

**St. Lawrence Churchyard,
Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



7056 PRIVATE

M. O'DONNELL

16TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

25TH MARCH, 1917

Martin O'DONNELL

Martin O'Donnell was born in 1893 in the district of Murwillumbah, New South Wales to parents Michael & Margaret Bridget O'Donnell (nee Maher). (Note: Martin O'Donnell's Attestation Papers recorded that he was born at "Merwolbar"). (His mother had emigrated to Australia with her father & siblings in October, 1884 from Tipperary, Ireland.)

The 1914 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Perth, subdivision of North Perth, listed Martin O'Donnell, Labourer of 22 Myrtle Street, Perth. His parents – Michael O'Donnell, Labourer & Margaret Bridget O'Donnell, were also listed at 22 Myrtle Street, Perth, Western Australia.

Martin O'Donnell was a 23 year old, single, Platelayer when he enlisted at Kalgoorlie, Western Australia on 9th October, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Michael O'Donnell, 47 Victoria Street, Perth, Western Australia.

Private Martin O'Donnell was posted to 87 Depot on 9th October, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements of 16th Battalion on 16th October, 1916. Private O'Donnell was written up for an Offence on 8th December, 1916 while in Camp at Blackboy Hill – Overstaying leave from 10 am on 8th to 10.20 pm on 11th December, 1916 – 2 days. He was fined 2 days' pay by Major Chandler, Commanding Officer.

Private Martin O'Donnell, Service number 7056, embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Berrima* (A35) on 23rd December, 1916 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 16th Infantry Battalion 23rd Reinforcements. He was written up for an Offence on 7th February, 1917 while at Sea – Disobedience of orders – smoking on troopdeck. He was confined to Barracks for 1 day. Private O'Donnell disembarked at Devonport, England on 16th February, 1917.

16th Battalion

The 16th Battalion AIF was raised from 16 September 1914, six weeks after the outbreak of the First World War. Three-quarters of the battalion were recruited in Western Australia, and the rest in South Australia. With the 13th, 14th and 15th Battalions it formed the 4th Brigade commanded by Colonel John Monash.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

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 Martin O'Donnell was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 24th February, 1917 from Australia.

Private Martin O'Donnell was sent sick to Group Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire on 10th March, 1917 with Influenza. He was discharged & rejoined 4th Training Battalion at Codford on 16th March, 1917.

Private Martin O'Donnell was sent sick again to Group Hospital at Codford on 20th March, 1917 with an ear complaint. He was admitted to Sutton Veny Hospital on 20th March, 1917.

Private Martin O'Donnell died on 25th March, 1917 at Isolation Hospital, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis. (Note: Morning State of Sick form recorded that Private O'Donnell died on 26th March, 1917. All other forms have the date as 25th March, 1917)

A death for Martin O'Donnell, aged 23, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Salisbury, Wiltshire, England.

Private Martin O'Donnell was buried on 29th March, 1917 in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England – Plot number 122 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Martin O'Donnell - *Coffin was polished wood. Military Funeral. Wreath sent by his comrades of 23rd Reinforcements, 16th Battalion. 4th T.B. Codford.*

(Note: Field Service – Army Form B 2090A & Burial Report both recorded that Private O'Donnell was buried in "Old Sarum Cemetery Grave No 122.")

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Martin O'Donnell contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relatives in Perth concerning his last hours, death and burial. A letter written on 4th May, 1917 by W. H. Cook reads: "*The Matron of the Salisbury solation Hospital has handed your inquiry (enclosed herewith) to me as being the Clergyman who visits the patients in that institution.*

Pte O'Donnell was admitted to the Hospital in the 18th March and he passed away just a week later. He was suffering from whit is commonly called "spotted fever" and was quite unconscious when he was brought to the Hospital from his Camp. He never regained consciousness, so that I was not able to minister to him in spiritual things. He was buried on the 29th March at the same time as another Australian soldier who had died of the same disease, a full military funeral (with band, firing-party, and the sounding of the Last Post) being accorded. I conducted the funeral myself. The place of burial was the little village Church-yard of Stratford-sub-Castle, situated 2 miles north of the city of Salisbury. Pte O'Donnell, like all the other Australian soldiers who have been buried here, (fourteen in number), is buried in a separate grave. His grave is number 122, and it will eventually be marked with a memorial.

If there are any further questions the relatives would like to ask, I should be happy to help them in any way I can. Perhaps the picture postcard of the Church, which I enclose herewith, may be of interest to them."

A War Pension was granted to Margaret Bridget O'Donnell, 47 Victoria St, Perth, mother of the late Private Martin O'Donnell, in the sum of 40/- fortnightly from 1st June, 1917.

Private Martin O'Donnell was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private O'Donnell's Father – Mr M. O'Donnell, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent 8th April, 1922 & Plaque sent 5th April, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private M. O'Donnell – service number 7056, of 16th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private M. O'Donnell is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 80.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

M. O'Donnell is remembered on the Bunbury War Memorial, located on Victoria Street, Bunbury, Western Australia.



Bunbury War Memorial (Photos from AWM – Places of Pride)



M. O'Donnell is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which 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.

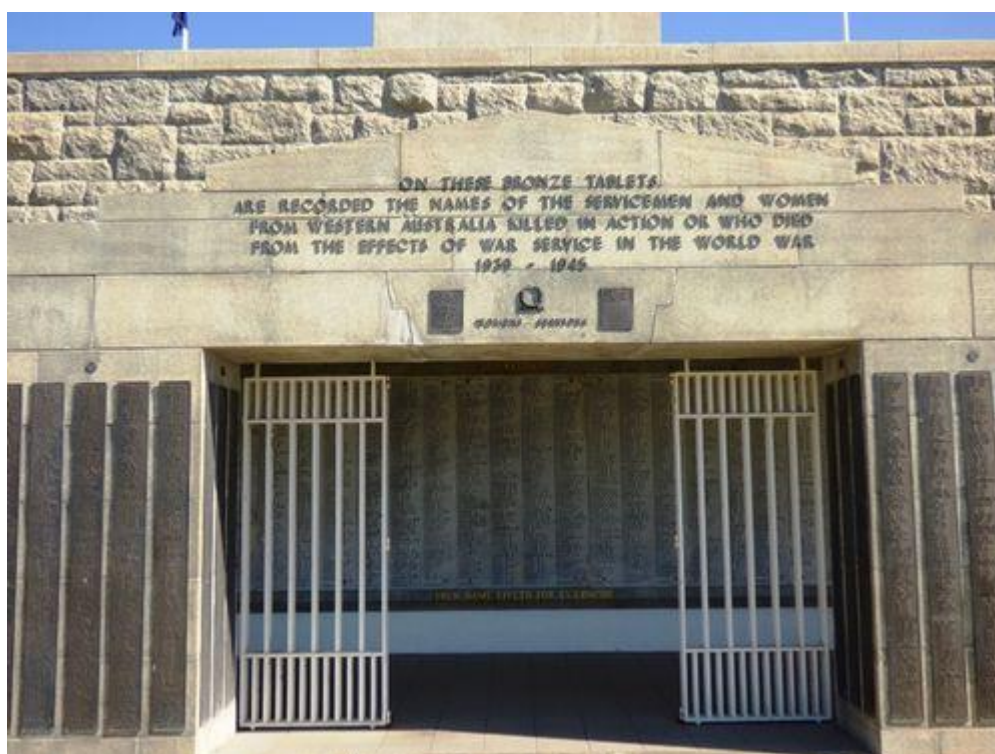
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)

& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

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

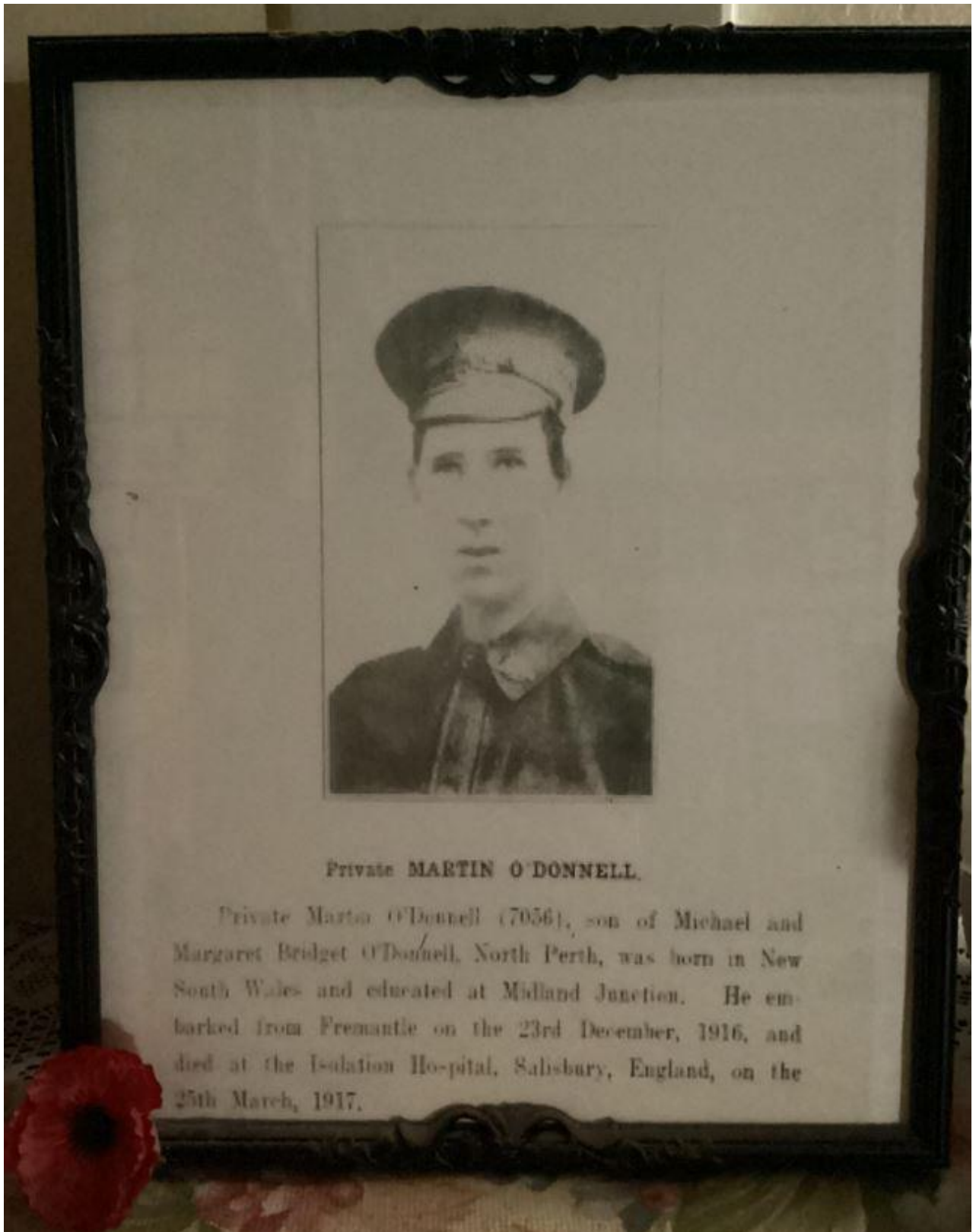




16th Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

(51 pages of Private Martin O'Donnell's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

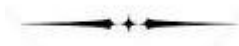
Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Private MARTIN O'DONNELL.

Private Martin O'Donnell (7056), son of Michael and Margaret Bridget O'Donnell, North Perth, was born in New South Wales and educated at Midland Junction. He embarked from Fremantle on the 23rd December, 1916, and died at the Isolation Hospital, Salisbury, England, on the 25th March, 1917.

(Photo kindly supplied by Julie Lancaster)



Newspaper Notices

West Perth Notes

The death of another of the Catholic young men of the parish, Martin O'Donnell, a highly respected young fellow, who left some three months ago for the front, is reported. He died on March 25th at Salisbury Hospital. His mother and sisters reside at 47 Vincent street. The sympathy of our readers will, we are sure, be extended to them in their bereavement. May his soul rest in peace.

(The W.A. Record, Perth, Western Australia – 7 April, 1917)

286th CASUALTY LIST

5th MILITARY DISTRICT

DIED OF ILLNESS

M. O'Donnell (West Perth)

(Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 13 April, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

O'DONNELL – In fond and loving memory of our dear son and brother Martin, who departed this life at Salisbury Hospital (England), on March 25, 1917.

May God have mercy on his soul.

Inserted by his parents, brothers and sisters.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 26 March, 1919)

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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 26th July, 1921, to Mr M. O'Donnell, 47 Victoria St, West Perth, W. A., advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late Private M. O'Donnell, in Stratford Sub Castle (Old Sarum) Cemetery, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Private M. O'Donnell does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards. Most of the 47 First World War burials in Stratford-sub-Castle (St Lawrence) Churchyard were made from the local hospital and more than half of them are of Australian servicemen who were based at the many Australian depots and training camps in the area. There are also two burials of the Second World War in the cemetery. (*Information from CWGC*)



St. Lawrence Church, Stratford-sub-Castle



Churchyard of St. Lawrence, Stratford-sub-Castle with CWGC Cross of Sacrifice



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)

Photo of Private M. O'Donnell's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



Original Grave Markers in Churchyard of St. Lawrence, Stratford-sub-Castle

Stratford-sub-Castle War Graves

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	RAF	British Army			NZ	NZ	Rogers 3 AIF		Robson Nurse	NZ	
B			Nicol AFC	Mason 5 Aus Pioneer	Dundas 29 AIF	Thorsby 20 AIF	Walpole (Wilson) 3 AIF	O'Grady 10 AIF	Kubank 40 AIF	NZ	
C	NZ	Jacob 31 AIF	Wood 9 AIF	Smith 55 AIF	British Army	British Army	Smith Aus ASC	O'Donnell 16 AIF	Knight 52 AIF	Lawrence 54 AIF	Edmonds 48 AIF
D		Lewis 30 AIF	British Army	Whitchurch 51 AIF	British Army	Dee 52 AIF	Greenslade 17 AIF	British Army	Thorburn 13 AIF	Knight 13 AIF	Hannabry 16 AIF
E					Adams 13 AIF	Crow Aus FA	British Army	Bolton 40 AIF	British Army	British Army	
F		British Army		British Army	British Army	British Army		Canada		British Army	

(Information for layout of graves – courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)