

**Melcombe Regis Cemetery,  
Weymouth, Dorset, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**1591 SERJEANT**

**D. K. McCUSPIE**

**60TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**28TH DECEMBER, 1916**

## Donald Kintore McCUSPIE

Donald MacCuspie was born at Mount Shank, South Australia on 15th October, 1889 to parents John & Catherine MacCuspie (nee Brown). His birth was registered in district of Grey, South Australia.

John MacCuspie, father of Donald Kintore MacCupsie, died on 25th May, 1892 at Port MacDonnell, South Australia.

The 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Flinders, subdivision of Dandenong, Victoria recorded Donald Kintore McCuspie , Labourer from Dandenong.

Donald Kintore McCuspie was a 24 year old, single, Labourer when he enlisted on 8th September, 1914 at Broadmeadows, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Presbyterian & his next of kin was listed as his brother – N. McCuspie, of Nelson, Victoria.

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie was posted to 3rd Reinforcements of 8th Battalion.

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie, Service number 1591, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Runic (A54)* on 19th February, 1915 with the 8th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements.

Mrs K. MacCuspie, Glenelg Bridge, Nelson, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 21st August, 1915 with the following letter: *"My son enlisted at Broadmeadows, about the end of the year 1914. I've never heard from or about him. Would it be asking you too much, if you could secure his present address & send it on to me, or address when leaving Broadmeadows. As far as I know his first address 1/D 8/10 No. 1591 Donald MacCuspie 8th Battalion A.I.F. Company 3rd Reinforcement."*

Base Records replied to Mrs K. MacCuspie on 11th October, 1915 advising the present postal address was *"No. 1591 Private D. K. MacCuspie, 8th Battalion (3rd Rfts), 2nd Infantry Brigade, 1st Australian Division, Alexandria, Egypt."*

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie proceeded from Base Details at Zeitoun on 20th October, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) with Draft. He joined 8th Battalion at Anzac on 23rd November, 1915 from 7th Reinforcements.

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie disembarked at Alexandria on 7th January, 1916 from *Empress of Britain* (after the evacuation of Gallipoli).

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie was to be Lance Corporal from 7th February, 1916 while posted with 8th Battalion at Serapeum.

### 8th Battalion

The 8th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 6th and 7th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

.....The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Lance Corporal Donald Kintore McCuspie was transferred to 60th Battalion from 8th Battalion & was taken on strength of 60th Battalion at Serapeum on 24th February, 1916.

Lance Corporal Donald Kintore McCuspie embarked from Alexandria on 19th June, 1916 on *Kinfauns Castle* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 29th June, 1916.

Lance Corporal Donald Kintore McCuspie was reported wounded in action in France on 19th July, 1916. He was admitted to 1st Convalescent Depot on 21st July, 1916 with a wounded Forearm & discharged to Base Details on 24th July, 1916. Lance Corporal McCuspie was taken on strength of 5th Divisional Base Depot in France on 25th July, 1916.

## 60th Battalion

The 60th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 24 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 8th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. The majority of both groups were Victorians. The new battalion formed part of the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

Having only arrived in France on 28 June, the 60th became embroiled in its first major battle on the Western Front on 19 July, without the benefit of an introduction to the trenches in a "quiet" sector. The battle of Fromelles was a disaster for the battalion. In a single day, it was virtually wiped out, suffering 757 casualties. These losses meant the battalion saw little further offensive action in 1916.....

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

### War Diary – 60th Battalion

*Trenches on Fromelles Front – 19th July, 1916:*

*Coy Cmdrs and all other available officers received final instructions re assault at Batn. Hdqtrs at 10 am.*

*Zero time 11 am. Head of battalion moved past Brigade Hqtrs at 1.30 and marched via V.C. Sap to front line trenches under heavy enemy artillery bombardment. Friendly artillery very heavily bombarding enemy trenches. Battalion established in front line trench by 4.20, Lewis guns excepted. A few casualties having occurred, some serious. Battalion scaled parapet and advanced in four waves, the first wave leaving at 6.45, the last at 7. Each wave advanced under very heavy artillery, machine gun and rifle fire, suffering very heavy casualties. Advance continued to within 90 yards of enemy trenches. The attack was held up, although it is believed some few of the battalion entered enemy trenches. During the night 19/20 a few stragglers, wounded and unwounded, returned to our trenches.*

*(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)*

Lance Corporal Donald Kintore McCuspie was taken on strength of 60th Battalion on 18th August, 1916 from 5th Divisional Base Depot. He was promoted to Sergeant on 18th August, 1916.

Base Records advised Mr K. McCuspie, Nelson, Victoria, listed as next-of-kin of "Private" D. K. McCuspie, had been reported wounded.

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie reported sick on 9th November, 1916 in the Field with 60th Battalion. He was admitted to 8th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 11th November, 1916 & embarked for England on 12th November, 1916 on *West Australian* with Myalgia.

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie was admitted to 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England on 15th November, 1916 with Myalgia – slight. He was transferred to 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 28th November, 1916 from 2nd Southern General Hospital. Sergeant McCuspie was discharged from 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital on 1st December, 1916 to Weymouth.

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie was posted to No. 2 Australian Command Depot, Weymouth, Dorset on 1st December, 1916. On 2nd December, 1916 the following was reported "*Shell has pains R leg and limps.*" On 13th December, 1916 Sergeant McCuspie was medically classified as B1 A Grade 1 (temporarily unfit for Service).

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie died at 4.20 pm on 28th December, 1916 at No. 2 Australian Command Depot (Hut Hospital, Monte Video), Weymouth, Dorset, England from Pneumonia. The 'Report of Death of a Soldier' (Army Form B. 2090) recorded he had died at Hut 80, Monte Video Camp, No. 2 Australian Command Depot. (Note: A Hospital Admission Card recorded that "Private" D. K. McCuspie, 1591, 60th Battalion was admitted to Hut 80 Hospital on 25th December, 1916 & discharged to Sidney Hall Hospital on 26th December, 1916.)

The Officer Commanding, No. 2 Command Depot, Weymouth, sent a Telegram to Administrative Headquarters, London, Australian Imperial Force on 28th December, 1916 at 3.30 pm advising that "*1591 Sergeant D. K.*

*McCuspie, 60th Battalion A.I.F. lying in Camp Hospital dangerously ill with Pneumonia. AAA Next of kin Mother Mrs A. J. McCuspie, Scorsby St., Hamilton, Victoria AAA Aunt of Sister Mrs Z. P. Hildreth 83 Abbeysville Rd, Clapham Park, London S.W. Please inform all relatives accordingly...*

A Telegram was sent from Administrative Headquarters, London, Australian Imperial Force on 29th December, 1916 to Mrs Hildreth, 84 Abbeysville Rd, Clapham Park, advising of the death of 1591 Sergeant Donald McCuspie.

A death for Donald K. McCuspie, aged 26, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Weymouth, Dorset, England.

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie was buried on 30th December, 1916 in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England – Section C Grave No. 2677.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number III. C. 2677 and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Donald Kintore McCuspie requested in his Will, extracted from A.B. 64, dated 9th March, 1915: *“In the event of my death I give the while of my property & effects to my Mother Katherine McCuspie of Nelson, Victoria.”*

An urgent Telegram was sent from Nelson, Victoria on 3rd January, 1917 advising *“Parents relatives of D. K. McCuspie 1591 now reside Scoresby St, Hamilton.”*

A War Pension was granted to Katherine MacCuspie, Hamilton, widowed mother of the late Donald Kintore McCuspie, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 2nd March, 1917.

Several packages containing the personal effects of the late Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie were sent to Norman McCuspie, brother, Nelson, Victoria.

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sergeant McCuspie's mother – Mrs K. McCuspie, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie – service number 1591, of 60th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Sergeant D. K. McCuspie is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 170.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

(87 pages of Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie'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**

### **262ND OFFICIAL LIST**

DIED OF ILLNESS

VICTORIA

Sgt McCuspie, D. K., Nelson

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 12 January, 1917)*

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CASUALTIES – The following district names appear in the latest casualty lists:- Died of illness Sergeant D. K. McCuspie, Nelson.....

*(Portland Guardian, Victoria – 15 January, 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)*

Sergeant Donald Kintore McCuspie does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

## Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England

Weymouth became a depot for Australian forces in 1916 and 83 of the 147 First World War burials in Melcombe Regis Cemetery are of Australian servicemen; most of these graves are scattered in the old part. The 36 Second World War burials are in the extension. The cemetery also contains seven war graves of other nationalities and one non-war burial.

*(Information from CWGC)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00333

### **Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919**

*Identified, front row, left to right: unidentified; Butler; 5917 Private Edgar Allan Thornell, 22nd Battalion (Bn), died 9 August 1918; 1207 Corporal Jesse Adams Davis, 12th Bn, died 15 November 1918.*

*Back row: 5329 Private Frederick Albert Archer, Anzac Provost Company, died 6 November 1918; 5990 Private Albert Robert Blackmore, 12th Bn, died 2 November 1918; 11099 Driver Matthew Charles Percival Nettle, 6th Australian Field Artillery Brigade, died 22 October 1918; 3942 Private Walter Alick Weckman, 51st Bn, died 9 November 1918.*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00332

**Some of the Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919**

*Identified, left to right: Captain Francis Arthur Deravin, Australian Army Medical Corps, died 8 July 1917 aged 41 years (large headstone); 138 Private Louis Nelson Matthews, 27th Battalion, 4 July 1917; 5082 Private Victor George Smith, 21st Battalion, died 13 November 1918.*



*(Photo courtesy of Steve Stewart)*



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)







(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

## Australians in Weymouth

### What was life like for the Australians?

#### The Camp

Within the camp, there were educational facilities as well as medical rooms which helped to recover and re-educate the soldiers. There was help provided for soldiers suffering with physical or emotional impairments, such as massage rooms, psychotherapy training rooms and a remedial gymnasium. This strengthened the men to help them recover from their injuries. The educational aspects were diverse, allowing soldiers to pick a completely different profession for when they went back home. This included architecture, motor engineering, electrical and carpentry classes. Another option allowed the soldiers to be retrained in their previous professions which may have become more difficult, due to loss of limbs or new techniques that may have been created whilst they were at war.

#### The Town

Weymouth benefited hugely from the influx of Australian and New Zealand soldiers. One shop that still exists today is the Acutt's clothing store, which used to sell everything a soldier could possibly need for his uniform, from the whole jacket to just the buttons and epaulettes. As well as Acutt's, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia also opened up their own branch in Weymouth, for the soldiers to use during their time over here, which highlighted the permanence of their stay. There was also a monthly newsletter that circulated amongst the men, which was produced by local company Sherrens, which still operates on the Granby Industrial estate.

### Special Events

The Australian recovery camps took special occasions very seriously, such as Christmas and Easter, to try and reduce the ache of home sickness and being away from their family and friends. Most camps tried to make their soldiers feel at home, with large celebrations with Christmas dinners and special guest performances at Easter. However, there were also other special events that gained press attention, such as the opening of the YMCA building, which used to be on Abbotshay Road. This provided help and welfare to the Australian soldiers, such as free food and blankets. There were fundraising days for the prisoner-of-war soldiers that had been captured during the fall of the Kut, who were mainly Dorset soldiers. From these fundraising days in Weymouth, Dorchester and Biddport, the towns managed to raise £3,600 to help comfort the prisoners.

### Entertainment

Entertainment was a highly important aspect of the soldiers' lives whilst they were in Weymouth. It kept the soldiers motivated and in high spirits whilst they were ill or injured, in hopes of helping to speed up their recovery. Throughout the camps in Weymouth, there was always something to watch or listen to, whether it was singing and acting companies who toured round the camps or at the Pavilion Theatre on the Esplanade. Sometimes, the soldiers even made their own entertainment, with marching bands and choirs being set up by the YMCA building in Westham. There were also balls and dances at the camps themselves and even a small trip to the Alexandra Garden along the Esplanade. Dating also became a significant part of the soldiers' lives, with many Weymouth women losing husbands and boyfriends at war. Finding comfort with the new soldiers at the camp, this led to many marriages between the two groups, and some migrating back to Australia with their new families, or staying here and leaving their families.

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THESE BOYS BEING ASSISTED BY ACUTT BROTHERS

THE AUSTRALIAN RECOVERY CAMP AT THE BRIDGEHEAD AT WEYMOUTH CAMP, ORGANIZED BY THE 4th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

Commanded and general subject only, under the Air Education Service at British War Camp

Weymouth, England, The Australian Band at No. 4 Australian Command Depot, Weymouth Camp

THE JOURNAL OF A SOLDIER

Weymouth, England, 1918, Australian soldiers before the gates of the camp, in a YMCA building

ROYAL JUBILEE HALL

ROYAL PALM COURT

ARCADIA

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

Images courtesy of Australian War Memorial, Newsletter originals published by Sherrens, Ltd. Weymouth



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

## Australians in Weymouth

### From Weymouth to Auswey - A Soldier's Récovery



During the First World War between 1914 and 1918, many injured soldiers who were mostly from Australia and New Zealand, were brought to Weymouth. They were known as ANZACS (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). They were placed in Repatriation and Rehabilitation camps in Westham, Littlehampton, Chichester and Portland. This was in the hope of sending them back to the line of action in France or back home to Australia due to lack of fitness. Weymouth was picked as the place to set up camp, as it was seen as a relaxing seaside location. This would help to heal the sick and injured Australians who had been fighting in major battles of the war or on the Western Front between France and Belgium.



Although thousands of ANZACS passed through Weymouth during the First World War, there are some soldiers who unfortunately did not make it home. These soldiers are proudly buried in the Melcombe Regis cemetery. This is only 100 metres away from one of the major camps in Westham, with 142 soldiers buried in the cemetery, 83 from Australia and 59 from New Zealand. These graves are similar to some of the war memorials and graves placed around Europe, much like the Somme in France. Unfortunately, there are too many grave names to be displayed on this board, but they can be found on the website link at the bottom of this board.



### Past and Present Westham

As you can see on the map of the Westham camp, many of the street names have an Australian connection, highlighting the history of the area. Residents of the housing estates, which are now built where the camp once stood, are still digging up remains of the camp, such as bullets or cooking equipment.



Modern Day Street Names	Westham Camp - December 1916
Queen Close	Soldiers Huts
Queen Road	Company Officers
Queensland Road	Regimental Institute
Kitchener Road	Minutemen Rifle Range
Corporation Road	Officers' Mess
Shark Road	Shower Block
Longcroft Road	Vehicle Shed, Mob Store
Wessex Road	Home Shelter
Parth Street	Cool Yard
Melcombe Street	Cook House
Adelaide Crescent	YMCA
Abbotsbury Road	Dung Pit
Sydney Street	Fire Hydrant
Shirecroft Road	





www.westhamcommunitygroup.co.uk

Images courtesy of Australian War Memorial

Photo of Serjeant D. K. McCuspie's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Allan Wood)*