

**Stoke Old Cemetery,
Guildford, Surrey
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3620 PRIVATE

W. G. PARKER

15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

9TH APRIL, 1918 Age 24

*In Memory
Of The Dearly Loved Son
Of Mrs D. Martin
Of Latrobe, Tasmania*

William Gordon PARKER

William Gordon Parker was born at Latrobe, Tasmania in 1893 to mother Mary Jane Parker.

William Gordon Parker attended Latrobe State School, Tasmania.

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Wilmot, subdivision of Latrobe listed William Gordon Parker.

William Gordon Parker was a 21 year old, single, Labourer from Latrobe, Tasmania when he enlisted on 13th August, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3620 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs M. J. Martin, Latrobe, Tasmania. (Mary Jane Parker, mother of William Gordon Parker had married Denis Martin).

Private William Gordon Parker was posted to No. 2 Depot Battalion on 9th March, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 11th Reinforcements of 15th Battalion (no date recorded).

Private William Gordon Parker embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ulysses (A38)* on 27th October, 1915 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 15th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 25th November, 1915.

Private William Gordon Parker rejoined his Battalion on Tel-el-Kebir on 6th March, 1916.

Private William Gordon Parker was given 1 day's detention for conduct to the prejudice of good order & military discipline – leaving ranks without permission on 29th March, 1916 at Serapeum. He also forfeited 1 day's pay.

Private William Gordon Parker proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 1st June, 1916 on *Transylvania* & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 8th June, 1916.

Private William Gordon Parker was written up on 10th June, 1916 for disobedience of "Train Standing Order" en route to Bailleul. He was awarded 24 hours Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited 1 day's pay.

Private William Gordon Parker was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 13th April, 1917 with Influenza. He was transferred to 4th Field Ambulance on 14th April, 1917 then transferred to 56th Casualty Clearing Station on 21st April, 1917. Pte Parker was transferred on 23rd April, 1917 from Casualty Clearing Station & admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France. He was transferred to 2nd Convalescent Depot at Rouen on 25th April, 1917 & discharged to Base Details on 27th April, 1917. Private Parker was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 29th April, 1917. He proceeded from 4th A.D.B.D. on 13th May, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion in the field on 14th May, 1917.

Private William Gordon Parker was sent sick to Hospital on 27th August, 1917. He was admitted to 4th Australian Field Ambulance with a wound to right hand. He was transferred to 12th Australian Field Ambulance then transferred again to 44th Field Ambulance on 2nd September, 1917 with an incised wound to right hand. He was discharged to duty on 4th September, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 7th September, 1917.

Private William Gordon Parker was wounded in action on 26th January, 1918. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 27th January, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to neck. Pte Parker was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station. He was transferred again & then admitted to 53rd General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 31st January, 1918 with gunshot wounds to neck. Pte Parker embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St. Denis* on 11th February, 1918.

War Diary – 15th Battalion

Hollebeke Area

25th January, 1918 – Foggy day and little fire from our or enemy artillery.

26th January, 1918 – Enemy fire quiet, ours normal.

27th January, 1918 – Enemy artillery very active. OLAF AVENUE and support line shelled at intervals through the 24 hours. Our artillery active in reply. Enemy patrol approached one of our posts, and was fired on, one being killed. His body was searched and identification proved normal. (War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

15th Battalion

In June 1916 they 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 1916. Along with most of the 4th Brigade, the battalion suffered heavy losses at Bullecourt in April 1917 when the brigade attacked strong German positions without the promised tank support. It spent much of the remainder of 1917 in Belgium, advancing to the Hindenburg Line.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private William Gordon Parker was admitted to War Hospital, Warren Road, Guildford, Surrey, England on 11th February, 1918. The Hospital admission's form recorded "*Shrapnel lodged between hans processes of 7th C & 8th D vertebrae – scar tissue involving brachial plexus & carotid sheath. Pat medraslinths (?) & secondary haemorrhage from ____: jugular vein occurred & pte died from collapse.*"

Private William Gordon Parker died at 8.30 am on 9th April, 1918 at War Hospital, Guildford, Surrey, England from wounds received in action

A death for William G. Parker, aged 24, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Guildford, Surrey, England.

Private William Gordon Parker was buried at 3pm on 12th April, 1918 in Stoughton Cemetery, (now referred to as Stoke Old Cemetery), Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey, England, – Plot number G. 363 (Soldiers Corner) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte William Gordon Parker - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag. Several Beautiful wreaths surmounted the coffin. Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers, were supplied by the Queens (Royal West Surreys) stationed at Stoughton, Guildford. 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.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private William Gordon Parker contains a letter from E. O. Comber, Red Cross Visitor, Guildford War Hospital which reads: "*I very much regret to have to inform you that No. 3620 Pte W. G. Parker has died of wounds in Guildford War Hospital. He was admitted on February 11th with G.S.W. neck. The piece of shell was still in, and an attempt (unsuccessful) was made to remove it on March 23rd. All the time he has been in the hospital, every possible care and attention has been given to him, and the sisters have been like angels to him. In fact everyone has been only too glad to help in providing any little extras that he might fancy. I can assure you that he could have had no more care anywhere and all of us who knew him felt his loss very much, I am writing to his mother in Tasmania and so is the Sister and some of the other men.*"

Private William Gordon Parker requested in his Will, dated 18th July, 1916, that in the event of his death, the whole of his property & effects be given to his mother – Mary Jane Martin, Latrobe, Tasmania.

Base Records would have contacted Mrs M. J. Martin, mother of the late Private William Gordon Parker, in October, 1920 asking if there were any nearer blood relatives 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. Although there is no record of the original letter in the Service Record file of the late Pte W. G. Parker, they would have specifically asked if the father of the late Pte Parker was alive. Mrs M. J. Martin replied on 30th October, 1920: "*In reply to yours of 19th inst. concerning my son the late No. 3620 Pte W. G. Parker, 15th Battalion, A.I.F. All the information I can give is the father name was G. Broomhall and he left the country before deceased was born and I have not seen or heard of him since. I do not no weather he is a live or not and cannot give any address. I don't see why he should get the medals if he is alive he never owned the boy. I reared him and brought him up and gave him to fight for his country for whitch he gave his life. I think if deceased is intitled to any medals I am the proper person to received them his Mother.*

Private William Gordon Parker was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Parker's mother – Mrs M. J. Martin, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Gordon Parker – service number 3620, aged 24, of 15th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Mrs Mary Jane Martin, of Latrobe, Tasmania.

Private W. G. Parker is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 77.



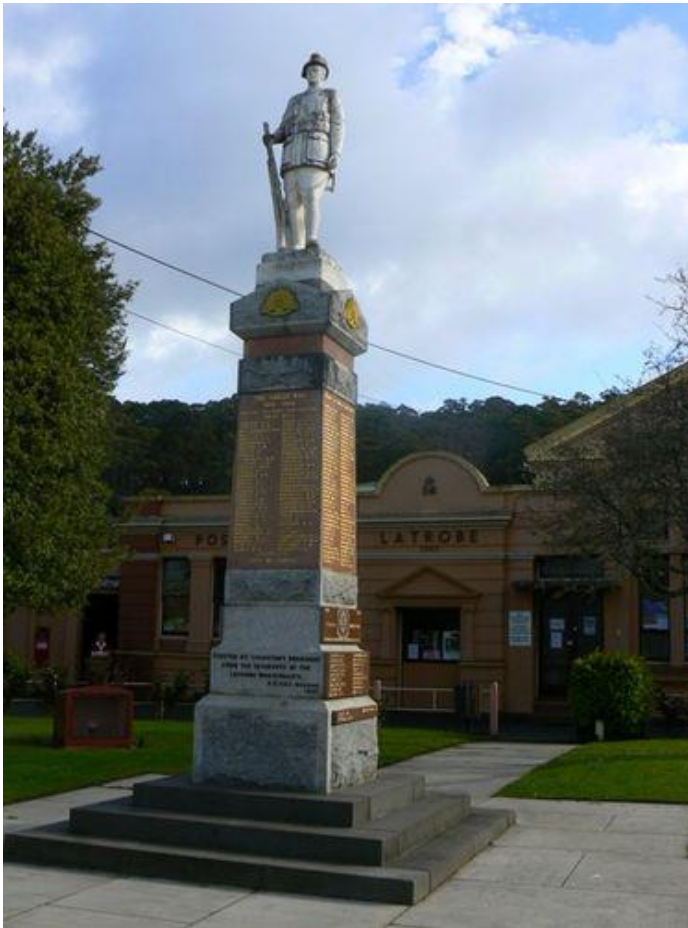
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. G. Parker is remembered on the Latrobe Roll of Honour, located in Latrobe RSL Club, 160 Gilbert Street, Latrobe, Tasmania.



Latrobe Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

W. G. Parker is remembered on the Latrobe War Memorial located on Gilbert Street, Latrobe, Tasmania.



Latrobe War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)

(44 pages of Pte William Gordon Parker'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



Newspaper Notices

NORTH-WESTERN NEWS

LATROBE

By the afternoon train yesterday four recruits left for the training camp. They were George Parker, William Gordon Parker, P. Jago and T. W. Riley.

(The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times, Tasmania – 12 August, 1915)

THE TOLL OF WAR

NORTH-WEST COAST CASUALTIES

The Ven. Archdeacon Beechinor has received intimation from the Base Records Office as follows:- "Officially reported that Private Gordon Parker, 15th Batt., died on the 9th April from wounds at Guildford War Hospital, England. Please inform his mother, Mrs Mary Jane Martin, Latrobe."

(The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times, Tasmania – 16 April, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

Casualty List No. 393

Tasmanian Casualties

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private W. G. PARKER, Latrobe, 9/4/18 (previously reported wounded)

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 26 April, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

Tasmanian Casualties

The following account of the funeral of Private W. G. Parker of Latrobe, and son of Mrs D. Martin, is taken from the "Surrey Advertiser" of April 13:- "The funeral took place at Stoughton Cemetery of Private W. G. Parker of the 15th Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces, who died on Tuesday, April 9, at the Warren-road War Hospital. Deceased, who was 24 years of age, came with A.I.F. from Tasmania, and was admitted into the hospital about three months ago, suffering from a shrapnel wound in the throat, after having been operated upon in France. The Rev. Father Higgins officiated at the funeral. The cortege was headed by the band of The Queen's, under Sergeant Hart, Chopin's Dead March and the Dead March in 'Saul' being played en route. At the graveside the firing party, under Sergeant Avis, fired three volleys, and the 'Last Post' was sounded. Those present included Warrant Officer S. E. Yeomans, representing the Administrator, Australian Imperial Forces, London; Miss Woodall, of the local V.A.D.; and several of his comrades front the hospital. Amongst the floral tributes were those from Lady Rowley, official organiser, Australian Red Cross Society; A. Preble, on behalf of his sister; Miss Woodall, a comrade's mother; his comrades in hospital; and many others." It is interesting to note that when soldiers leaving no relatives in Guildford die at the local war hospitals, the task of looking after their graves is carried out by a local committee, consisting of Lady Rowley (who attends to the Australian graves), Miss Fearon (British soldiers' graves), and Miss Woodall (the graves in Stoughton Cemetery). The funds are provided by subscription. On Easter Sunday the 14 graves at the Stoughton Cemetery were attended to, the flowers being purchased from funds received from subscriptions from the infants at Stoughton school, where Miss Woodall is mistress.

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 22 June, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

PARKER – In sad and loving memory of our dear grandson and nephew, Private William Gordon Parker, who died of wounds on April 9, 1918.

Under the flag with the five-starred cross,

The pride of the Southern sea,

He laid down his life in the deadly strife

To keep Australia free.

In a soldier's grave he lies sleeping,

One of earth's bravest and best,

In our hearts we shall miss him for ever,

Though we know he is only at rest.

-Inserted by his loving grandmother and grandfather, and uncles and aunt.

PARKER – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private W. G. Parker, who died of wounds received in France, 9th April, 1918.

No mother was there to soothe his brow,

No brother there to say good-by,

No sister to take him by the hand,

When death was drawing nigh.

No loved ones stood around him

To catch his last faint sighs;

Nor whisper just one loving word

Before he closed his eyes.

Midnight stars are shining

On a grave so far away,

Where kind comrades laid our darling

Just one year to-day.

No one knows how much we miss him;

No one knows what bitter pain

We have suffered since we lost him;

Home has never been the same.

His King and country called him;

The call was not in vain;

On Australia's roll of honor

You will find our dear Will's name.

Sacred heart of Jesus, have mercy on him.

-Inserted by his sorrowing mother and father, brothers and sister, J., D., C., D. Martin, Latrobe.

(*Advocate*, Burnie, Tasmania – 9 April, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

PARKER – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private William Gordon Parker, who died of wounds received in France, in War Hospital, England, April 9, 1918. Aged 24 years.

Sadly a mother is thinking

Of her soldier son, so brave;

Who fought for the cause of freedom,

Now lies in a hero's grave.

Fond memories will always keep,

And ever feel the loss.

Of a loving heart, now silent,

'Neath a wooden cross.

He has borne his cross, he has gained his Crown,

Though he lies in a far-off grave;

And we think of his life – a duty done;

Manly, unselfish and brave.

Sacred heart of Jesus, have mercy on him.

-Inserted by his sorrowing mother and father, brothers and sister, I., D., S., and D. Martin, Latrobe; F. F. Parker, Smithon.

(*Advocate*, Burnie, Tasmania – 9 April, 1921)

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. G. Parker does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of The Dearly Loved Son Of Mrs D. Martin Of Latrobe, Tasmania

Stoke Old Cemetery, Guildford, Surrey, England

Stoke Old Cemetery, Guildford, Surrey contains 84 Commonwealth War Graves – 76 from World War 1 & 8 from World War 2.

There are 4 Australians buried in this Cemetery.



Cross of Sacrifice in Stoke Old Cemetery, Guildford *(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)*

Photo of Private W. G. Parker's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Stoke Old Cemetery, Guildford, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)