

Wandsworth Cemetery, London, England War Graves

(also known as Earlsfield Cemetery, Magdalen Road Cemetery, Wandsworth Earlsfield Cemetery)



Lest We Forget

World War 1



4612 PRIVATE

W. W. NICHOLSON

45TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

24TH AUGUST, 1916 Age 20

Walter William NICHOLSON

Walter William Nicholson was born at Bradford, Yorkshire, England on 11th September, 1895 to parents Walter & Amelia Nicholson (nee Buckley). His birth was registered in December quarter, 1895 in the district of Bradford, Yorkshire West Riding, England. Walter William Nicholson was baptised on 29th September, 1895 at St. Augustine Church, Undercliffe, West Yorkshire, England. At the time of his baptism the family lived at 31 Exeter Street & Walter Nicholson was listed as a Plumber.

The 1901 England Census recorded Walter W. Nicholson as a 5 year old, living with his family at 31 Exeter Street, Bradford East, Yorkshire, England in a 4 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Walter Nicholson (Plumber, aged 39, born Collingham, Notts) & Amelia Nicholson (aged 34, born Upton Warren, Worcs). Walter was the eldest of three children listed on this Census (all born Bradford, Yorks) – Walter then Hilda M. Nicholson (aged 3) & John F. Nicholson (aged 6 months).

Walter William Nicholson attended Board School at Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

Walter Nicholson, father of Walter William Nicholson, died in 1906 in Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

The 1911 England Census recorded Walter William Nicholson as a 15 year old Van Boy (Brewers Agent) living with his widowed mother – Amelia Nicholson (aged 45) & his 2 siblings Charles Edward Nicholson (At School, aged 8, born Bradford, Yorks) & Edith Rachel Nicholson (At School, aged 5, born Bradford, Yorks). The family of four lived in a 3 roomed dwelling at 12 Station Cottages, Aston Hills, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, England. Amelia Nicholson had recorded she had 5 children.

According to information provided by his mother for the Roll of Honour – Walter William Nicholson came to Australia when he was 16 years of age.

The Nicholson Family of four were passengers on *Norseman* which departed from London, England on 23rd September, 1911. They had contracted to land at Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Mrs Amelia Nicholson (aged 40), Mr W. Nicholson (Farmer, aged 16), Miss H. Nicholson (aged 14) & Mr Charles Nicholson (aged 9).

Walter William Nicholson was a 20 year old, single, Fireman's Assistant from Harrogate, Broughton Street, Concord, N.S.W. when he enlisted at Holdsworth, NSW on 3rd September, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs A. Nicholson, Harrogate, Broughton Street, Concord, N.S.W. Walter Nicholson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Senior Cadets for 18 months & had been rejected before as unfit for His Majesty's Service.

Private Walter William Nicholson was posted to Holdsworth Depot on 17th September, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 13th Reinforcements of 13th Battalion on 16th October, 1915 then transferred to "E" Company of No.1 Battalion. Private Nicholson was transferred on 1st December, 1915 to "C" Company of No. 1 Battalion.

Private Walter William Nicholson, Service number 4612, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on RMS *Osterley* on 15th January, 1916 with the 1st Infantry Battalion, 14th Reinforcements.

1st Battalion

The 1st Battalion was the first infantry unit recruited for the AIF in New South Wales during the First World War.

The battalion was raised within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914.....

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli in December 1915, the battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Walter William Nicholson was transferred to 45th Battalion on 6th March, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir from 1st Battalion. He was taken on strength of 45th Battalion on 6th March, 1916.

Private Walter William Nicholson was transferred to (H.Q.) Stretcher Bearers at Serapeum on 24th April, 1916.

Private Walter William Nicholson reported sick (to Hospital) on 22nd May, 1916 & rejoined his Battalion on 1st June, 1916.

Private Walter William Nicholson proceeded from Alexandria on 2nd June, 1916 on Troopship *Kinfauns Castle* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 9th June, 1916.

Private Walter William Nicholson was wounded in the Field on 9th August, 1916. He was admitted to 4th Field Ambulance on 9th August, 1916 with shrapnel wound/s to Head then transferred the same day to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Head. Private Nicholson was transferred & admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 16th August, 1916. He embarked for England on 18th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *St. Andrew* with G.S.W. (fractured Skull).

45th Battalion

The 45th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 2 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its new recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 13th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 13th, the new battalion was composed mostly of men from New South Wales.

As part of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division, the 45th Battalion arrived in France on 8 June 1916, destined for the Western Front. It fought in its first major battle at Pozieres in August, defending ground previously captured by the 2nd Australian Division.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 45th Battalion

9th August, 1916:

Still in support supplying fatigue and working parties.

Casualties to 12 noon

Killed – Officers – Nil

Other ranks 4

Wounded – 1 Officer – Capt J. H. Holman

Other ranks 31.

10th August, 1916:

Still in supports as yesterday

Casualties to 12 noon.

Killed – Officers – Nil

Other ranks – Nil

Wounded – Other ranks 16.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Walter William Nicholson was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, England on 19th August, 1916 with G.S.W. to Head. He was reported to be dangerously ill on 23rd August, 1916.

Private Walter William Nicholson was buried in Wandsworth (Earlsfield) Cemetery, London, England – Block 19 Grave No. 30.

Base Records wrote to Mrs A. Nicholson, Harrogate, Broughton Street, Concord, NSW on 16th April, 1920 with the following letter: *“With reference to my communication of the 9th March, 1917, regarding the regrettable loss of your son the late No. 4612 Private W. W. Nicholson, 45th Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from block 19, grave No. 30, Wandsworth Cemetery, and re-interred in Grave No. 1, Australian Section, Wandsworth Cemetery, Wandsworth, London. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.”*

This is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number - Aust. 1. and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Base Records contacted Mrs A. Nicholson, “Harrogate,” Broughton Street, Concord, NSW on 19th October, 1921 stating she was noted on the records of the late No. 4612 Private W. W. Nicholson, 45th Battalion, as the registered next-of-kin but desired to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & was specifically asked if his father was still alive 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.

Amelia Nicholson replied to Base Records on 24th October, 1921 advising *“...I am the next of kin to my son Pt W. W. Nicholson No 4612 of 45 Battalion, his father having been dead 16 years ago.”*

Private Walter William Nicholson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Nicholson’s mother – Mrs A. Nicholson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Walter William Nicholson – service number 4612, aged 20, of 45th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Walter & Amelia Nicholson, of “Harrogate Concord” Broughton St., Sydney, Australia.

Private W. W. Nicholson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 140.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. W. Nicholson is remembered on the Concord Pavilion of Honour (War Memorial), located in Queen Elizabeth Park, corner Crane & Broughton Streets, Concord, Sydney, NSW.

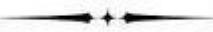


Concord Pavilion of Honour (Photo above from *AWM Places of Pride*; below from *War Memorials Register NSW*)



(46 pages of Private Walter William Nicholson'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

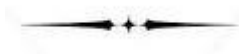




AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05301.168

Private Walter William Nicholson



Newspaper Notices

Australian Casualties

Lists Nos. 211 to 213

New South Wales

Died of Wounds

Pte W. W. NICHOLSON (Concord), 24/8/16

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 20 September, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN HEROES KILLED IN FRANCE



PTE. W. W. NICHOLSON, Concord.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 October, 1916)



PTE. W. W. NICHOLSON,
Concord.—Died of Wounds.

(*Sydney Mail*, NSW – 15 November, 1916)

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 W. W. Nicholson does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Wandsworth (Earlsfield) Cemetery, London

This is to the North-East of Earlsfield Station and is bounded by the Magdalen Road on the East and the main railway line on the West.

It contains five 1914-1918 War Plots, (the general Military Plot, the Australian, the Newfoundland, the New Zealand and the South African plots). These are on the main path leading West from Magdalen Road and there are also over 200 burials in other parts of the cemetery. The Military Plot contains a Screen Wall bearing the names of those buried in it and those in unmarked graves in other parts of the cemetery. The majority of the 1939-1945 burials are scattered throughout the cemetery but there is one group of six burials together in a War Plot near the main entrance. Again, those whose graves are unmarked are also named upon the Screen Wall, Panel 1.

Many of the 1914-1918 burials are from the 3rd London General Hospital which was at Wandsworth. There are 477 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and 115 of the 1939-1945 war here. There are also 5 non-war service burials here.

There are 34 Australian World War 1 Soldiers buried here & 1 Australian Soldier from 1925.

(Information from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H16917

A group of Soldiers' graves in the Australian Section of Wandsworth Cemetery, London *(taken 15 April, 1931)*



(Photo by Scotch Mist 2013)



The Australian Plot in Wandsworth Cemetery, London *(Photos from CWGC)*





Cross of Sacrifice (Photos from CWGC)

Photo of Private W. W. Nicholson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Wandsworth (Earlsfield) Cemetery, London, England.



(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright)