

**Stourbridge Cemetery,  
Stourbridge, West Midlands, England  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**1187 PRIVATE**

**D. J. McGRATH**

**34TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**14TH JULY, 1918**

## Daniel James McGRATH

Daniel James McGrath was born at Junee, New South Wales in 1881 to parents James McGrath & Priscilla McGrath (formerly Mulligan, nee Kaye).

Daniel James McGrath was a 31 year old, single, Labourer from Temora, NSW when he enlisted at West Maitland, NSW on 25th January, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1187 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr James McGrath, Temora, NSW. Daniel McGrath stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to his Teeth. His upper teeth required attention – a plate was required.

Private Daniel James McGrath was posted to West Maitland, NSW on 25th February, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to "D" Company, 34th Battalion on 8th March, 1916.

Private Daniel James McGrath embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 2nd May, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 34th Infantry Battalion, "D" Company & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 23rd June, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Daniel James McGrath proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 21st November, 1916.

Private Daniel James McGrath was detached to Working Part on 29th April, 1917 & rejoined 34th Battalion from detachment on 15th May, 1917.

Private Daniel James McGrath was on Leave to Paris from 24th December, 1917 & rejoined from Leave on 7th January, 1918.

Private Daniel James McGrath was sent sick to 9th Field Ambulance on 11th March, 1918 with Scabies & was discharged to duty on 18th March, 1918. He rejoined 34th Battalion on 19th March, 1918.

Private Daniel James McGrath was sent sick to 9th Field Ambulance on 16th May, 1918 & admitted with Bronchitis. He was transferred to 47th Casualty Clearing Station on 18th May, 1918 then transferred to Ambulance Train on 19th May, 1918. Private McGrath was admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 20th May, 1918 with Bronchitis. He was transferred to England on 7th July, 1918.

### 34th Battalion

The 34th Battalion was formed in January 1916 at a camp established at the Maitland showground in New South Wales. It was planned that the bulk of the battalion's recruits would be drawn from the Maitland area and thus it was dubbed "Maitland's Own". The first recruits for the 34th, however, hailed from the far north-west of the state and arrived at Maitland after joining a recruiting march that began at Walgett. These men were known as the "Wallabies".

The 34th became part of the 9th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division. It left Sydney, bound for the United Kingdom in May 1916. Arriving there in late June, the battalion spent the next five months training. It crossed to France on 22 November, and moved into the trenches of the Western Front for the first time on 27 November, just in time for the onset of the terrible winter of 1916-17.

The 34th Battalion had to wait until the emphasis of British and Dominion operations switched to the Ypres Sector of Belgium in mid-1917 to take part in its first major battle; this was the battle of Messines, launched on 7 June. After several stints in the trenches, and a period of rest and training, the battalion entered battle again on 12 October around Passchendaele. The battlefield, though, had been deluged with rain, and thick mud tugged at the advancing troops and fouled their weapons. The battle ended in a disastrous defeat, and over 50 per cent casualties for the 34th.

For the next five months the 34th alternated been periods of rest, training, labouring, and service in the line. When the German Army launched its last great offensive in the spring of 1918, the battalion was part of the force deployed

to defend the approach to Amiens around Villers-Bretonneux. It took part in a counter-attack at Hangard Wood on 30 March, and helped to defeat a major drive on Villers- Bretonneux on 4 April.....

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

Mr J. McGrath, Temora, NSW was advised by Base Records on 8th June, 1918 that his son, Private Daniel McGrath, was dangerously ill. Another notification, also dated 8th June, 1918, advised that Private Daniel McGrath had been admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital, Rouen, France on 22nd May with Bronchitis & his condition was dangerous.

Mr J. McGrath, Temora, NSW was advised by Base Records on 16th August, 1918 that Private Daniel McGrath's condition was stationary. He was advised on 20th June, 1918 that Private Daniel McGrath's condition was slightly improved & on 26th June, 1918 that Private Daniel McGrath had been removed from the Seriously Ill List.

Private Daniel James McGrath was admitted to 1st Southern General Hospital – Stourbridge Section, Birmingham, England on 8th July, 1918 with Bronchitis - severe. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Tracheal cough; no air E\_\_ed left lung. No dullness or murmur. Suggest Aneurysm. Tracheotomy.*"

Private Daniel James McGrath died at 4.20 pm on 14th July, 1918 at 1st Southern General Hospital – Stourbridge Section, England from Mediastinal Growth.

A death for Daniel J. McGrath, aged 35, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Stourbridge, Worcestershire, England.

Private Daniel James McGrath was buried on 17th July, 1918 in Stourbridge Cemetery, Stourbridge, West Midlands, England – Plot number 8 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private McGrath - *Coffin was Elm. Brass mounts. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral, and the Coffin draped with the Australian Flag. Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were in attendance. Wreaths were sent from Mrs Townsend, also, Nursing Staff and Patients of the 1st Southern General Hospital. The Rev. Father W. J. Bull officiated at the graveside, where the "Last Post" was sounded. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected. Administrative Headquarters A.I.F. London were represented at the Funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mr J. McGrath, De Boos St, Temora, NSW on 20th June, 1924 with the following letter: "*I am in receipt of a communication from Mr L. M. Instone, 26 Lea Rd., Wolverhampton, England (formerly a member of the Australian Imperial Force), who on Anzac Day last visited the grave of your son, the late No. 1187 Private D. J. McGrath, 34th Battalion, and other Australian soldiers buried in the Stourbridge Cemetery. No doubt this action will be appreciated by you and it is thought you may desire to personally communicate with him.*"

Base Records wrote to Mr J. McGrath, DeBoos St, Temora, NSW on 4th June, 1925 with the following letter: "*You will doubtless be interested to learn that on the occasion of the recent Anzac Day pilgrimage to the graves of Australian soldiers buried in the United Kingdom, the cemetery at Stourbridge, Worcestershire, wherein the remains of your son, the late No. 1187 Private D. J. McGrath, 34th Battalion, and other members of the Force are interred, was again visited by Mr L. M. Instone, of "Elmdene", Woodfield Avenue, Penn. Wolverhampton, England. The thanks of the Department have been conveyed to Mr Instone for this further evidence of his continued interest in and attention to the graves of our fallen soldiers, and it is thought you may desire to personally express your appreciation of his kindness.*"

Private Daniel James McGrath was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private McGrath's father –Mr J. McGrath, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Daniel James McGrath – service number 1187, of 34th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

D. J. McGrath is remembered on the Temora War Memorial, located in Callaghan Park, Loftus Street, Temora, NSW.



**Temora War Memorial** (Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – above Henry Moulds; below Liz Williamson)



Private D. J. McGrath is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 124.



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

(53 pages of Private Daniel James McGrath'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**

### **Temora**

Mr James McGrath is in receipt of a communication from the military authorities that his son, Pte Daniel McGrath, is dangerously ill. He was admitted to the Eleventh Stationary Hospital, Rouen, France, on the 22nd May.

*(Cootamundra Herald, NSW – 24 June, 1918)*

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### **N.S.W. CASUALTIES**

#### **Ill in Hospital**

Pte McGrath, D. J. (Temora), dangerously

*(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 26 June, 1918)*

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Mrs Mulligan desires us to explain that her son who died of illness in France was not Pte Albert Mulligan, as many suppose, but was another son, Daniel, aged 35, who enlisted up north, and would not be known here, as he never at any time lived in Cootamundra.

*(Cootamundra Herald, NSW – 30 July, 1918)*

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#### **420th CASUALTY LIST**

##### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

DIED, CAUSE NOT STATED

Pte DANIEL JAS. McGRATH, Temora

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 August, 1918)*

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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)*

A letter from Base Records, dated 25th July, 1921, to Mr J. McGrath, De Boos St, Temora, NSW advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late Private D. J. McGrath, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Private D. J. McGrath does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

#### **Stourbridge Cemetery, Stourbridge, West Midlands, England**

The cemetery contains 47 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war, (including those of 13 Australian soldiers, near which a Cenotaph is placed); and a War Cross is erected on the main roadway close to the entrance. The 1st Southern General Hospital had a Section in the Stourbridge Infirmary.

Most of the First World War burials are scattered but 17 form a small plot. The cemetery also contains 20 scattered burials of the Second World War and 1 Non World War burial here. *(Information from CWGC)*



*(Photo by cookie – Find a Grave)*



**Australian Plot** *(Photo courtesy of Margaret Carter)*

### **Stourbridge Cemetery Overseas Soldiers Sarcophagus**

Adjacent to the Plot where the 13 Australian WW1 War Graves are located sits a Sarcophagus Memorial (listed by CWGC above as a Cenotaph) which reads:

*“In Grateful Memory Of Our Comrades From  
Overseas Who Died In The Stourbridge Military  
Hospital During The Great War 1914-19.”*

The names of the 13 Australians are listed on the Plaque along with a Soldier from Canadian Contingent & 2 Soldiers from U.S.A.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



**Stourbridge Cemetery Overseas Soldiers Sarcophagus/Memorial**

(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)





Arrow showing the Plot where Australian WW1 War Graves are located (Photo courtesy of Margaret Carter)



Stourbridge Cemetery showing Australian WW1 War Graves (Photo courtesy of Margaret Carter)

Photo of Private D. J. McGrath's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Stourbridge Cemetery, Stourbridge, West Midlands, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett – Private Collection)*



**Australian Plot** (*Photo courtesy of Margaret Carter*)