

**Dumfries Cemetery,
Dumfries, Scotland**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



4761 PRIVATE

D. M. RAE

19TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

15TH JANUARY, 1919 Age 22

Through Fire, Wounds, Prison

Came Safely

Then Gazing Homeward

Died

Donald Mac RAE

Donald Mac Rae was born at Coolamon, in the Riverina area, New South Wales on 4th June, 1896 to parents Arthur Edward George Rae and Annie Rae (nee Fryer). Arthur Rae was an organiser of the Australian Labor Party.

Donald Mac Rae attended Glenorie Public School & then his final 12 months of school was completed at Middle Dural Public School.

Donald Mac Rae was a 19 year old, single, Labourer from Glenorie, NSW when he enlisted at Casula, Sydney, NSW on 28th December, 1915 with the 20th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4761 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr A. Rae, Glenorie, NSW. Donald's older brother William Lincoln Rae, a 21 year old, single, Painter enlisted the same day & was given a service number of 4765.

Private Donald Mac Rae was posted to B Depot at Casula on 17th January, 1916. He was transferred to "A" Company, 20th Battalion on 8th February, 1916.

Private Donald Mac Rae & his brother Private William Lincoln Rae both embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Ceramic* (A40) on 13th April, 1916 according to the Embarkation Roll at the Australian War Memorial website. Pte Rae's Casualty Form – Active Service records the date of embarkation from Sydney as 14th May, 1916. Pte Rae was sent to Isolation – "Contact" while at Sea on HMT *Megantic* from 29th May, 1916 & discharged from Isolation on 7th June, 1916. He disembarked at England (no date recorded).

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 Donald Rae proceeded overseas to France from 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire, England on 9th September, 1916 to join his Unit.

Private Donald Rae was marched in from England to 2 A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 11th September, 1916. He was marched out from Etaples on 28th September, 1916 to join his Unit. Pte Rae joined the 20th Battalion in the field on 7th October, 1916.

Private Donald Rae was sent sick to 7th Australian Field Ambulance on 11th December, 1916 with diarrhoea & was discharged to duty on 13th December, 1916.

Private Donald Mac Rae was wounded in action in France on 26th February, 1917. He was taken to 45th Casualty Clearing Station on 27th February, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to right shoulder then transferred to Ambulance Train 9 on 28th February, 1917. Pte Rae was admitted to the 3rd Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 1st March, 1917. He was marked for transfer to England on 3rd March, 1917 & was invalided to England on the Hospital Ship *Cambria* on 4th March, 1917 from Boulogne with shrapnel wounds to chest wall.

20th Battalion

The 20th Battalion provided reinforcements for the attack near Fliers between 14 and 16 November, launched in conditions that Charles Bean described as the worst ever encountered by the A.I.F.

War Diary – 20th Battalion

Front Line – 26-2-17: We continue advancing with the object of capturing Malt Trench. Occupied le Coupe Guele near Bapaume Road also Warlencourt Road trench. We are relieved at night by 19th A.I.F. and move to old Bn. Headquarters in Sunken Road. Relief complete 3.30 am 26/27 Casualties Nil.

Front Line – 27-2-17: Kline still pushing forward. 6th Bde. on left and 1st Div. on right. Casualties. To Hosp. 3 O.R. From Hosp. 25 O.R. From Reinf. 35 O.R. To Cam: Rank 3 O.R.

(Battalion & War Diary information from The Australian War Memorial)

Private Donald Rae was admitted to Middlesex War Hospital at Napsbury, England on 4th March, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to chest wall. He was discharged on 1st June, 1917 & proceeded on furlo & was to report to Depot at Perham Downs at end of his furlo.

Private Donald Rae was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 16th June, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was marched in from No. 2 Command Depot to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 29th June, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was medically classified as B1 A4 – Fit for Overseas Training Camp when passed dentally fit.

Private Donald Rae was marched in from No. 3 Command Depot to Overseas Training Depot at Perham Downs on 21st July, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was admitted to Brigade Hospital at Perham Downs on 23rd July, 1917 with Influenza & discharged on 30th July, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was written up for an Offence/ Crime while posted at Perham Downs, Wiltshire – Absent off 6.30 am Parade on 2nd October, 1917. He was awarded a punishment on 3rd October, 1917 of a forfeiture of 1 days pay.

Private Donald Rae proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 9th October, 1917 from Overseas Training Brigade at Perham Downs, Wiltshire.

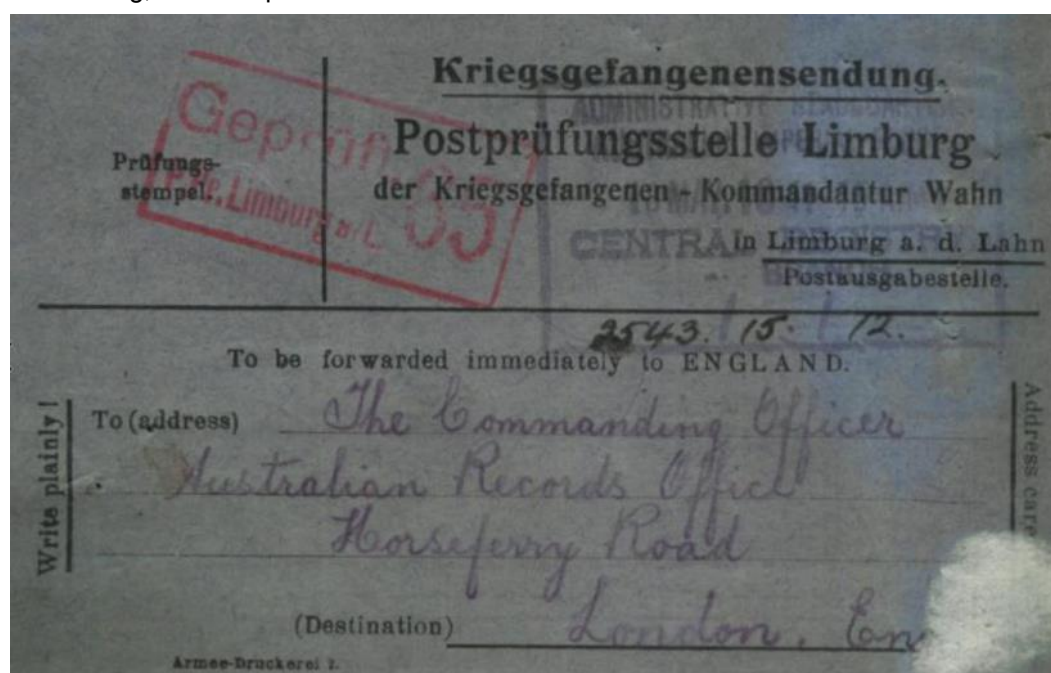
Private Donald Rae was marched in from England to 2 A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 10th October, 1917. Pte Rae was marched out to join his Unit on 13th October, 1917 & rejoined 20th Battalion from being wounded on 15th October, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was transferred from 20th Battalion to 5th L.T.M. (Light Trench Mortar) Battery & taken on strength of 5th Light Trench Mortar Battery in France on 12th November, 1917.

Private Donald Rae was transferred to 19th Battalion from 5th Light Trench Mortar Battery on 13th January, 1918 but was to remain attached for duty with 5th L.T.M. Battery.

Private Donald Rae was sent to 5th Field Ambulance on 27th February, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion on 1st March, 1918.

Private Donald Mac Rae was reported as missing in action in France on 12th April, 1918. A Court of Enquiry was held on 23rd April, 1918 & Private Donald Mac Rae who was previously reported missing on 12th April, 1918 was now reported as "Missing, believed prisoner of War 12/4/18."



Front & back of Private Donald Mac Rae's Prisoner of War Postcard

100,000 Pads. 12/17. H. W. & V., Ltd.

"B" Form.
MESSAGES AND FORMS

ll up this card immediately!
I am prisoner of war in Germany.

Na: 4761

Ch: nald

Re: 19 Bn att.

Regt: Australian Light Trench Mortar Battery

Sound: Wounded III. Improper to be erased.

Date: 19th April 1918

Do not reply to Limburg. await further information.

The 3rd Echelon France dated 1st May, 1918 which reads Private Donald Mac Rae "previously reported missing now reported Prisoner of War in German hands."

Private Donald Mac Rae, of 19th Battalion attached to 5 L.T.M. Battery, was interned as a Prisoner of War in Münster II Camp from 30th April, 1918. He had been captured at Hangard on 12th April, 1918. Hangard Wood was a locality south of Villers-Bretonneux, northern France.

B3388

Stamm-lager: Münster II Datum der Ausfertigung: _____
Principal-camp: _____ Date: _____

oder _____
or _____ Tag: 30 Monat: 4 Jahr: 18
Laqarett: _____ Day: _____ Month: _____ Year: _____
Hospital: _____

Zunahme: Mac Rae
Surname: _____

Vorname: Donald. Mac
Christian name: _____

Rang: Pte
Rank: _____

Reg. oder Korps: Att. L.T.M. Reg. Nr.: _____ Komp.: L.T.M.
Reg. or Corps: _____ Reg. Nr.: _____ Komp.: _____

Erkennungsmarke Nr.: 4761
Number of identification disc.: _____

Gefangennahme: Ort: Hangard Datum: 12. 4. 18
Capture: Place: _____ Date: _____

Ob verwundet, _____
Whether wounded, _____
Bezeichnung der Wunde: _____
Description of wound: _____

Geburt: Ort: Australien Datum: 4. 6. 96
Birth: Place: _____ Date: _____

Heimatort: Australien
Home place: _____

Adresse des nächsten Verwandten: Mr. A. Rae,
Address of next-of-kin: Glerou,
Via Housby,
N.S.W. Australia

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Donald Mac Rae, 4761, 19th Battalion contains an extract from Prisoner of War Post Card received from Pet Rae dated 12th May, 1918:

"Interned Munster II.

I was captured on the 12th April 1918 and am in good health and doing well. Will you please cable to my Mother Mrs A. Rae, Glenorie vis Hornsby New South Wales.

The following were taken prisoners with me Pte J. E. Murray, Pte C. C. Hall and Cpl. R. Howell all of the 5th Aust. L.T.M. Batty., The two latter were wounded but were progressing favourably when I left them."

The Red Cross advised Pte William L. Rae, 4765, D Company, 20th Battalion, A.I.F. of the post card from his brother.

Australian Prisoners of War – World War 1

Just over 4,000 Australians were taken prisoner during the First World War by the Turks and the Germans.

Of the 232 Australian prisoners of war captured by the Turks, nearly half were light horsemen captured in Sinai and Palestine; others were captured at Gallipoli, were members of the Australian Flying Corps, or were crew of the submarine AE2. About 25 per cent of these prisoners of the Turks died in captivity.

In all, 3,850 Australians were captured by the Germans on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918. Nine per cent of these prisoners died in captivity. A total of 395 Australians died during captivity in the First World War.

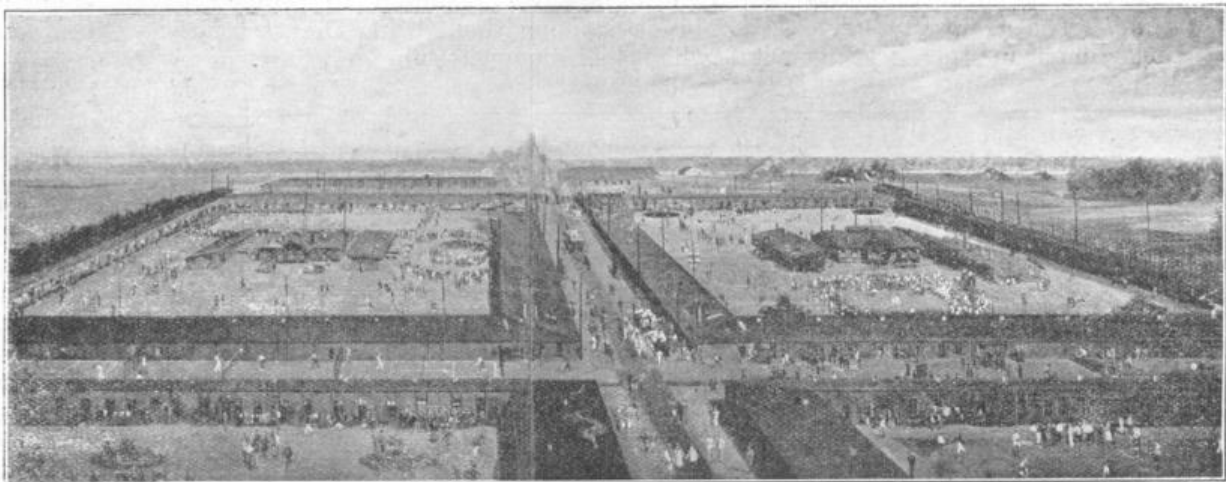
When the first Australian prisoners of war were taken by the Germans in July 1916, a separate department of the Australian Red Cross Society (A.R.C.S.) was formed to take care of them. The A.C.R.S. despatched 395,695 food parcels and 36,339 clothing parcels.

(Information from The Australian War Memorial)

Münster Prisoner of War Camp, Germany

Münster is a city in the north western part of Germany. There were four prisoner of war camps: Münster I was outside the city in open farming country, Münster II was at the racecourse, Münster III was a former Army barracks, and Münster IV was reserved for Russian prisoners.

Münster Camp No II consisted of four large quadrangles which had been built in the racecourse. In these quadrangles British soldiers as a rule occupied rooms by themselves. In this camp there were 11,093 prisoners, of whom 451 were British. The living room opened on the large central court, in the middle of which are the kitchens, latrines and bath-houses. In one "block" a room had been arranged as a Catholic chapel and another used as a theatre. Each block had its own band of music, made up of men of all nationalities.



MÜNSTER II, RENNBAHN.

A panoramic view of the prison camp at Rennbahn (Muenster II) showing how the facility was divided into four quarters by two perpendicular streets. Barracks formed the perimeter of the compound. By dividing the camp into different compounds, the Germans could improve security by organizing the number of POW's into smaller units while maintaining economies of scale for camp operations in regard to transportation, supply, feeding, and medical care.

Private Donald Mac Rae was repatriated & arrived in Hull, England on 11th December, 1918.

Private Donald Mac Rae was granted leave from 13th December, 1918 & was to report to Headquarters on 15th January, 1919.

Private Donald Mac Rae died at 6.45 pm on 15th January, 1919 at Dumfries Infirmary, Scotland from Enteric Fever (14 days).

Private Donald Mac Rae was buried on 18th January, 1919 in Dumfries Cemetery, Dumfries, Scotland – Plot number 376 Presbyterian Section (CWGC has plot number as A. of B. 289) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Donald Mac Rae - *Coffin was oak. The late soldier was accorded a full military funeral, Firing Party, Pall-bearers and Pipe Band of the Arrol-Johnson Cadet Corps being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack and surmounted by several wreaths from Mrs Hutchinson and friends as above and an "Anonymous Friend to Australian Soldiers". Australian Imperial Force Headquarters were represented at the funeral and a temporary Oak Cross will be erected by the A.I.F. The Pipers played "Lochaber no More" at the graveside.*

Names of relatives and friends present at the Funeral – Mrs Hutchinson, Wingfield, Dumfries, Mr & Mrs Baird, Wingfield, Dumfries, Mr Sharp, Lockerbie Road, Dumfries, Mr Lockerbie, Lockerbie Road, Dumfries & Mr Swan, Lockerbie Road, Dumfries.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Donald Mac Rae contains a copy of a letter written by Mrs M. Hutchinson, "Wingfield" Dumfries, Scotland, which the Red Cross sent to Pte William L. Rae, 4765, D Company, 20th Battalion, A.I.F., elder brother of Private Donald Mac Rae which reads:

"We have received an unofficial report about your brother 4761 Pte D. M. Rae, 19th Battalion, A.I.F. which although it is of a very sad nature, we feel may be of some value to you....."

"I am deeply grieved to convey to you the sad tidings that Don Rae passed away last evening the 15th between 6 and 7 o'clock. I was up at the Infirmary to see him in the afternoon I think he knew mw for he asked twice if I had come specially to see him. Once he tried to say something about his brother Charlie, and I said I had written to him but I don't think he understood. When I left him I could see the end was not very far off, and I arranged with the nurse about a phone message during the evening. Before six however, the porter came to say he was dying and could I go at one. I went and sat by his bedside till he passed peacefully away. It was just a falling asleep. I am able to assure you that he has been most tenderly and sympathetically nursed. He was specialised at the time, so that day and night there was a nurse at his bedside. Both nurses spoke so nicely of him all through his illness and delirium, and said what a nice boy he was to nurse. The Doctor was most interested – it being the worst case of Influenza-Pneumonia they have had to pass the crisis. When my daughters went to see him on Saturday afternoon, they were so proud of him having passed the crisis, and his temperature was down, at night however, it rose again, there has been some complication and they seem puzzled I cannot tell you the kind interest there has been in the Infirmary about him, nor can we speak too highly of the care and kindness of the nurses day and night. One told me he so much liked to be sponged and that was done for him every four hours. I waited and saw him after he was laid out, and he looked so peaceful.

This morning my son-in-law has made the necessary arrangements for his funeral, which is to take place on Saturday at 12.30. The Doctor wired last night while I was at the Infirmary, for his brother to the address in your letter, which I received by the 5 o'clock post, but we cannot tell whether he may get leave in time and my son-in-law may have to return to France on Sunday evening. We wired also this morning to Australian Headquarters.

A grave in Dumfries Cemetery has been purchased. We thought his father and mother would like that best and the funeral will be private, my son in law and a few personal friends will attend.

We are grieving for his dear parents to lose their dear boy thus, after all he has been through and just when the prospect of his return to them was so near, but it will comfort them to know he was so carefully nursed and everything done that possible could be. It is another of the sad sad cases of the cruel way.

We sympathise with you deeply in the loss of your brother and trust that it may be of some comfort to you to know that he passed away amongst friends and that such kind thought has been bestowed on his burial and last resting place."

Private Donald Mac Rae requested in his Will dated 11th July, 1917 that all his real estate be bequeathed to Arthur Rae, Glenorie, via Hornsby, NSW & his personal estate be bequeathed to Arthur & Annie Rae Glenorie, via Hornsby, NSW.

Private Donald Mac Rae was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Rae's father – Mr A. Rae, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Donald Mac Rae – service number 4761, aged 22, of 19th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Arthur and Annie Rae, of "Tres Bon" View St, Marrickville, New South Wales, Australia.

Private D. M. Rae is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 89.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

D. Rae & his brothers, W. Rae & C. Rae, are all remembered on the Glenorie War Memorial located in Walter Buckingham Memorial Park, 936 Old Northern Road, Glenorie, NSW.





Glenorie War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Wayne Moore)

(82 pages of Private Donald Mac Rae'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



Connected to Donald Mac Rae:

Older Brother – Private William Lincoln Rae, 4765, 20th Battalion. Embarked with Donald on 13th April, 1916. Wounded in action on 14th November, 1916 at the Somme. Killed in action near Villers Bretonneux, France 8th August, 1918. Buried in Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery – XII.A.4. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal.

Older Brother – Gunner Charles Joseph Rae, 36655, Field Artillery Brigade. Embarked from Sydney on 5th November, 1917. Served in France & Belgium. Returned to Australia & embarked on 12th May, 1919 & disembarked on 5th July, 1919. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal.

William Lincoln Rae & Charles Joseph Rae were twins.



20 Batt. Reinforcements. A.I.F. March 1916.
Left Australia S.S. Ceramic April 1916

Pte. William.L. RAE
killed in action France 1918

Pte. Don M. Rae
Died due to illness 1919



Brothers – Privates William & Donald Rae

(Photo with permission of François Berthout)



Private Donald Mac Rae



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

AWM2017.6.100

Collection number PR82/008

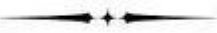
Description

Note from C M Winnon to the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, Glenorie, 14 March 1916. The note details a ceremony and gift presentation for departing soldiers;

*Back: Privates G. Dale, **D. Rae**, H. Walker*

Front: Privates Roy Roberts, W. Rae, T. Dale

Attached to the note is a photograph of the soldiers excluding Clem Smith. [Includes envelope]



LAST POST CEREMONY

Private Donald Mac Rae was remembered in the Last Post Ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on 21st April, 2016.

Commencing at approximately 4.55 pm AEST, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony in the Commemorative Courtyard. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the Roll of Honour.

The ceremony begins with the Australian national anthem followed by the piper's lament. Visitors are invited to lay wreaths and floral tributes beside the Pool of Reflection. An individual's story is told, and the Ode is recited by Australian Defence Force personnel. The ceremony ends with the sounding of the Last Post.

(Information & general photo from The Australian War Memorial)



Speech transcript

4761 Private Donald Mac Rae 19th Battalion, AIF
DOD 15 January 1919
No photograph in collection Story delivered 21 April 2016

Today we remember and pay tribute to Private Donald Mac Rae.

Donald Rae was born on 4 June 1896 in Junee, New South Wales, to Arthur Rae, one of the formative members of the Labor Party, and his wife, Annie.

Donald was the third of six children, named for a famous trade unionist of the time, who presented the infant with a membership of the Australian Workers Union, making him the youngest known union member in history. He attended Glenorie Public School before moving to Middle Dural Public School for his final year. After leaving school, he went to work on a farm run by a staunch unionist and Labor man at Lankey's Creek.

Arthur Rae was elected to the Senate in 1910. Donald followed in his father's footsteps by joining the Political Labor League at Lankey's Creek and becoming active in the Labor movement.

When the First World War began Rae was working on the family farm with his father and older brothers. He enlisted along with his brother Will on 28 December 1915. After initial training they were allocated to the 12th reinforcements to the 20th Battalion, embarking in April 1916.

Arriving in England, the brothers spent several months with the 5th Training Battalion before being sent to France in early September. They joined the 20th Battalion in October, just in time for one of the worst winters on record. The battalion took part in the disastrous attack on Flers, and while Donald Rae came through unscathed, his brother was wounded and evacuated to England.

When the German army withdrew to the Hindenburg Line in early 1917 the Australians were involved in pursuing them. On 26 February 1917 Rae was severely wounded by shrapnel during the capture of Malt Trench. The shrapnel narrowly missed his lungs and heart, and he was evacuated to England for treatment and convalescence.

Recovering from his wounds by the end of July, Rae remained in England at a training establishment in Perham Downs. During this time he was able to reunite with his brother, and they re-joined their battalion in France in October.

The 20th Battalion spent the next few months resting and refitting, with several spells in the front line. In mid-January 1918 Rae was transferred to the 19th Battalion and seconded to the 5th Light Trench Mortar Battery. During the German Spring Offensive of late March Rae's battery was sent with the Australian 5th Brigade to Hangard Wood, where heavy fighting was taking place. In April he and several of his comrades were taken prisoner while providing fire support to a British battalion.

With the signing of the Armistice several months later, Rae was released and sent back to England. He was given four weeks' leave, and travelled to Scotland to visit friends and family. On New Year's Day he was admitted to Dumfries Infirmary suffering enteric fever.

His family and friends stayed by his side throughout his illness. However, while he rallied briefly, the fever returned and Private Rae passed away on 15 January. He was 22 years old. He was laid to rest with full military honours in Dumfries Cemetery.

Rae's oldest brother, Charles, who had served with the artillery on the Western Front, returned safely to Australia in May 1919. Will Rae had been killed in action in August 1918, aged 24, near Villers-Bretonneux.

Private Donald Rae's name is listed on the Roll of Honour on my right, among more than 60,000 others from the First World War.

This is but one of the many stories of service and sacrifice told here at the Australian War Memorial. We now remember Private Donald Mac Rae, who gave his life for us, for our freedoms, and in the hope of a better world.

Michael Kelly
Historian, Military History Section

Video of The Last Post Ceremony commemorating the service of (4761) Private Donald Mac Rae 19th Battalion, AIF, First World War. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2133719>

Newspaper Notices

GLENORIE

RECRUITS

Two of our young men, William and Donald Rae, sons of Mr and Mrs Arthur Rae, have enlisted , and enter camp for training in a few weeks.

(The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Parramatta, NSW – 8 January, 1916)

CASUALTY LIST 281

Wounded: Pte D. M. Rae, Glenorie

(The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Parramatta, NSW – 24 March, 1917)

AFTER TWO YEARS

Son of Mr Arthur Rae Killed

Word that his son Private William Rae had been killed in action in France on August 8 was received by Mr Arthur Rae, organiser of the Australian Labor Party, yesterday afternoon.

Private William Rae, who was 25 years of age, left Australia in April, 1916, and shortly after entering the firing line was badly wounded. After recovering in a hospital in England he returned to the front.

His twin brother, Gunner Charles Rae, is still in the firing line. Another brother, Private Donald Rae, is a prisoner of war in Germany. On April 12 last (two years from the day he left Sydney) Donald was, with a few others who were guarding a munition dump, surrounded by a big force and compelled to surrender.

(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 28 August, 1918)

DIED ON FURLOUGH

Mr ARTHUR RAE'S SON

Private Donald Rae, a son of Mr Arthur Rae, organiser for the A.L.P., died from pneumonic influenza in Scotland while on furlough on January 15. Word to this effect was received by Mr Rae this morning.

Private Rae, who enlisted in the early stages of the war, was for many months a prisoner of war in Germany, and was released only in December last.

This makes the second son whom Mr Rae has lost at the front. A third son is still with the colours.

(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 24 January, 1919)

ARTHUR RAE

The news of the death of his son Donald, which was received by ex-Senator Rae last Friday, came as a terrific blow to the veteran Labor leader. Donald Rae died of pneumonia, at Dumfries, Scotland, whilst spending a holiday with some friends. He had only returned to England a few weeks before, having been a prisoner of war in Germany for upwards of a year. Mr Rae's eldest son, William, was killed in action in France last August, thus a double grief has fallen upon the parents of the boys during the past six months.

On reading the notification, which came with such terrible suddenness, Mr. Rae sat dazed and speechless for a time. When he recovered from the first shock, and in answer to the expressed sympathy of the writer, he said: 'It's not for myself — it's the mother!' That spontaneous utterance, when the brain was practically benumbed with grief, is characteristic of the man, and will be recognised as such by all those who know him best. It is unnecessary, and would be unbecoming, that more should be said of this old Labor stalwart at such a time. Let it suffice to express the firm conviction that the sincerest and most heartfelt, sympathy of every member of the Labor Movement in Australia, and of thousands besides, will be extended to Mr and Mrs Rae and their family in their great sorrow.

(Labor News, Sydney, NSW – 1 February, 1919)

DONALD RAE

Private Donald Rae, the news of whose death was received last Friday, was the third son of ex- Senator Rae.

He had been a prisoner of war in Germany for eight months, and had on his release arrived in London on December 11. His parents and their family were looking forward to his early return with the fondest hopes and expectations.

Donald Rae was in his 23rd year. He enlisted in December, 1915, along with his elder brother, William, who was killed in action on August 8 last, and they had served together in the same battalion. In March, 1917, Donald was severely wounded in the chest, pieces of shrapnel passing between the lungs and heart, and narrowly missing both vital spots. He was sent to England, and quickly recovered, but his parents believe that the results of this wound probably made him an easier victim to the disease, which carried him off soon after regaining his freedom.

When returning to the firing line, by a strange coincidence, he met his brother William, who had been wounded earlier, on the wharf at Dover, and they returned to the trenches together. Donald Rae held the unique distinction at one time of being the youngest Trades Unionist in the world, having been presented at his birth by the late Donald Macdonell, after whom he was named, with a membership ticket in the A.W.U. His membership was kept up until an amendment of the law prohibited Union membership to persons under 16 years of age. Later on, when working in the Albury district, he rejoined the Union, and was a member of the Victoria Riverina Branch up to the time of his death.

For some time he was in the employ of that life-long Unionist and Laborite, Mr. Moses Wright, of Lankey's Creek, near Germanton (now Holbrook). While there, inheriting a taste for politics, he became secretary of the Lankey's Creek P.L.L., while only a lad. Later on he returned to his parents' home at Glenorie, and was secretary of the local School of Arts until his enlistment.

There is still another brother, Gunner Charles Rae, on active service somewhere abroad, but he has not been heard from since the armistice was signed.

The deceased, Donald Rae, recorded his first vote for the Federal elections of 1917 while in a convalescent hospital in England, and both he and his deceased brother William voted 'No' on the conscription referendum, and expressed some opinions on that subject which were not permitted publication in Australia.

General sympathy will be felt for the parents and the other members of the family at this second heavy and entirely unexpected blow which has stricken their home, and robbed Australia of a worthy young citizen and a genial, lovable character.

(Labor News, Sydney, NSW – 1 February, 1919)

458th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

Pte DONALD MAC RAE, (Sydney) (c. n. std.)

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 18 February, 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.

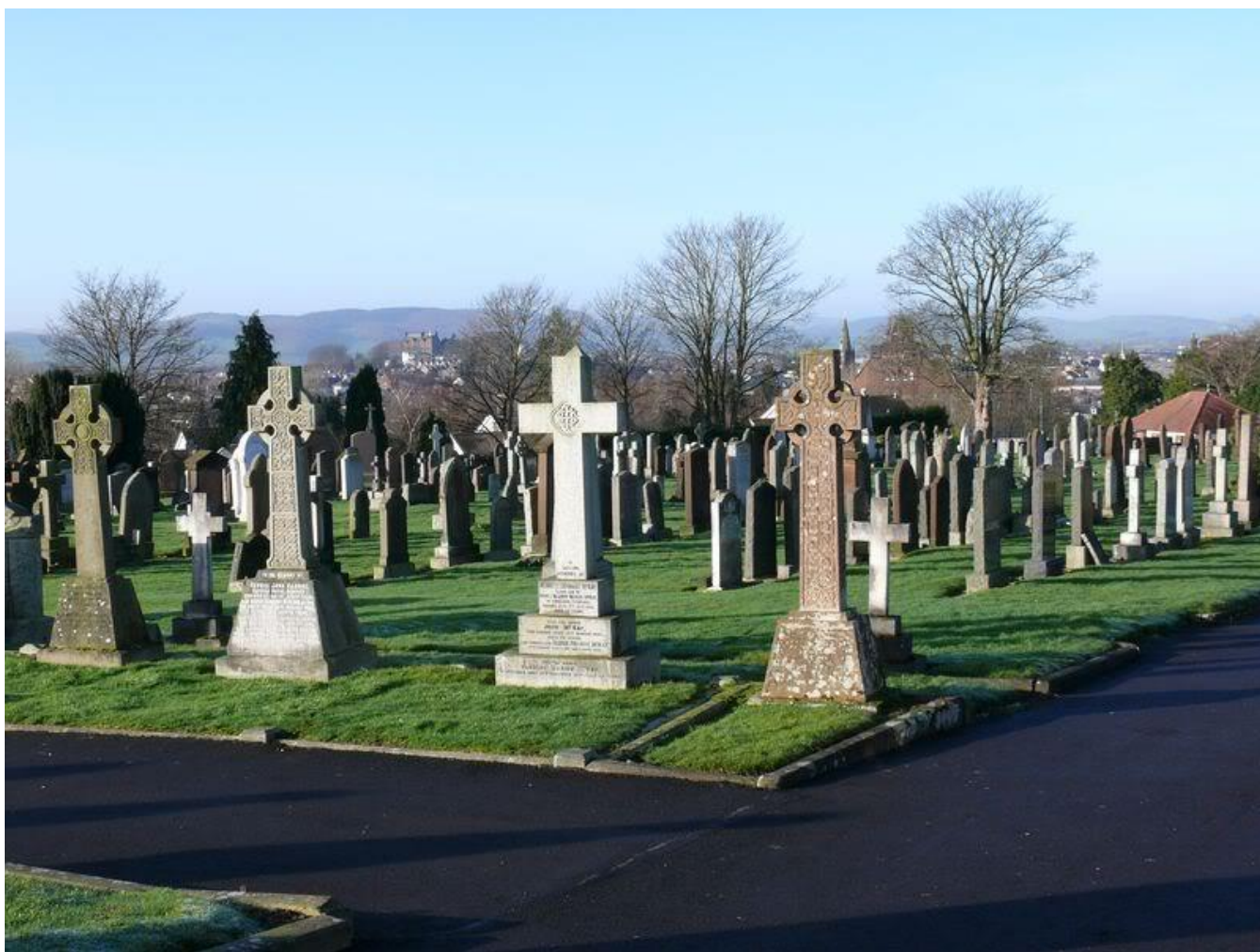
(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Private Donald Mac Rae does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Through Fire, Wounds, Prison Came Safely Then Gazing Homeward Died

Dumfries Cemetery, Dumfries, Scotland

Dumfries Cemetery contains 15 Commonwealth War Graves – 10 relate to World War 1 & 5 are from World War 2.



(Photo by Spoons – The Scottish War Graves Project)

Photo of Private D. M. Rae's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Dumfries Cemetery, Dumfries, Scotland.



(Photo by Spoons – The Scottish War Graves Project)