

**Lodge Hill Cemetery,
Birmingham, West Midlands**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2451 LANCE CPL

T. C. MURPHY

2ND AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

15TH AUGUST, 1916

Thomas Christopher MURPHY

Thomas Christopher Murphy was born on 24th December, 1880 at Hinton, New South Wales to parents Thomas & Ellen Murphy. His birth was registered in 1881 in the district of Morpeth, New South Wales. (Note: Thomas Christopher Murphy listed his place of birth as Morpeth on his Attestation Papers)

Thomas Christopher Murphy attended Roman Catholic School (as listed on information provided for Roll of Honour).

Thomas Christopher Murphy was a 35 year old, single, Floorlayer (listed as Concreter on Attestation Papers) from 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, New South Wales when he enlisted on 18th July, 1915 at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2451 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Miss N. Murphy, care of Mrs Slattery, 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, New South Wales. Thomas Christopher Murphy stated on his Attestation Papers that he be previously served for 3 years with Colonial Forces as a volunteer & had resigned.

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy was posted to 6th Reinforcements of 19th Battalion. He was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 19th Battalion on 16th September, 1915.

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Themistocles* (A32) on 5th October, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Brigade, 19th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements. He was taken on strength of 19th Battalion on 8th January, 1916 from Reinforcements.

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy was transferred to 2nd Pioneer Battalion on 16th March, 1916 & was taken on strength of 2nd Pioneer Battalion at Moascar on 17th March, 1916.

2nd Pioneer Battalion

The 2nd Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 2nd Division. Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

(Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 19th March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 26th March, 1916.

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy was wounded in action in France on 31st July, 1916 & was admitted to 2nd Field Ambulance with shrapnel wounds to Right Leg, Foot & right Hand. He was transferred & admitted to 45th Casualty Clearing Station on 31st July, 1916 then transferred on 1st August, 1916 to Ambulance Train 28. Private Murphy was admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Rouen, France on 1st August, 1916 with Shrapnel wounds to Leg, Foot & Ankle. He was transferred to England on Hospital Ship *Marama* from Havre on 4th August, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Leg & Foot.

War Diary – 2nd Pioneer Battalion

Pozieres

30th August, 1916:

Work on extending CENTRE WAY through POZIERES

“ “ “ COPSE AVENUE

“ “ improving SUNKEN ROAD Trench

Making road from LA BOISELLE Rd to CHALK PIT ROAD.

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BN Hd Qrs at CONTALMAISON heavily bombarded; lot of gas shells used.

31st August, 1916:

Improving and extending CENTRE WAY

“ “ “ COPSE AVENUE

Constructing BOMB STORES and dug-outs for Field Kitchens, SUNKEN RD and COPSE AVENUE

(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy was admitted to 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, England on 6th August, 1916 with Shell wound to right Calf.

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy died on 15th August, 1916 at 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, Northfield, England from wounds received in action in France - G.S.W. right Leg & Pulmonary Embolism & Syncope. The Hospital Admissions form recorded: *“Died suddenly Aug 15th from Pulmonary Embolism. P.M. made confirming diagnosis.”*

A death for Thomas C. Murphy, aged 35, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Kings Norton, Worcestershire, England.

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy was buried on 19th August, 1916 in Grave number 349, “B” 10, Soldiers Section, Lodge Hill Selly Oak Cemetery, Birmingham, England.

Base Records wrote to Miss E. M. Murphy, c/- Mrs Slattery, 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, New South Wales, on 20th April, 1920 with the following *“With reference to my communication to you of the 20th October, 1917, concerning the regrettable loss of your brother, the late No.2451, Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy, 2nd Pioneers Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from former site, and re-interred in Grave No. 360, Section “B” 10, Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.”*

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy's name is remembered on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall B10. 360 as he does not have a headstone in Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, West Midlands, England.

Private Thomas Christopher Murphy requested in his Will completed in Egypt that in the event of his death the whole of his property, money & effects be given to his sister Miss Nellie Murphy, c/- Mrs Slattery, 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, New South Wales.

Base Records contacted Miss E. M. Murphy, c/- Mrs Slattery, 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, New South Wales, sister of the late Private Thomas Christopher Murphy, on 19th October, 1920 stating that she was registered on the records of the late No. 2451 Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy as the next of kin, but requested to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked are his father & mother alive, if not has he any brothers (stating the eldest) of any sisters older than herself due to the “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Base Records wrote to Headquarters, 2nd Military District on 25th November, 1920 stating: *“On 19th October last a communication was forwarded to Miss Ellen Margaret Murphy, c/o Mrs Slattery, 59 Abercrombie Street, Sydney, requesting her to furnish the address of the parents of the late No. 2451 Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy, 2nd Pioneer Battalion, or if they are already deceased the names and addresses of the late soldier's eldest brother and eldest sister. As no reply has so far been received I shall be obliged if you will endeavour to obtain the information required and advise me as soon as possible as it is desired to dispose of the War Medals, etc., issuable of account of the abovementioned late soldier's service.”*

The Provost Marshall's Office, Victoria Barracks, Sydney, wrote to The Inspector-General of Police, Phillip Street Sydney, on 13th December, 1920, requesting "Newcastle Police to interview Mr James Murphy who is employed as a Carpenter on Walsh Island, Newcastle, and is shown as the eldest brother of the late No. 2451 L. Cpl. T. C. Murphy 2nd Pioneer Battalion A.I.F. and ascertain from him if he is the person entitled to receive the 1914 Star and other War Medals awarded to the late soldier....."

A reply was received from Sergeant Fred C. Rutherford on 22nd December, 1920 which reads: "*I beg to report that I interviewed James Murphy who is employed at Walsh Island as a Carpenter; he stated that he is the eldest Brother of the deceased T. C. Murphy and he filled in and signed the attached form. His signature was witnessed by me.*"

James Murphy, of 19 Lewis Street, Islington, signed the following statement on 22nd December, 1920: "*.... Do hereby desire to make claim for any War Medals and Decorations awarded to my late brother No. 2451 L. Cpl. T. C. Murphy, deceased, and if given into my custody, I hereby undertake to carefully preserve same and will produce them to the military authorities upon demand should any person with a prier claim appear.*"

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Murphy, 19 Lewis Street, Islington, Newcastle, New South Wales on 19th January, 1921 with the following: "*I am informed you are the eldest surviving brother of the late No. 2451 Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy, 2nd Pioneer Battalion, but in order that I may be in a position to properly dispose of the late soldier's 1914/15 Star, and other war medals, etc. when available, shall be much obliged if you will inform me whether his father and mother are still living, and if so, their present address.*"

Mr J. Murphy replied to Base Records on 24th January, 1921 advising that "*both parents of the late No. 2451 Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy 2nd Pioneer Battalion are deceased. They both died before the War.*"

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Murphy's eldest brother - Mr J. Murphy, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy – service number 2451, aged 41, of 2nd Australian Pioneers. He was the son of Thomas and Ellen Murphy.

Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 172.

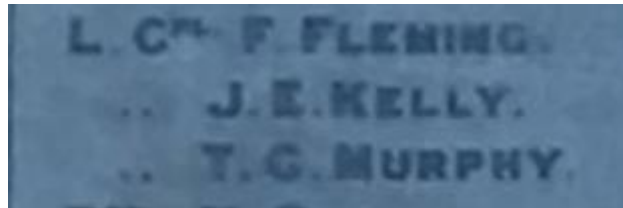


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

T. C. Murphy is remembered on the Hamilton War Memorial, located in Gregson Park, Tudor & Steel Streets, Hamilton, NSW.



Hamilton War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



T. C. Murphy is remembered on the Hamilton Municipal District World War 1 Roll of Honour, located Fort Scratchley Historical Site, Nobbys Road, Newcastle East, NSW.



Hamilton Municipal District World War 1 Roll of Honour (Photo from War Memorial Register NSW)

(49 pages of Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy'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

Roll of Honour

MURPHY – Lance-corporal T. C. Murphy, killed in action in France, August 14, 1916.

Sadly a sister is thinking
Of her soldier brother, brave,
Who fell for the cause of freedom,
And rests in a hero's grave.

Never to be forgotten by his loving sister, N. Murphy, Sydney.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 2 September, 1916)

Official List No. 205

New South Wales

Other Deaths

L.-Cpl. T. C. MURPHY (Sydney), 14/8/16. Cause not stated,

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 6 September, 1916)

DISTRICT CASUALTIES

KILLED IN ACTION

PRIVATE MURPHY – Mr J. Murphy, of Cleary-street, Hamilton, has received word that his brother, Private William B. Murphy, was killed in action in France on May 3rd. Private Murphy was in his 19th year. His eldest brother – Lance-corporal T. C. Murphy, was killed in France last August.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 1 June, 1917)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Lance Corporal Thomas Christopher Murphy does not have CWGC headstone, his name is instead remembered on a CWGC Screen Wall as his grave was one that could not be individually marked with a headstone.

Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, West Midlands, England

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.

BIRMINGHAM (LODGE HILL) CEMETERY contains 499 First World War burials, most of them in a war graves plot in Section B10. The names of those buried in the plot, or in graves elsewhere in the cemetery which could not be individually marked, are inscribed on a Screen Wall. Second World War burials number 125, most of them scattered throughout the cemetery, although there is a small plot in Section 2E. Birmingham Municipal Crematorium stands within the cemetery. In the chapel, there is a bronze plaque commemorating 48 servicemen of the Second World War whose remains were cremated there.

(Information from CWGC)



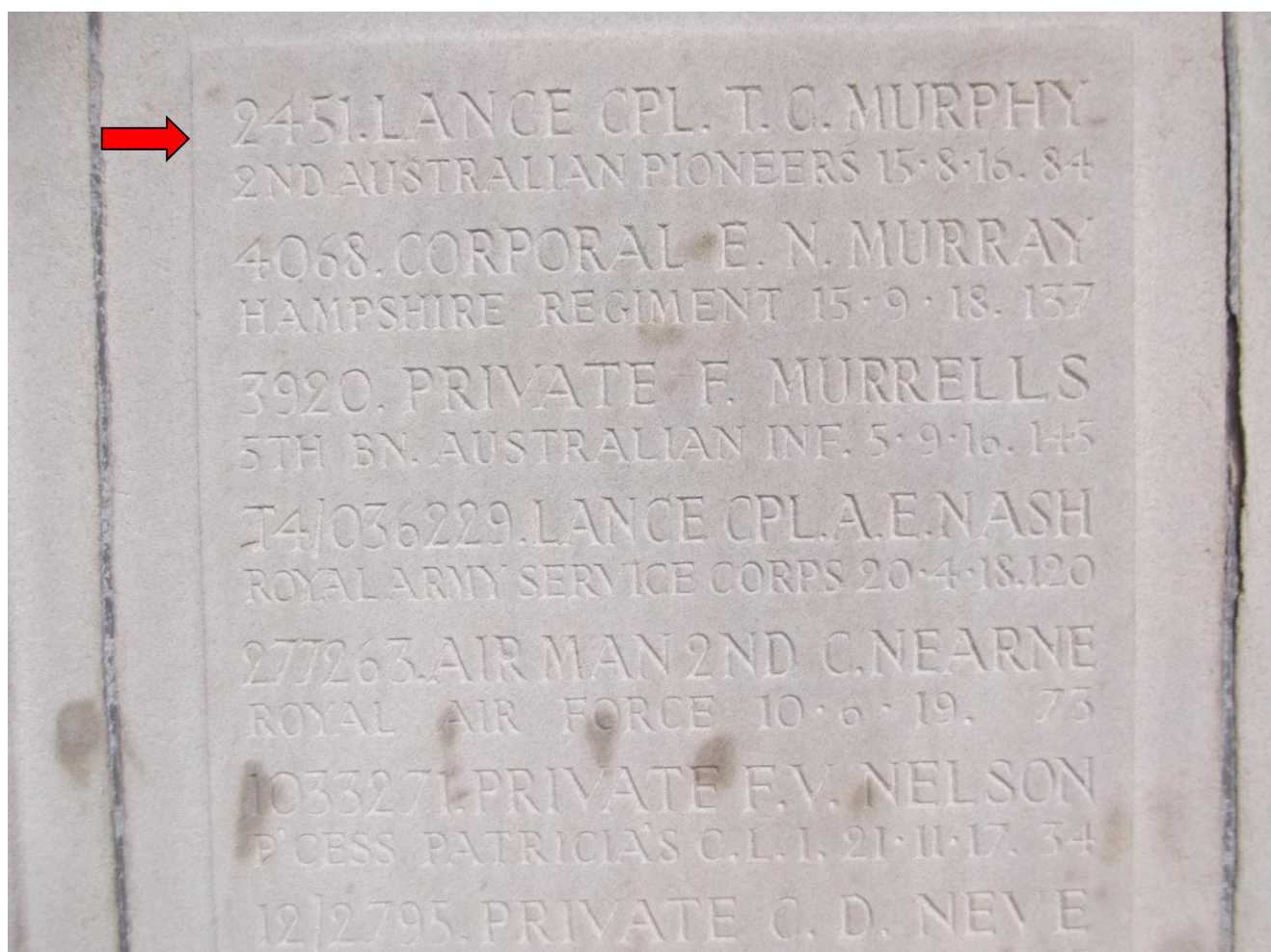
(Photo by Lepidus Magnus)



Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham (*Photos from CWGC*)



Photo of Lance Corporal T. C. Murphy's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission WW1 Screen Wall in Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, West Midlands, England.



(Photo by Myra Mason – Find a Grave)



WW1 Screen Wall in Garden of Remembrance (Photo by Myra Mason – Find a Grave)



WW2 Garden of Remembrance (Photo by Myra Mason – Find a Grave)

Lodge Hill Cemetery

