

**Overleigh Cemetery,
Chester, Cheshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



5386 SAPPER

G. MCLARTY

1ST AUSTRALIAN TUNNELLERS

4TH NOVEMBER, 1918 Age 40

Peace Perfect Peace

George McLARTY

George Matheson McLarty was born at Ballarat, Victoria in 1878 to parents Archibald and Mary McLarty (nee Matheson).

George McLarty attended State School, McArthur Street, Ballarat, Victoria.

George McLarty had been apprenticed for 5 years with F. C. Pring, of Ballarat, Victoria.

The 1903 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of Bunbury, Western Australia, listed George McLarty, Cooper, from Victoria Street.

George McLarty married Daisy Helen McIntosh in Perth, Western Australia in 1905.

Newspaper notice – Sunday Times, Perth, Western Australia – 8 October, 1905:

Matrimonial Market

The following marriages are notified to take place at an early date:-

George McLarty (Bunbury) to Daisy Helen McIntosh (Perth).

The 1906 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of Bunbury, Western Australia, listed George McLarty, Cooper, from Victoria Street.

The 1910 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of Bunbury, Western Australia, listed George McLarty, Cooper, living at Spencer Street with his wife – Daisy Helen McLarty, Home Duties.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of Bunbury, Western Australia, listed George McLarty, Cooper, living at Spencer Street with his wife – Daisy Ellen McLarty, Home Duties.

George McLarty was a 34 year old, married, Cooper from 236 St. George's Terrace, Perth, Western Australia when he enlisted in Perth, Western Australia on 14th March, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5386 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Daisy Ellen McLarty, Hospital for Insane, Claremont, Western Australia. George McLarty stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 6 years with 3rd Battalion Infantry at Ballarat & had been discharged.

Private George McLarty was posted to 53rd Depot Battalion on 14th March, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Engineer Reinforcements as Sapper in 16th March, 1916. Sapper McLarty was transferred to Tunnelling Corps on 19th June, 1916 then transferred to Miners Reinforcements at Seymour on 1st July, 1916.

Sapper George McLarty embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Suffolk (A23)* on 30th September, 1916 with the Tunnelling Companies, September, 1916 Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 2 December, 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.

Sapper George McLarty proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 1st January, 1917 on *SS Arundel* from Tunnelling Reinforcements at Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England. He was marched in to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) in France on 2nd January, 1917.

Sapper George McLarty was attached to "1st Anzac Ent Battalion" on 18th January, 1917. He was taken on strength of 1st Tunnelling Company from Tunnelling Reinforcements on 1st February, 1918.

1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion

The 1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion was formed at La Motte in France on 6 June 1916. Like the other British Empire entrenching battalions, the unit was initially used to hold reinforcement infantrymen for I ANZAC Corps. Soldiers were posted to the battalion after completing initial infantry training in the United Kingdom and further

training at the base depots of the AIF divisions in France. The role of the 1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion was to accelerate and improve the training process by providing reinforcement infantrymen with exposure to combat conditions while undertaking engineering works near the front line.

The battalion initially provided all infantry reinforcements for the I ANZAC Corps, but all of its personnel were posted to combat units as part of the response to the heavy casualties suffered by the Australian units involved in the Battle of Pozières between July and September 1916. While it ceased to provide training to infantrymen, the 1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion's headquarters and staff were retained and the unit absorbed the surplus reinforcements for the AIF's tunnelling companies; these comprised 9 officers and 203 other ranks. The battalion subsequently operated as a tunnelling unit on the Western Front alongside Canadian tunnellers. It was disbanded on 20 October 1917.

(Wikipedia)

Sapper George McLarty proceeded to join 1st Australian Tunnelling Company on 12th March, 1917 & was attached to 1st Australian Tunnelling Company in the Field on 14th March, 1917 from 1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion.

1st Australian Tunnelling Company

The 1st Australian Tunnelling Company was one of the tunnelling companies of the Royal Australian Engineers during World War I. The tunnelling units were occupied in offensive and defensive mining involving the placing and maintaining of mines under enemy lines, as well as other underground work such as the construction of deep dugouts for troop accommodation, the digging of subways, saps (a narrow trench dug to approach enemy trenches), cable trenches and underground chambers for signals and medical services.

(Wikipedia)

Sapper George McLarty was wounded in action on 29th September, 1918. He was admitted to 12th Casualty Clearing Station on 29th September, 1918 gassed (classed as wounded) then transferred to Ambulance Train 19 on the same day. Sapper McLarty was admitted to 6th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 30th September, 1918. Sapper McLarty was invalided to England from Rouen on 2nd October, 1918 having been wounded - gassed.

War Diary - 1st Australian Tunnelling Company

Cartigney

28th September, 1918 – Much rain – Road work being proceeded with.

29th September, 1918 – Fine – misty morning. Offensive started. Section carry on in accordance with instructions Appendix 2 & 8. Lt. Johnson severely wounded 18 Sappers wounded. 1 Sapper died of wounds.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Sapper George McLarty was admitted to Chester War Hospital on 4th October, 1918 suffering from effects of being Gassed.

Sapper George McLarty died 16.30 hrs on 4th November, 1918 at Chester War Hospital, Cheshire, England from Pneumonia.

*[**NOTE: The Commonwealth War Graves Commission had the date of death as 3rd November, 1918 & as a result Sapper George McLarty's CWGC Headstone is engraved with that date. Update – CWGC have now agreed to the date of death as being 4th November, 1918 after being advised by Chester Record Office that the date of death on the death certificate is 4th November, 1918.*

The Australian War Memorial has the date of death as 4th November, 1918 & all the official forms in the Service Record file have the date of death as 4th November, 1918. All the official forms in the Service Record file except one of two copies of the Burial Report have the date of death as 3rd & also a telegram to Arthur North has the date as 3rd.]

A death for George McLarty, aged 40, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Chester, Cheshire, England.

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Sapper George McLarty was buried on 11th November, 1918 in Overleigh Cemetery, Chester, Cheshire, England – Plot number 3843 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sapper George McLarty - *Coffin was Elm with brass mounts. The deceased was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack. Rev. F. W. Anderson conducted the burial service and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. The Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of Relatives and friends present at the Funeral – Australian soldiers & Hospital Chaplin.

(Note: According to Find a Grave – Sapper McLarty is buried in Overleigh New Cemetery)

The Acting Secretary, Lunacy Department, Claremont, Western Australian wrote to The Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne in March, 1920 stating that they were returning papers that had been forwarded to Mrs D. E. McLarty who was an inmate of the Institution. They regretted that "Mrs McLarty is not in a fit state to supply the information required by the Department of Defence."

Base Records wrote to Mrs M. M. McLarty, 103 Peel Street, Ballarat, Victoria, in April, 1920 asking if "*your son, the late No. 5386 Sapper G. McLarty, 1st Tunnelling Company.... had any children and if so their names, ages and addresses.*" They also stated they were forwarding forms which had been forwarded to the late soldier's widow but were advised she was not able to supply the information required.

Base Records wrote to Mrs M. M. McLarty, 103 Peel Street, Ballarat, Victoria, in April, 1921 stating that they "*desire to be in a position to properly dispose of the war medals, etc., of your son, the late No. 5386 Sapper G. McLarty, 1st Tunnelling Company, who upon enlistment nominated his wife as next-of-kin. I have been informed, however, that she is an inmate of a Lunatic Asylum and incapable of attending to any business. In the circumstances, unless there are any children and if so I should be very obliged for their names and addresses, it is proposed to hand over deceased's war medals, etc., to you, but only on the distinct understanding that they will be preserved with due care and produced to this Department at any time upon receipt of its demand, should the late soldier's widow ever be in a fit state to have charge of the mementoes. If you are agreeable to accept them under these conditions, kindly complete the attached Declaration before a J.P. and return to me at your earliest convenience.*"

Miss M. McLarty signed a Statutory Declaration on 27th April, 1921 at Ballarat stating she would preserve with due care the medals. She had a hand written notation "*I am the sister of above deceased soldier, his mother is deceased. There are no children by marriage.*"

Sapper George McLarty was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sapper George McLarty's sister as his mother had died in 1920 - Miss. M. McLarty. (Scroll sent August, 1921 & Plaque sent (under Bond) October, 1922).

Miss M. McLarty advised Base Records in December, 1924 that her address was 5 Clarendon Street, Ballarat instead on 103 Peel Street.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper George McLarty – service number 5386, aged 40, of 1st Coy, Australian Tunnelling Corps. He was the son of Archibald and Mary McLarty.

Sapper G. McLarty is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 27.



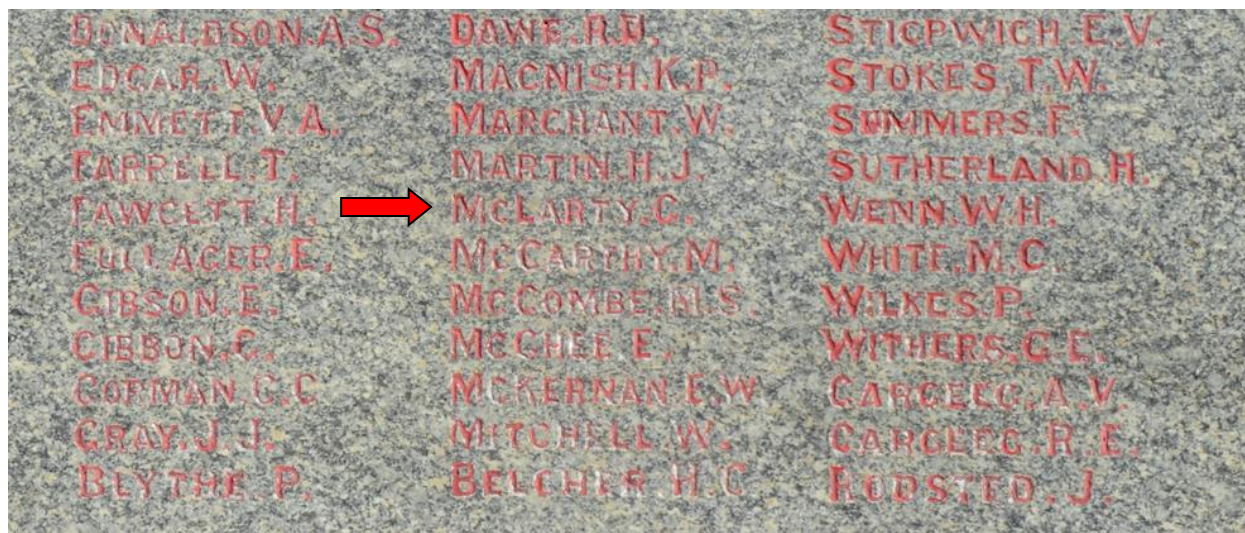
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

G. McLarty is remembered on the Bunbury War Memorial, located in Anzac Park, Victoria & Stirling Streets, Bunbury, Western Australia.



Bunbury War Memorial (Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – above Faithe & below by Henry Moulds)





Bunbury War Memorial

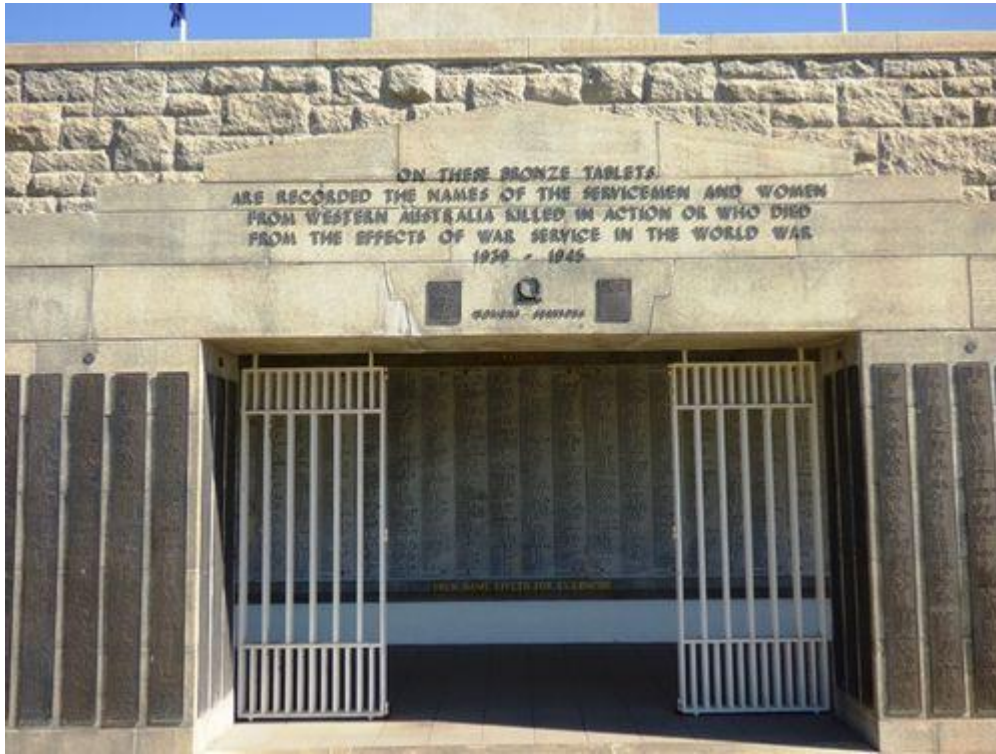
The Western Australia State War Memorial is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force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

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



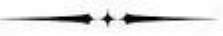
The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names



Corps of Engineers Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

(55 pages of Sapper George McLarty'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

DIED ON SERVICE

McLARTY – Died of pneumonia, November 3rd, Military Hospital, Chester, England, Sapper George McLarty, 1st Australian Tunnelling Company, beloved husband of Daisy (Bunbury, W.A.), youngest son of Mary and the late Archibald McLarty, "Argyle," Peel street north: after two and a half years' service.

(The Ballarat Star, Victoria – 7 December, 1918)

A.I.F. CASUALTIES

The 453rd list of casualties among members of the Australian Imperial Force is as under:-

WEST AUSTRALIA

DIED OF ILLNESS

Spr. George McLarty. Claremont.

(Kalgoorlie Miner, Western Australia – 30 December, 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)

Sapper G. McLarty does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Peace Perfect Peace

Overleigh Cemetery, Chester, Cheshire, England

Chester (Overleigh) Cemetery contains 129 First World War burials, about half of them made from local hospitals including the Chester War hospital which was housed in the Infirmary building. Second World War burials number 69. The majority of the burials are scattered throughout the cemetery but there is a small war graves plot made up of 32 graves from both wars.

(Information from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice, New Overleigh Cemetery, Chester *(Photos by John S. Turner)*



Overleigh New Cemetery, Chester - War Graves *(Photos by John S. Turner)*



Overleigh New Cemetery, Chester - War Graves (Photos by John S. Turner)



(Photo courtesy of Seb – Twitter 6 Sept 2022)



Sapper G. McLarty's CWGC Headstone with incorrect date of death
(Photos by Chris Kemp – Find a Grave – May, 2015)



Photo of Sapper G. McLarty's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Overleigh New Cemetery, Chester, Cheshire, England.

(Note: The CWGC were advised at the time of researching that the date of death on the headstone was incorrect. The date of death should be 4th November, 1918 as listed by The Australian War Memorial.

Update – CWGC upon receiving information that the death certificate has the date of death as 4th November, 1918 have submitted an amendment request for the headstone to be corrected)

***Update – 2022 See below for photo of CWGC Headstone with corrected date of death ***



(Photo by Chris Kemp – Find a Grave – December, 2018)



(Photo courtesy of Seb – Twitter 6 September, 2022)