

# Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham

## War Graves



*Lest We Forget*

## World War 1



**6292 PRIVATE**

**V. H. MEADE**

**13TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**11TH MAY, 1917 Age 25**

*In Ever Loving Memory*

*Of Our Dear Victor*

*Rest In Peace*

## Victor Harold MEADE

Victor Harold Meade was born at Geelong, Victoria in 1892 to parents Joseph and Louisa Meade (nee Jefferies).

Victor Harold Meade was schooled in Birmingham, England.

The 1901 England Census recorded Victor Meade as a 9 year old Scholar living with his family at 36 Armoury Road, Aston, Birmingham. His parents were listed as Joseph Meade (Carpenter & Joiner, aged 44, born Ireland) & Louise Meade (aged 44, born Henbury, Gloucester). Victor was the youngest of 3 children listed on this Census – Cecila (Dressmaker, aged 16, born Ireland), Frank (Scholar, aged 14, born Australia) & Victor.

The 1911 England Census recorded Victor Meade as a 19 year old Carpenter living with his family at 101 Cato Street, Birmingham in a Tenement with 6 rooms. His parents were listed as Joseph Meade (Carpenter, aged 54) & Louise Meade (aged 54). Joseph & Louise Meade had been married for 27 years & had 4 children, with 1 child deceased. Only 2 sons were listed on this Census – Francis Meade (Policeman, aged 24, born Sydney, NSW, Australia) & Victor.

Victor Meade had been apprenticed with E. Copson, Birmingham for 4 years.

Victor Meade , aged 24, born Australia, was listed as crew – Passage Worker on board *Medic* which had departed from the port of Genoa, Italy & arriving in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1916.

Victor Harold Meade was a 24 year old, single, Carpenter & Joiner from 265 Glebe Road, Glebe, NSW when he enlisted on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 with the 13<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 20<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 6292 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs L. Meade of 2 Thornton Road, Wood End, Birmingham, England. According to information supplied by his father – Joseph Meade, for the Roll of Honour, Victor Meade had served in the Police Force at Shanghai, China. He had voluntarily left the Shanghai Police Force to proceed to Australia to enlist. Victor Meade was with Shanghai Municipal Police from 1913 to 1916. Victor Meade stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served 4 years with Territorials.

Private Victor Harold Meade embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 9th September, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 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 Victor Harold Meade was marched in to 4<sup>th</sup> Training Brigade at Codford, Wiltshire, from Wareham on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1916.

Private Victor Harold Meade proceeded overseas for France from Codford via Folkestone on *Princess Victoria* on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

Private Victor Harold Meade was marched in from England at Etaples, France on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 1917 to 4<sup>th</sup> A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot).

Private Victor Harold Meade joined the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion in France on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1917.

Private Victor Harold Meade was wounded in action in France on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1917. He was taken to 13<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance then admitted to Casualty Clearing Station with bullet wounds to groin. Pte Meade was transferred from 49<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station to 16 Ambulance Train on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1917. He was admitted to 10<sup>th</sup> General Hospital at Rouen on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right thigh. Pte Meade was transferred on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 to Hospital Ship *Western Australia* which embarked from Rouen for England.

According to information supplied by his father – Joseph Meade, for the Roll of Honour, Victor Meade was wounded at Bullecourt.

## 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion

In June, 1916, the 13th Battalion sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in August. In February, 1917, Captain W. H. Murray, who had transferred to the 13th from the 16th Battalion, earned the Victoria Cross for his actions during an attack near Gueudecourt. He became one of the most highly decorated officers in the AIF. The 13th Battalion, along with most of the 4th Brigade, suffered heavy losses at Bullecourt in April, 1917 when the brigade attacked strong German positions without the promised tank support. The battalion spent much of the remainder of 1917 in Belgium advancing to the Hindenburg Line. (AWM)

Private Victor Harold Meade was admitted to Richmond Military Hospital, Surrey, England on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 with a gunshot wound to right thigh.

Private Victor Harold Meade died at 6.25 pm on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1917 at Richmond Military Hospital, Grove Rd, Surrey from wounds received in action in France (Gunshot wound to thigh) and from Septic Pneumonia. His mother – Mrs L. Meade was in Hong Kong at the time of her son's death & was being notified of the death by cable from Headquarters. Mrs Meade's current address was c/o Mr F. Meade, Sanitary Dept., Hong Kong, China.

A death for Victor H. Meade, aged 25, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Richmond Sry, Surrey, England.

Private Victor Harold Meade was buried in Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1917 in Plot number 27429E and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Meade - *Coffin was good, polished Elm with brass fittings. The Private funeral was attended by Mr Meade, Mrs Merchant (the father & sister of the deceased) and several other relatives. Arrangements could not be made by the relatives, in the time at their disposal, for the purchase of a grave, and the common grave had therefore to be made use of. It is the intention of Mr Meade, however, to have the body exhumed and re-interred in a single grave. A temporary oak cross is to be erected by the A.I.F.*

Private Victor Harold Meade's body was exhumed & reinterred in Plot number B. 24277 on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1917. Mrs H. Merchant (Relative), West End, Birmingham was the informant.

Pte Victor Harold Meade was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Meade's mother – Mrs L. Meade (Scroll & Plaque were issued in England).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Victor Harold Meade – service number 6292, aged 25, of 13th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Joseph and Louisa Meade, of 3 Annavilla Ranelagh, Dublin. Born at Geelong, Victoria.

Private V. H. Meade is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 70.





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

(51 pages of Pte Victor Harold Meade'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**

OFFICIAL CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte V. H. Meade, England 11/5/17 (p. r. wnd).

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 28 May, 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)*

Pte Victor Harold Meade does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Ever Loving Memory Of Our Dear Victor*

*Rest In Peace*



Photo of Pte V. H. Meade's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham, West Midlands, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Maggie Laity)*



## **Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham, West Midlands (Warwickshire)**

Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham contains 513 War Graves.

The First World War saw four important hospitals - besides many smaller - posted at Birmingham: the 1st Southern General (3,500 beds) was in the university and other buildings, with a section at Stourbridge; the 2nd/1st Southern General (1,800 beds) in the Dudley Road Infirmary and in billets; the 1st Birmingham War Hospital (1,000 beds) at Rubery Hill Asylum and the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital (900 beds) at Hollymoor Asylum.

Military hospitals were at Birmingham again during the Second World War, including No 7 Canadian Hospital at Marston Green. Birmingham and Coventry were among the chief manufacturing areas producing materials for the war effort and were subjected to many devastating air raids during the Blitz of 1940-41.

Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham contains 262 First World War burials, 62 of which form a war graves plot. Screen Walls commemorate those buried in the plot and in graves elsewhere in the cemetery not marked by headstones. Second World War burials number 250, 31 of them forming a small plot towards the centre of the cemetery, the rest scattered. The names of six men buried in graves not marked by headstones have been added to the existing Screen Wall. *(Information & photos from CWGC)*



**Yardley Cemetery, Birmingham**