

**Hollybrook Cemetery,  
Southampton, Hampshire, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**7280 PRIVATE**

**P. F. McVICAR**

**21ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**18TH SEPTEMBER, 1918 Age 31**

## Peter Finley McVICAR

Peter Finley McVicar was born at Waaia, Victoria in 1887 to parents John & Jane McVicar (nee McDonald).

The 1909 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kooyong, subdivision of Malvern East, Victoria recorded Peter Finley McVicar, Jockey, of Dandenong Rd, Malvern East.

Peter Finley McVicar was a 29 year old, single, Horse Trainer from Melbourne, Victoria when he enlisted on 28th November, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 7280 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. McVicar, Drouin, Victoria.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was posted to 1st Depot Battalion at Royal Park on 30th November, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Recruits Company on 5th December, 1916 then back to 1st Depot Battalion at Royal Park (undated). Private McVicar was transferred on 9th January, 1917 to 6th Battalion, 24th Reinforcements.

Private Peter Finley McVicar embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ballarat (A70)* on 19th February, 1917 with the 6th Infantry Battalion, 24th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 25th April, 1917.

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 Peter Finley McVicar was marched in to 2nd Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire, England on 26th April, 1917 from Australia.

Private Peter Finley McVicar proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 20th August, 1917 from Durrington. He was marched in to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 21st August, 1917. Private McVicar joined 21st Battalion in France on 1st September, 1917.

### 6th Battalion

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

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

Private Peter Finley McVicar was wounded in action on 3rd October, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 3rd October, 1917 with shrapnel wound/s to hand then transferred the same day to 10th Casualty Clearing Station. Private McVicar was transferred & admitted to 18th General Hospital at Camiers, France on 4th October, 1917 with shrapnel wound/s to left hand. He was discharged to Convalescent Depot at Etaples on 26th October, 1917 then transferred to 14th Convalescent Depot at Trouville on 26th October, 1917.

### 21st Battalion

The 21st Battalion was raised, as part of the 6th Brigade, at Broadmeadows in Victoria in February 1915. Its recruits hailed from all over the state. The later enlistment of these men, and their average age of 29, would seem to indicate a more considered decision to enlist that set them apart from those who did so amidst the heady enthusiasm of late 1914.....

In early May 1917, the battalion fought at Bullecourt, and then in October participated in the 3-kilometre advance that captured Broodseinde Ridge, east of Ypres. Like the rest of the AIF the battalion saw out the year recuperating from the trials of the Ypres sector.....

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

## War Diary – 21st Battalion

*YPRES – October 3, 1917:*

*10 am – Battalion moved from Infantry Barracks to Gordon Area.*

*11 am – Arrived at Gordon Area. Battalion in Reserve.*

*10.40 pm – The Battalion moved forward from Gordon Area to the Assembly point at D 27 C 9 5*

*YPRES – October 4, 1917:*

*2.15 am – Arrived at Assembly Point and formed up as previously arranged viz in mass sections in file without a casualty; although the enemy was searching the valleys with 4.2 & 5.9 H.E. shells*

*3.10 am – Battalion moved forward to Jumping off Tape and formed up as arranged and everything was in order at 5.10 am.*

*....*

*5.25 am – Enemy put down a heavy barrage on Jumping off Tape. At zero (6am) our barrage opened and the enemy immediately reduced his to a few 5.9's....Shortly after zero wounded and prisoners came into the Regimental Aid Post established in the Brick Kiln the latter being used to the fullest extent as stretcher bearers. Practically all the wounded up to about 6.30 am were the result of the enemy's pre zero bombardment.*

*.....*

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

Private Peter Finley McVicar was written up on 21st November, 1917 – when OAS (on Active Service) drunkenness. He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited 7 days' pay.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was marched in to 2nd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 30th November, 1917 from Hospital. He was marched out from 2nd A.D.B.D. on 15th December, 1917 to Australian Infantry Base Depot at Havre.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was transferred from A.I.B.D. to 40th Stationary Hospital at Harfleur on 25th March, 1918 for an operation. He was transferred to Australian Convalescent Depot (Right Hernia) at Havre on 23rd May, 1918 then on 27th June, 1918 he was marched in to A.I.B.D.

Private Peter Finley McVicar reported sick on 15th June, 1918. He was admitted to No. 2 General Hospital on 15th June, 1918 – P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin). He was transferred to Australian Convalescent Depot on 19th June, 1918 with Influenza. Private McVicar was marched out from A.I.B.D. on 20th July, 1918 & rejoined 21st Battalion in France on 24th July, 1918.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was wounded in action (2nd Occasion) on 1st September, 1918. He was admitted to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 2nd September, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to Thighs. Private McVicar was admitted to 12th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 7th September, 1918. He embarked for England on 14th September, 1918 (as per Casualty form – Active Service, however the Statement of Service form recorded he was "Invalidated to England wounded 9/9/18.").

## **21st Battalion**

Like many Australian battalions, the 21st could barely muster a company after the 1918 offensive. It was ordered to disband and reinforce its sister battalions. In response, the men of the 21st mutinied on 25 September 1918. By the end of that day, the order was withdrawn, and the battalion fought its last battle at Montbrehain on 5 October. The following day it became the last Australian battalion to withdraw from active operations on the Western Front. The 21st Battalion was disbanded on 13 October 1918.

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

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## War Diary – 21st Battalion

From the War Diary – the 21st Battalion were in the Mount St Quentin Area on 1st September, 1918.

*Casualties for the day – (4 Officers named) Killed in Action; (1 Officer named) wounded in action. 18 O.R. Killed 59 O.R. Wounded 6 O.R. Wounded – At Duty.*

(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Peter Finley McVicar was admitted to University War Hospital, Southampton, England on 15th September, 1918. According to Hospital Admissions form he was suffering from Shrapnel Wounds to Thighs, perforated wound to Bladder, lacerated wound to \_\_\_\_\_ of small Gut.

Private Peter Finley McVicar died at 11.55 am on 18th September, 1918 at University War Hospital, Southampton, England from wounds received in action - G.S.W. (Gunshot wound/s) to Abdomen.

A death for Peter F. McVicar, aged 32, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Southampton, Hampshire, England.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was buried on 20th September, 1918 in Hollybrook Cemetery, Southampton, Hampshire, England – Plot number B. 01. 33 and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Peter Finley McVicar - *Coffin was polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and surmounted by beautiful wreaths sent by the brother and sister, of deceased. The Rev: Parkinson, conducted the burial service at the graveside, and the "Last Post" was sounded. The grave will be turfed, and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Private Peter Finley McVicar requested in his Will date 5th August, 1917: *"...do hereby revoke all former Wills made by me and declare this to be my last Will. I Devise and Bequeath all me deferred pay and my personal belongings to Miss Charlotte Elizabeth Bunker c/o Family Hotel, Glenelg, S Australia and my allotment of Three shillings (3/-) a day to my sister Mrs G. J, Yorath, Retrola, Payneham Road, Payneham, S Australia."*

The Notification of the Death of a Soldier (Army Form W 3037) for Private Peter Finley McVicar recorded that notification of the death of the Soldier had been sent to next-of-kin – Mrs Yorath, Mother, Rheola, Payneham Rd, Payneham, Australia.

Private Peter Finley McVicar was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private McVicar's father – Mr J. M. McVicar, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Peter Finley McVicar – service number 7280, aged 31, of 21st Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of John & Jane McVicar.

Private P. F. McVicar is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 94.



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

(45 pages of Private Peter Finley McVicar'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**

### **AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

#### **LIST No. 354**

Victoria

WOUNDED

P. F. McVicar

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 November, 1917)

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DIED OF WOUNDS – Mr McVicar, of Drouin, was notified by the Defence Department, through Mr Phillips (Presbyterian Minister) on Monday, that his son Peter had died of wounds.

(*Gippsland Independent, Buln Buln, Warragul, Berwick, Poowong and Jeetho Shire Advocate*, Victoria – 26 September, 1918)

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## **ROLL OF HONOR**

### **VICTORIAN LIST**

#### **DIED OF WOUNDS**

Pte P. F. McVICAR, Drouin, 18/9/18

*(Weekly Times, Melbourne, Victoria – 16 November, 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)*

Private P. F. McVicar has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but no inscription.

#### **Hollybrook Cemetery, Southampton, Hampshire, England**

Southampton was No 1 Port during the First World War and military hospitals were established in the University buildings, in the Highfield Institution and at Shirley Warren. During the Second World War, 4.5 million tons of military equipment passed through Southampton docks and parts of the prefabricated harbours used at Arromanches during the Normandy invasion were made there. For a while, Southampton was also base to the 14th Major Port Transportation Corps of the United States Army.

Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery contains burials of both wars and a memorial to the missing.

The cemetery has a First World War plot near the main entrance containing most of the 125 graves from this period. Behind this plot is the Hollybrook Memorial which commemorates by name almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports or other vessels torpedoed or mined in home waters. It also bears the names of those who were lost or buried at sea, or who died at home but whose bodies could not be recovered for burial.

Most of the 186 Second World War burials are in a separate war graves plot. 3 of these burials are unidentified seaman of the Merchant Navy.

In addition to the Commonwealth war graves, the cemetery contains 67 war graves of other nationalities, many of them German, of which 2 are unidentified.

*(Cemetery information from CWGC)*





**Chapel at Hollybrook Cemetery** (Photo by Michael Day)



**Hollybrook Cemetery** (Photo – Basher Eyre 2012)





*(Photo courtesy of Allan Noble)*



**Hollybrook Cemetery with Hollybrook Memorial at front** *(Photo by Michael Day)*



Photo of Private P. F. McVicar's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Hollybrook Cemetery, Southampton, Hampshire, England.







**Hollybrook Cemetery – Original Grave Markers**