

**Grantham Cemetery,  
Grantham, Lincolnshire  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**647 C. SERJT. MAJOR**

**FRANK MATHERS**

**AUST. MACHINE GUN CORPS**

**22ND DECEMBER, 1916\* Age 35**

*In Memory Of  
My Beloved Husband  
Rest In Peace*

(\*Note – At the time of researching - C.S.M. Mathers' headstone had the incorrect date of death as 21st December, 1916.

CWGC were advised in September, 2017 of the error)

## Frank MATHERS

Frank Mathers was born 20th August, 1883 at Fulham, London, England to parents Frank & Martha Mathers (nee Ash). He was baptised on 7th October, 1883 at St. John's, Fulham, London, Middlesex. At the time of his baptism, the family were living at Harwood Terrace, St. James.

Frank Mathers attended St. Martin-in-the-fields School, Westminster, London, England from 23rd August, 1886 until 21st November, 1887.

Frank Mathers, father of Frank Mathers (jun), died on 15th November, 1890 in London, England.

The 1891 England Census recorded Frank Mathers as a 7 year old living with his widowed mother & family at 45 Breen St, Fulham, London, England. Frank's mother was listed as Martha Mathers (aged 30, born Fulham, Middlesex). Frank was one of four children listed on this Census – Margaret Mathers (aged 9, born Fulham, Middlesex), then Frank (born Lambeth, Middlesex), Frederick Mathers (aged 4, born St. Martin's le Grand, Middlesex) & Gertrude Mathers (aged 3, born St. Georges, Middlesex). Also listed was Maud Sparrow, a visitor (aged 19) & George Stephenson, a Boarder (Labourer, aged 50).

Frank Mathers joined the Royal Navy & was posted to H.M.S. *Caledonia* as Boy 2nd Class on 28th January, 1898. He was promoted to Boy 1st Class on 3rd November, 1898. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Agincourt* on 22nd February, 1899 then transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke II* on 7th March, 1899. Boy 1st Class Mathers was transferred to H.M.S. *Curacoa* on 3rd July, 1898 then transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 19 October, 1899. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Arethusa* on 14th November, 1899.

Frank Mathers signed with the Royal Navy on 20th August, 1900 for a period of 12 years. He stated his date of birth was 20th August, 1882 at Lambeth, London. His occupation was listed as Orderly Boy. Frank Mathers was given a service number of 197606 (Chatham). He was 5ft 6  $\frac{3}{4}$  in with light brown hair, grey eyes & a fair complexion. He had I.L.E.L. tattooed on his left forearm & a figure of a female on his left forearm, & snake, bird & flowers on his right forearm.

Frank Mathers was promoted to Ordinary Seaman on 20th August, 1900 still aboard H.M.S. *Arethusa*. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Goliath* on 8th April, 1901 then promoted to Able Seaman on 30th January, 1903.

Able Seaman Frank Mathers was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 9th October, 1903 then transferred to H.M.S. *Wildfire* on 9th March, 1904.

Frank Mathers, Seaman in Royal Navy, aged 23, married Janet Black, aged 18, on 25th December, 1904 at St. John's Church, Walham Green, London, England. Frank Mathers listed his address as 23 Walham Avenue & Janet listed her address as 32 Walham Avenue. Frank's father was listed as Frank Mathers (deceased) soldier & Janet's father was listed as George Black, plasterer.

Able Seaman Frank Mathers was transferred to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 20th July, 1905 then transferred to H.M.S. *Cape Yard* on 9th August, 1905. He was transferred again to H.M.S. *Forte* on 1st October, 1905 then back to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 8th June, 1907. He was promoted to Leading Seaman on 9th July, 1907. Leading Seaman Frank Mathers was transferred to H.M.S. *Wildfire* on 14th August, 1907. He was transferred back to H.M.S. *Pembroke* on 19th September, 1907 before transferring to H.M.S. *Cyclops* on 26th October, 1907. Leading Seaman Frank Mathers became Able Seaman Mathers on 6th May, 1908 & remained on H.M.S. *Cyclops* until 20th July, 1909 where he was admitted to Chatham Hospital.

According to information supplied for the Roll of Honour, by his wife, Frank Mathers had been a Leading Seaman in the British Navy & had served for 14 years before being invalided out. He served though the China War & received a Medal & 2 bars.

Frank Mathers was a 33 year old, single, Machine Driver (Coke oven machine) from Catherine Hill Bay, via Newcastle, NSW when he enlisted at Randwick, Sydney, NSW on 26th August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 647 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his

mother – Mrs M. Atkins, of 23 Walham Avenue, Fulham, London, England. Frank Mathers stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served in the Royal Navy & also was a member of the Rifle Club at Catherine Hill Bay, NSW.

Private Frank Mathers was posted to 2nd Infantry Battalion on 28th August, 1914 for recruit training. He was appointed Lance Corporal with 2nd Battalion on 25th September, 1914.

Lance Corporal Frank Mathers embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Suffolk (A23)* on 18th October, 1914 with the 2nd Infantry Battalion, "F" Company & disembarked at Egypt on 8th December, 1914. Lance Corporal Frank Mathers's rank reverted to that of Private on 9th December, 1914. He was attached to "F" Company on 12th December, 1914.

Private Frank Mathers was transferred to Machine Gun Section on 6th February, 1915.

Private Frank Mathers embarked from Alexandria on *Derfflinger* on 5th April, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) in the Gallipoli Campaign.

Private Frank Mathers was sent to Field Ambulance at Gallipoli Peninsula on 6th June, 1915. He was admitted to Casualty Clearing Station on 12th June, 1915 with Gastro Enteritis. Pte Mathers rejoined his Unit on 20th June, 1915.

Private Frank Mathers was promoted to Corporal on 22nd June, 1915.

Corporal Frank Mathers was transferred to Fleetsweeper ("Fleet Sweeper" was used to evacuate wounded from Anzac Cove/ North Beach, out to the Hospital ships) at Lemnos on 28th July, 1915. Cpl. Mathers was admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Cairo on 6th August, 1915. He was transferred to Australian & New Zealand Convalescent Hospital at Helouan on 25th August, 1915 with Dysentery then transferred to Zeitoun on 26th August, 1915 fit for active Service. Cpl. Mathers was admitted to A. D. B. I. Hospital at Cairo on 6th September, 1915 & discharged to Base Details at Zeitoun on 7th September, 1915.

Corporal Frank Mathers was admitted to No. 1 Australian General Hospital at Heliopolis on 21st October, 1915 with colic. He was discharged on 28th October, 1915.

Corporal Frank Mathers was with No. 1 Training Battalion at Zeitoun on 18th February, 1916.

Corporal Frank Mathers was taken on strength of 14th Machine Gun Company & rejoined his Unit at Ferry Post on 26th March, 1916 from School of Instruction at Zeitoun.

Corporal Frank Mathers was to be C.S.M. (Company Sergeant Major) with rank of W.O. Class II to complete establishment dated from 17th April, 1916 at Ismailia (Egypt).

Company Sergeant Major I Frank Mathers was sent sick to Hospital on 7th June, 1916. He was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined) & transferred to 1st Australian Stationary Hospital at Ismailia on 7th June, 1916 with a gastric ulcer.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers embarked from Alexandria to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) on 19th June, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th June, 1916.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was admitted to 15th Field Ambulance with Biliary Colic on 19th August, 1916. He was transferred to No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station then transferred on 20th August, 1916. C.S.M. Mathers was transferred to Hospital Ship *Jan Breydel* on 15th September, 1916 with cholecystitis (Inflammation of gall bladder).

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was admitted to 1/5 N. General Hospital, Leicester, England on 16th September, 1916 with "cholic ustitis".

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was taken on strength of No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 17th October, 1916.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers reported back from furlough to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs on 2nd November, 1916. He was medically classified Class A.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was marched out to Australian Details at Parkhouse, Wiltshire from No. 1 Command Depot on 17th November, 1916 & marched in to Machine Gun Training Depot at Grantham, Lincolnshire on 23rd November, 1916.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was admitted to Belton Hospital, Grantham on 19th December, 1916.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers died at 8.50 am on 22nd December, 1916 at Belton Military Hospital, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England from Perforation of Duodenum.

A death for Frank Mathers, aged 37, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Grantham, Lincolnshire, England.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was buried on 23rd December, 1916 in Grantham Cemetery, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England – Section 7 Grave no. 4. G. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

[Note - From researching the other Australian Soldiers buried in Grantham Cemetery, the next-of-kin were contacted by Base Records in April, 1920 to advise that the remains of the next-of-kin had been exhumed from the original grave & had been re-interred in Section 15 (& the associated grave number quoted). The next-of-kin were advised that *"This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain."* C.S.M. Frank Mathers does not have a burial report in his Service Record file, nor is there any record regarding his body being exhumed but the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records that Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers is buried in Section 15. B. 12.]

Frank Mathers requested in his Will dated 16th January, 1915 that the whole of his property, pay & effects be given to Mrs Janet Mathers, c/o Mrs R. Sly, 7 Hurlingham Mansions, High Street, Fulham, London, England.

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to C.S.M. Mathers' widow – Mrs J. Mathers, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in England in August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers – service number 647, aged 35, of 14th Coy., Australian Machine Gun Corps. He was the son of Frank and Martha Mathers; husband of Janet Mathers, of 39 Seagrave Rd., West Brompton, London. Served in the Boxer Rebellion (1900). Born at Fulham, London, England.

Company Sergeant Major F. 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 178.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. Mathers is remembered on the Catherine Hill Bay Honour Roll, located at Catherine Hill Bay Surf Club, 69 Flowers Drive, Catherine Hill Bay, NSW.



**Catherine Hill Bay Honour Roll** (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW – Mr Robert McLardy)

F. Mathers is remembered on the Catherine Hill Bay War Memorial, located at Catherine Hill Bay Bowling Club, Flowers Drive, Catherine Hill Bay NSW.



**Catherine Hill Bay War Memorial** (Photo from Monument Australia – Stephen Woods)



F. Mathers is remembered on the Catherine Hill Bay Cornstalk Lodge G.U.O.F.G. Roll of Honour, located at East Lake Macquarie Historical Society, 22 Lake Street, Swansea, NSW.



**Catherine Hill Bay Cornstalk Lodge G.U.O.F.G. Roll of Honour**

*(Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW –Margaret Berghofer)*

(43 pages of Company Sergeant Major Frank 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) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **CASUALTIES**

#### **261st LIST**

Died (Other Causes)

C.S.M. F. Mathers, England

*(The Land, Sydney, NSW – 12 January, 1917)*

## CATHERINE HILL BAY

At Catherine Hill Bay Public School patriotic songs were sung by the children and addresses were given by the teachers, comprising Mr Akhurst, Mr Russell, Miss Hepworth, and the Rev. Mr Palmer. The children then adjourned to the grounds, where a crowd of adults had gathered. The children marched to the flagpole, at the top of which the Union Jack was flying, and as the flag was lowered to half-mast and raised again to the peak the children stood at salute.

About 30 wreaths placed at the foot of the flagstaff by the children and others showed the spirit of the Catherine Hill Bay people towards their fallen soldiers. Mr Akhurst and Rev. Mr Palmer spoke of those from Catherine Hill Bay who had fallen, special mention being made of Private Victor Farr, who fell in the landing at Gallipoli. The other fallen soldiers whose names were mentioned were Privates A. Baker, H. Whitehead, T. Woods, P. Penfold, O. A. Harris, W. Rummings and Sergeant F. Mathers. The children sang the National Anthem, at the conclusion of the ceremony.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 26 April, 1917)*

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### 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)*

Company Sergeant Major Frank Mathers does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Memory Of My Beloved Husband Rest In Peace*

## **Grantham Cemetery, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England**

During the First World War there were machine gun camps and depots at Belton Park, on the Lincoln Road, and at Grantham a 620 bed military hospital. Most of the First World War burials are scattered throughout the cemetery but a number of Australian and New Zealand machine gunners are buried together in Section 15. During the Second World War there was a Royal Air Force station at Grantham and there is a small group of RAF graves in Section 17. Other Second World War graves are in a small war graves plot in Section 19, opposite the town's memorial to the civilian war dead, and the remainder are in various other parts of the cemetery. The Cross of Sacrifice is near the eastern side of the cemetery, between sections 2 and 3 and serves as a central memorial to the service men of both wars buried here. Grantham Cemetery contains 55 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 58 from the Second. There is also one Dutch war grave. There are 5 Australian Graves in this Cemetery.

*(Information from CWGC)*



**Grantham Cemetery** *(Photos by Roger Sayer)*





**Grantham Cemetery – Australian Plot** *(Photo courtesy of Stephen Stapleton)*



*(Photo by Roger Sayer)*



Photo of C. Serjt. Major Frank Mathers' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Grantham Cemetery, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England.

(\*Note – At the time of researching C.S.M. Mathers' headstone had the incorrect date of death as 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1916. CWGC were advised in September, 2017 of the error- should be 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1916)



*(Photo courtesy of Tony Emptage)*



Photo of C. Serjt. Major Frank Mathers' New Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Grantham Cemetery, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England, showing the correct date of death.



*(Photo courtesy of Adam Gadd 2021)*



GRANTHAM CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM

HARROWBY ROAD NG31 9DT

