, Sunnyhurst, Scorer Street, W. Lincoln, on 6th October, 1916: *"I am in receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant regarding your brother, and beg to inform you that his name is not down for return to Australia. I trust that it will be unnecessary to send him back, but that he will recover his health in this country, and spend his furlough with you. Meanwhile I shall try and arrange for his transfer from The King George Hospital to the 4th Northern General Hospital, Lincoln, in order to be near you."*

Private James Ewart Mathers died on 12th October, 1916 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action in France – G.S.W. to Head.

A death for James Mathers, aged 25, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Lambeth, London, England.

Private James Ewart Mathers was buried on 14th October, 1916 in Canwick Road Cemetery, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England – Plot number D. 1775 and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The records for the next-of-kin for Private James Ewart Mathers were changed (no date shown) to show Mr J. Mathers, Father, of 18 Slater Gate, Lincoln, England as the next-of-kin. Previously Private Mathers' sister was shown as his next-of-kin.

Fremantle Municipal Council, Western Australia wrote to Base Records on 15th June, 1917 requesting a Certificate of Death, in duplicate, for Private James Mathers, No. 347, 28th Battalion.

Base Records replied to His Worship The Mayor, Town Hall, Fremantle, Western Australia, on 28th June, 1917 enclosing a Certificate of report of death (in duplicate) for No. 349 Private J. E. Mathers, 28th Battalion.

James Mathers, 17 Saltergate, Lincoln, applied for an Australian War Pension in respect of the service of his son, the late Private James Ewart Mathers, No. 349, 28th Battalion. The Pension was declined *"Claimant has adequate means of support."*

Private James Ewart Mathers was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Mathers' father – Mr J. Mathers, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in England).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private James Ewart Mathers – service number 349, aged 27, of 28th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of James and Martha Mathers, 15 Camden St., Sneiton Rd., Nottingham, England.

Private J. E. Mathers is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 114.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

J. E. Mathers is remembered on the St. John's Church Memorial Choir Vestry, located in St. John's Church in the Square, Queen & Adelaide Streets, Fremantle, Western Australia.



St. John's Church in the Square, Fremantle



St. John's Church Memorial Choir Vestry (Photos from Monument Australia)

J. E. Mathers is remembered on Fremantle's 849, located at War Memorial, Monument Hill Memorial Reserve, High & Swanbourne Streets, Fremantle, Western Australia. Twelve plaques contain all 849 names of the Fremantle servicemen who died in service or were killed in action during World War One. The plaques were created as part of the Centenary of Anzac commemorations.

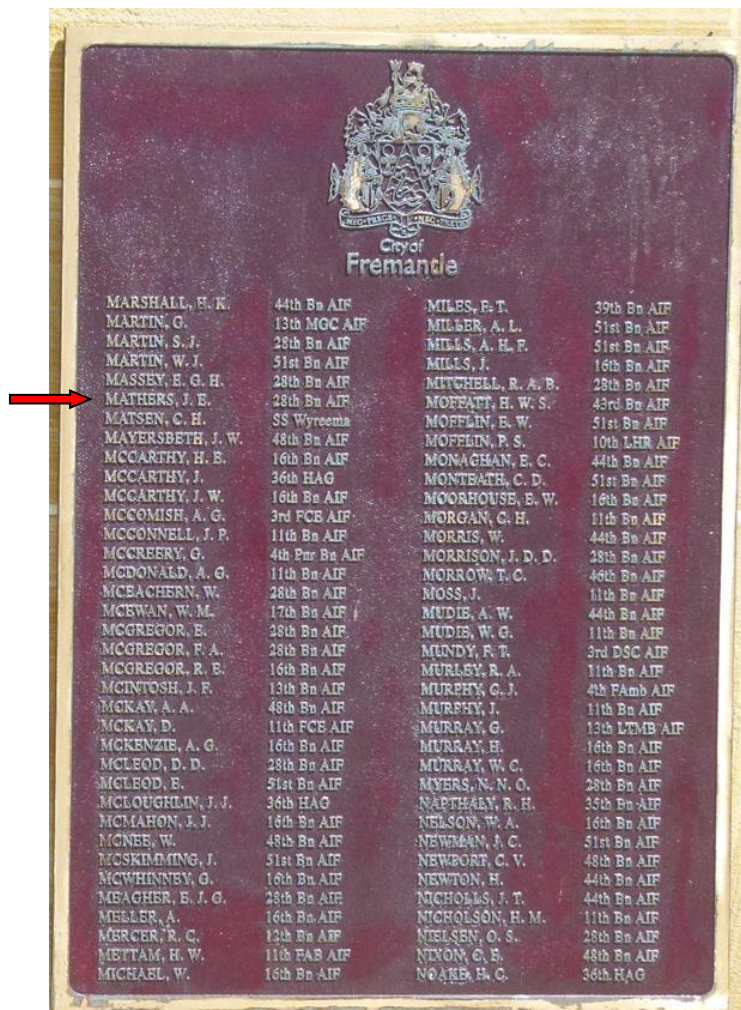


Fallen Sailors & Soldiers Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)





(Panel photos courtesy of Gordon Stuart)



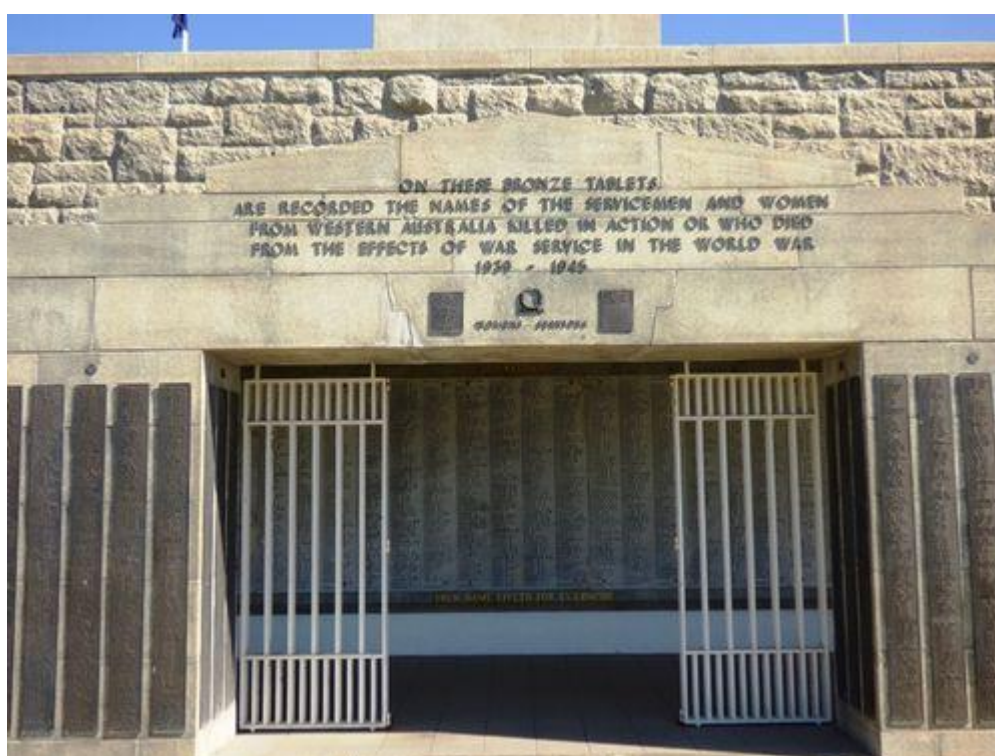
J. E. Mathers is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



**Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names**

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)





28th Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

J. E. Mathers is remembered on the Lincoln City War Memorial, located at St. Benedict's Square, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England.



(43 pages of Private James Ewart Mathers' 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



PT. J. E. MATHERS, 28th Bat.
(Died of wounds in King George
Hospital, London. He served at
Gallipoli.)

(Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 18 May, 1917)

Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

TWO CASUALTY LISTS

The 206th list is as follows:-

WEST AUSTRALIA

WOUNDED

J. E. Mathers, England, and seriously ill

(Kalgoorlie Western Argus, Western Australia – 12 September, 1916)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

226th and 227th CASUALTY LISTS

PROGRESS REPORT

J. E. Mathers (England, improving, previously reported severely wounded and seriously ill.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 3 October, 1916)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

238th CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF WOUNDS

J. E. Mathers (England), previously reported wounded and seriously ill.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 27 October, 1916)

KILLED IN ACTION

MATHERS – In loving remembrance of Private James Mathers, 28th Battalion A.I.F., who died of wounds in King's Hospital London, October 12, 1916.

We mourn his loss and cherish his memory.

-Inserted by his loving friend Iolene Korten.

MATHERS – In respectful remembrance of Private James Mathers, 28th Battalion A.I.F., who died of wounds in King George's Hospital, London, October 12, 1916.

Purely lived and nobly died.

-Inserted by W. E. Wray, Fremantle.

(Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 3 November, 1916)

£. S. D.

OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY

WHERE IT GOES

Probates for the week are:-

James Ewart Mathers, late of Fremantle, to William Ernest Wray, £411 6s 3d

(The Daily News, Perth, Western Australia – 12 July, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

MATHERS – In loving remembrance of Private James Mathers, of original 28th Battalion, A.I.F., who died of wounds in King George's Hospital, London, October 12, 1916, buried at Lincoln, England.

Too far away thy grave to see,

But not too far to think of thee.

We mourn his loss and cherish his memory.

-Inserted by his loving friend, Iolene Korten

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 12 October, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

MATHERS – In loving remembrance of Private James Mathers, of original 28th Battalion, A.I.F., who died of wounds in King George's Hospital, London, October 12, 1916.

We mourn his loss and cherish his memory.

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(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 12 October, 1918)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

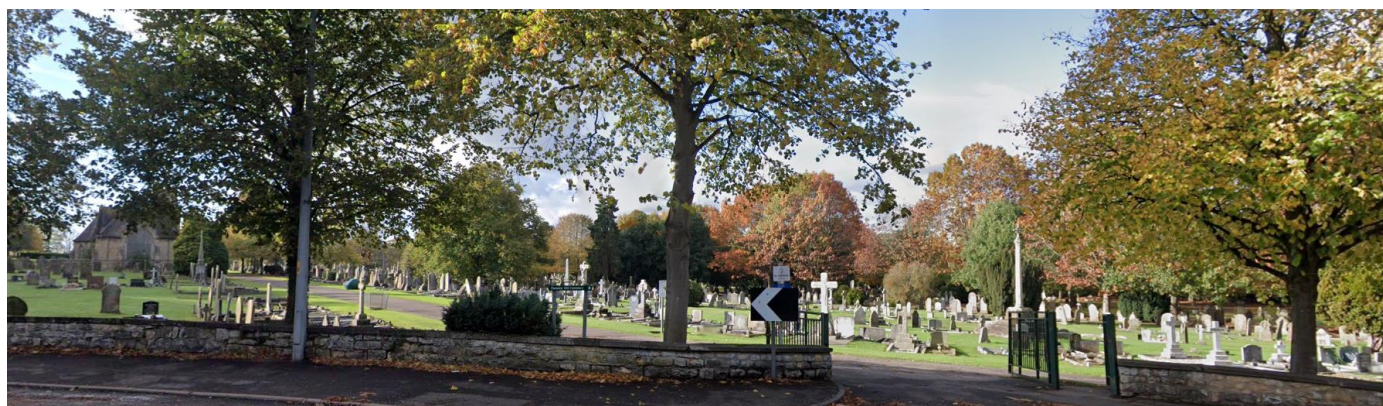
The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & 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 James Ewart Mathers has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but no inscription.

Canwick Road Cemetery, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England

Canwick Road Cemetery, Lincoln contains 51 Commonwealth War Graves – 34 from World War 1 & 17 from World War 2.



(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Private James Ewart Mathers' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Canwick Road Cemetery, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Military Historian)