

**Melcombe Regis Cemetery,
Weymouth, Dorset, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6136 PRIVATE

S. C. M. SAUNDERS

19TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

3RD JANUARY, 1919 Age 33

The Sun Went Down

While Yet It Was Day

Sydney Charles Moore (Sid) SAUNDERS

Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was born at Gulgong, near Mudgee, New South Wales in 1885 to parents John Thomas & Susan Emily Saunders (nee Maybury).

Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was a 31 year old, single, Hairdresser from 389 Dowling Street, Moore Park, Sydney, NSW when he enlisted on 1st June, 1916 at Royal Agricultural Show Grounds, Sydney, New South Wales with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Susan Saunders, of 389 Dowling Street, Moore Park, Sydney, NSW

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was posted to “C” Company, 1st Battalion at Cootamundra, NSW on 6th June, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to “B” Company, 3rd Battalion at Cootamundra from 16th June, 1916. Private Saunders was transferred on 6th July, 1916 to “B” Company, 19th Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, New South Wales. He attended NCO School No 12 from 8th August, 1916 until 8th September, 1916. Private Saunders was transferred to 17th Reinforcements of 19th Battalion as Acting Corporal from 8th September, 1916.

Private (rank as listed on Embarkation Roll) Sydney Charles Moore Saunders, Service number 6136, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 25th October, 1916 with the 5th Infantry Brigade, 19th Infantry Battalion, 17th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 28th December, 1916.

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 / Acting Corporal Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was marched in to 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire, England on 29th December, 1916. (An entry on his Casualty Form – Active Service recorded “Reverts to ranks” on marching on to 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone on 29th December, 1916.)

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone per S.S. *Golden Eagle* on 25th February, 1917. He was marched in to 2nd A.D.B.D. at Etaples, France on 26th February, 1917. Private Saunders was taken on strength of 19th Battalion in France on 3rd March, 1917 from 17th Reinforcements.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was with his Unit (19th Battalion) on 20th December, 1917. (This usually was reported when there had been no activity/illness/injuries reported on a soldier's Casualty form Active Service for a period of time.)

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was on Leave to UK from 11th February, 1918 & he returned from Leave on 28th February, 1918.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders reported sick on 3rd March, 1918. He was admitted to New Zealand Stationary Hospital, Belgium on 3rd March, 1918 with V.D.G. then transferred to Ambulance Train 19 on 6th March, 1918. Private Saunders was admitted to 39th General Hospital at Havre, France on 9th March, 1918 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was still a patient on 17th May, 1918. He was discharged to Base Depot on 2nd July, 1918. Total V.D.G. period – 122 days. Private Saunders was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 2nd July, 1918. He was marched out from A.I.B.D. on 5th July, 1918 & rejoined 19th Battalion in the Field on 10th July, 1918.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from 24th July, 1918 until arrested at Boulogne, France on 11th August, 1918. He was returned to 19th Battalion from A.W.L. on 18th August, 1918.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders reported sick on 6th September, 1918 to Hospital & rejoined 19th Battalion on 14th September, 1918. (no cause of illness recorded) (Note: “Hospital” is the generic term used – he may have been admitted to a Field Ambulance, Casualty Clearing Station or Dressing Station – not necessarily a “hospital”)

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was awaiting trial (no date recorded).

Regarding Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders' absence from 24th July, 1918 to 11th August, 1918 the following was recorded on his Casualty Form – Active Service: “*No evidence to support charge could be obtained. Soldier released without prejudice.*”

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was wounded in action in France on 3rd October, 1918. He was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance on 3rd October, 1918 with Shrapnel wounds to Face & right Leg then transferred to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 4th October, 1918. Private Saunders was transferred to Ambulance Train on 4th October, 1918 & was admitted the same day to 6th General Hospital at Rouen, France. He was invalided to England on 7th October, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle*.

19th Battalion

The 19th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. A large number of the 19th's original recruits had already served with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) in the operations to capture German New Guinea in 1914.

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In 1917, the 19th was involved in the follow-up of German forces after their retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and was one of four battalions to defeat a counter-stroke by a German force, almost five times as strong, at Lagincourt. The Battalion took part in three major battles before the year was out, second Bullecourt (3-4 May) in France, and Menin Road (20-22 September) and Poelcappelle (9-10 October) in Belgium.

The spring of 1918 brought a major German offensive that the 19th Battalion helped to stop. For his actions during the fighting around Hangard Wood on 7 April, Lieutenant Percy Storkey was awarded the Victoria Cross. With this last desperate offensive defeated, the 19th participated in the battles that pushed the German Army ever closer to defeat: Amiens on 8 August, the legendary attack on Mont St Quentin on 31 August, and the forcing of the Beaufort Line around Montbrehain on 3 October. Montbrehain was the battalion's last battle. The casualties of 1918, combined with long-term leave for 1914 enlistees, and dwindling new enlistments had sapped the strength of the AIF. On 10 October 1918 the 19th Battalion was disbanded to reinforce other battalions in the brigade.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 19th Battalion

ESTREES – 3rd October, 1918:

3 am – Bn H.Q. moved from Nauroy to dugout in trench astride main Estrees road, shared with 20th Bn. Companies reported all in position on tape line, 5.30 am.

6.5 am – Zero hour. Creeping artillery barraged from 400 yards ahead of J.O. line, working towards objective trench system and areas beyond. Left companies (D and C) made good progress, the enemy's artillery reply being scattered, and were reported on objective shortly after 7 am. The right companies, A and B, however, encountered determined opposition from enemy machine-guns in the Beaufort Line, and house used as a machine-gun nest on the NE outskirts of Estrees. These companies were also held up by a thick belt of wire in front of the trench system, which owing to the "ditching" of two tanks in the Hindenburg Line and the putting out of action of two others, was quite intact. While held up by this wire, the enemy continually used his machine guns and flung hand grenades ("potato mashers") at the attackers, causing considerable losses in wounded. "A" and "B" accordingly fell back to sunken road B26d, H3a.

ESTREES – BEAUREVOIR

10.30 am – Our artillery concentrated on trenches each side of main road 300' and house at B 27 c 8.8. This was effective and A and B, together with 17th on right, advanced and mopped up the trench system proceeding through narrow gaps in the wire. The enemy, whose demoralisation was completed by the second artillery shoot offered no resistance. A and B Companies subsequently took up a line on the slope of LA MOTTE VALLEY (see Dispositions). Weather fine.

Prisoners taken in this operation numbered 280: Machine-guns 19: Minenwerfers 4: Bicycles 2: Flash signalling apparatus complete 1: Flare Pistols 9. For other details, and times of various phases, see Appendix.

Our losses were: Killed 8 o/r; Wounded 8 Off; 102 o/r

Total strength, 27 Off 449 o/r. Line strength 12 Off. 169 o/r

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

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Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was admitted to 1st Southern General Hospital, Edgbaston, Birmingham, England on 8th October, 1918. The Hospital Admissions form recorded Shell wound to Face; compound fracture of lower jaw & Leg R T & T calf. He was reported to be convalescent on 8th November, 1918 & medically classified as B1 B _ . Private Saunders was transferred to Queen's Hospital Sidcup on 29th November, 1918. He was discharged & granted furlough from 5th December, 1918 & was then to report to No. 2 Command Depot.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from Weymouth on 19th December, 1918. The case was reported & on 20th December, 1918 the case was dismissed.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 21st December, 1918 from Administrative Headquarters, London.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders reported sick on 24th December, 1918 & was admitted to Monte Video Hospital, Weymouth, Dorset on 28th December, 1918 – dangerously ill with “*Cerebral Haemorrhage*.”

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders died at 04.45 am on 3rd January, 1919 at Monte Video Hospital, Weymouth, Dorset, England from Cerebral Tumour (Aedema).

A death for Sydney C. Saunders, aged 33, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Weymouth, Dorset, England.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was buried on 6th January, 1919 in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England – Section C Grave No. 3100.

From the burial report of Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders - Coffin was Elm with brass fittings. The late Private Saunders was buried with full Military honours and was followed to his last resting place by two Officers and 100 N.C.O.'s and Men of No. 2 Australian Command Depot Weymouth. The Church of England Chaplain who attended him during his illness officiated at the graveside. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders' burial place is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number II. C. 3100 and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders contains a letter from Sister in Charge, Monte Video Hospital, Weymouth which reads: “*He died on this hospital as you know. The cause of death was Cerebral Haemorrhage – he had been a patient here about 10 days. Came in here, not very ill, but suffering from severe headaches, which increased in severity, as his condition became worse. The condition was not in any way the result of a wound or injury. I have written to his Mother giving her all the particulars possible.*”

Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Saunders' mother – Mrs S. Saunders, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent March, 2023).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders – service number 6136, aged 33, of 19th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas & Susan Saunders, of 21 Cowper St., Randwick, Sydney, New South Wales.

Private S. C. M. Saunders 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.



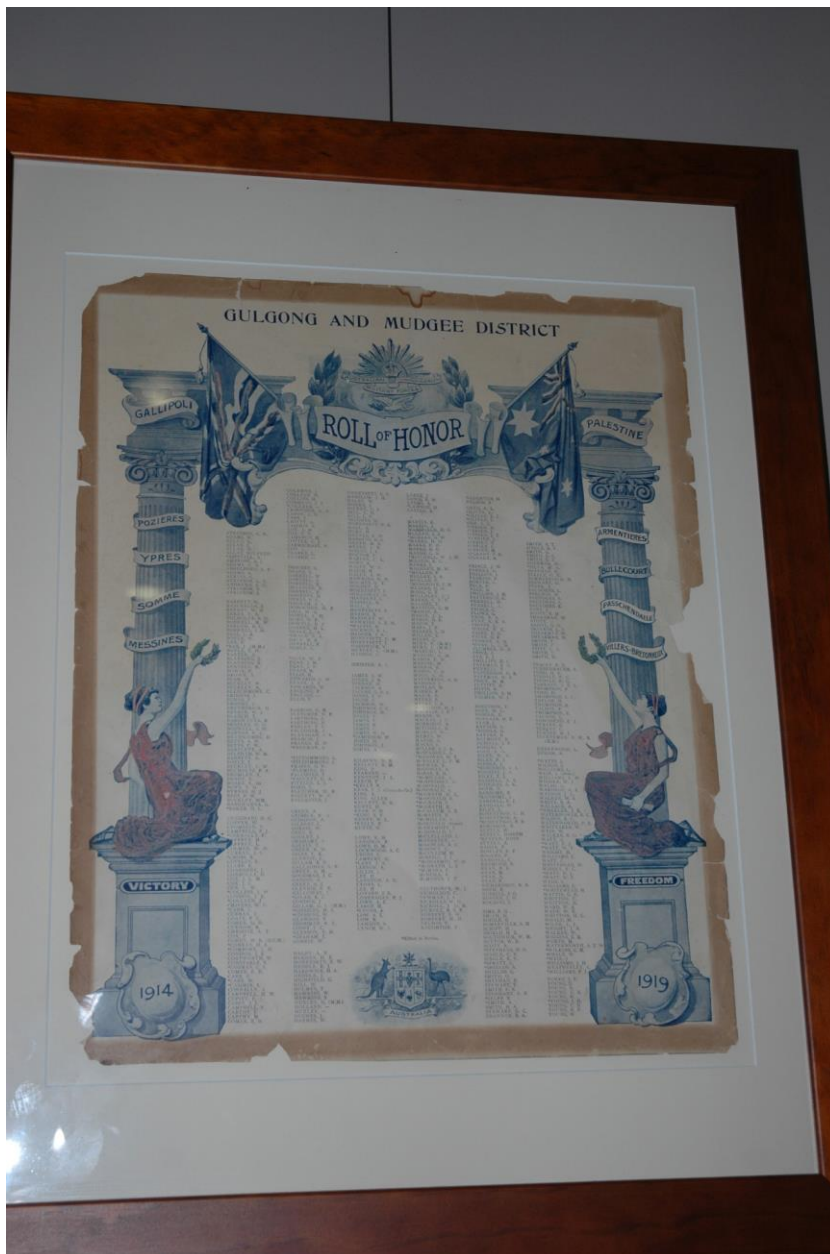
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

S. Saunders is remembered on the Gulgong Public School Honour Roll, located in Gulgong Pioneers Museum, 73 Herbert Street, Gulgong, New South Wales.

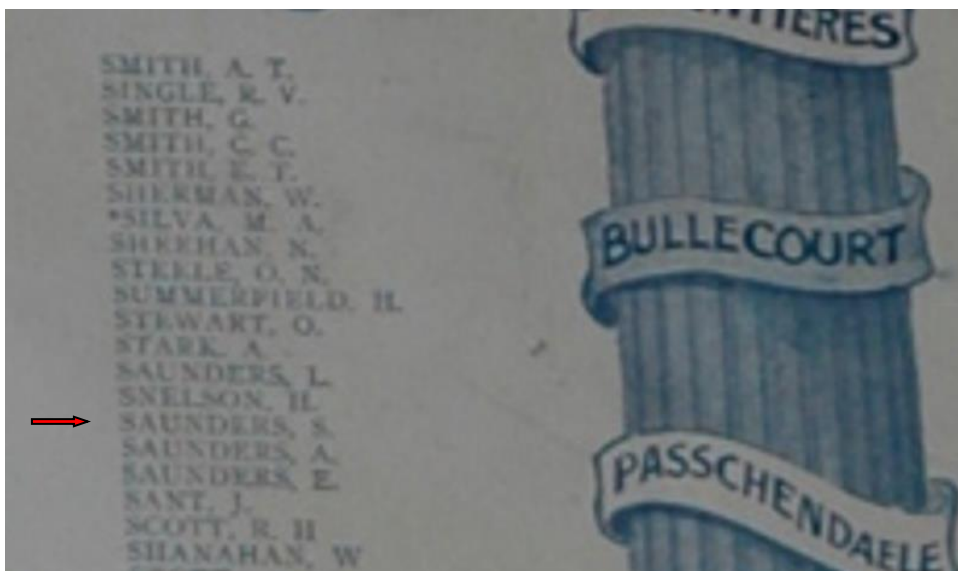


Gulgong Public School Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)

S. Saunders is remembered on the Gulgong and Mudgee District Roll of Honor, located in Club Mudgee (The Mudgee Soldiers Club Ltd), Mortimer & Perry Streets, Mudgee, NSW.



Gulgong and Mudgee District Roll of Honor (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)



S. Saunders is remembered on the Gulgong District Soldiers Memorial, located on Rotunda in Anzac Memorial Park, Medley & Fitzroy Streets, Gulgong, NSW.



Anzac Memorial Park



Gulgong District Soldiers Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)



Gulgong District Soldiers Memorial

(44 pages of Private Sydney Charles Moore Saunders' 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 Sydney Charles Moore Saunders

Newspaper Notices

A CIRCUS ACCIDENT

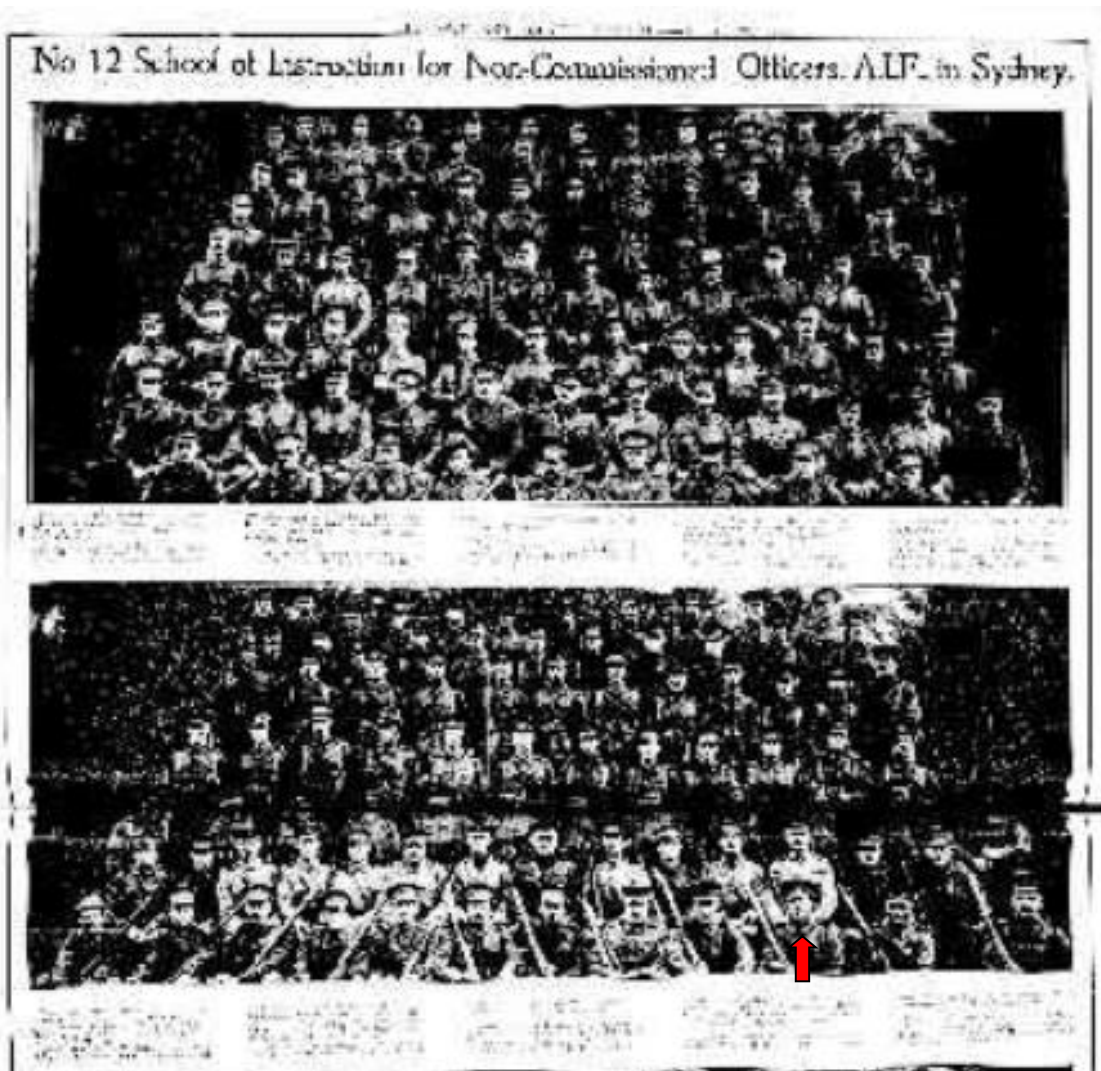
THE BENCHES GIVE WAY

GULGONG, Wednesday – Whilst Ashton's circus was performing last night, the seats gave way, and 300 people were precipitated to the ground. One boy, Sidney Saunders, had his leg broken, and another boy named Richards had his arm broken. Several were found unconscious and others severely injured. Great excitement prevailed for a while, but after a temporary lull in the programme the performance was continued.

(*The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, NSW – 19 May, 1898)

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY JOURNAL — August 23, 1916.

No 12 School of Instruction for Non-Commissioned Officers, A.I.F., in Sydney.



NEARING THE END

TWO CASUALTY LISTS

No. 446

WOUNDED

S. C. M. SAUNDERS, Moore Park

(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 25 November, 1918)

Corporal Sid Saunders

DIED IN CAMP

WHILE WAITING TO START FOR HOME

Word has been received to the effect that Corporal Sidney Saunders, son of Mr. T. Saunders, of Gulgong and Mrs. Saunders, of Moore Park, Sydney, had died. Corporal Sidney Saunders was a brother of Mr. W. A. Saunders, of the Post Office Hotel, Gulgong. Mr Saunders received the news of his brother's death on Saturday.

On the previous Wednesday the deceased soldier's mother received a cable from him stating that he was well and about to board a transport for home. On Thursday, however an official telegram contained the notification that Private Saunders was dangerously ill, and on Friday another cable contained the news of his death at Monte Video camp while awaiting to start for home.

Corporal Saunders was a native of Gulgong and was 34 years of age. When a lad he was for a time employed in the "Advertiser" Office, Gulgong, but he relinquished the printing trade and took up hairdressing, etc. - under Mr. Samuel Copeland. Eventually he went to Sydney and for many years was in the employ of Messrs. Craig and Aitken. He enlisted in 1915. He was attached to the infantry and while serving his country in France he received a serious gunshot wound in the face and leg. The late Corporal Saunders was married.

The mother of the fallen soldier lies in a low state at her home in Sydney.

Private E. Saunders, another son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Saunders, has been in hospital in England for a considerable time, suffering from the effects of gas.

(*Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative*, NSW – 16 January, 1919)

DEATHS

SAUNDERS – At Monte Video Camp, England, Private Sid Saunders, 19th Battalion, late of 389 Dowling Street, Moore Park.

(*The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, NSW – 16 January, 1919) & (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 16 January, 1919)

ROLL OF HONOUR

SAUNDERS – Died at Monte Video Hospital, England, January 3, 1919, Sid, beloved youngest son of Mr and Mrs T. Saunders, aged 33 years.

The call to arms was given,
Our son at once obeyed,
But ere the dawn of manhood peeped,
O God, Thou callest him away.

SAUNDERS – Died at Monte Video Hospital, England, January 3, 1919, Sid, beloved brother of Ethel, Will, and Ern. (O.A.S.). He sleeps in a hero's grave.

SAUNDERS – Died at Monte Video Hospital, England, January 3, 1919, Sid, beloved brother of Wal. And Evelyn and uncle of Eileen and Alf (O.A.S.).

SAUNDERS – Died at Monte Video Hospital, England, January 3, 1919, Sid, beloved brother of May and Tom Younger, and uncle of Doris, Cliff, Edna and Eunice.

SAUNDERS – Died at Monte Video Hospital, England, January 3, 1919, Sid, beloved brother of Illie and Ray Ranger and uncle of Jack.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 18 January, 1919)

N.S.W. CASUALTIES

The 456th list of casualties contains the names of 41 New South Wales men dead and many ill.....

DIED OTHER CAUSES

SAUNDERS, S.C.M., Moore Park

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 31 January, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our darling son and brother, Sid, 19th Batt., died at Monte Video, January 3, 1919.

Gone – what sadness in that word.

Inserted by his loving mother, father, sister and brother, Ethel and Ernest,

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our darling brother and uncle, Sid, 19th Batt., died at Monte Video, January 3, 1919.

We'll remember when the world forgets

Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, Wal. and Evelyn, also Alf. and Eileen.

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our darling brother and uncle, Sid, 19th Batt., died at Monte Video, January 3, 1919.

Sadly missed

Inserted by his loving brother and sister -in-law, Will and Alice, also Bill and Thelma.

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SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our darling brother and uncle, Sid, 19th Batt., died January 3, 1919.

Loving remembrances last for ever.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, May and Tom Younger, also Dos, Clif, Edna, and Eunice.

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our darling brother and uncle, Sid, 19th Batt., died at Monte Video, January 3, 1919.

Leaves of remembrance

Weave sweetest memories.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Illie and Ray Ranger, also Jack.

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our dear friend, Pte Sid Saunders, late 19th Batt., died at Monte Video, January 3, 1919. Inserted by his loving friends, Con and Phil Hopwood.

SAUNDERS – In sad memory of my dear pal, Pte S. Saunders, who died January 3, 1919 at Monte Video Camp Hospital, England, Inserted by E. Bible.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 January, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SAUNDERS – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, who passed away at Monte Video, England, January 3, 1919.

There is no death in God's great world.

The soul can never die:

And those who love do not depart,

But fondly linger nigh.

Inserted by his loving mother and father and sisters, Ethel, May, and Elma, and brothers, Ernest, Walter and William.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 January, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our dear son and brother, Sid. 19th Batt., who passed away January 3, 1919, at Monte Video, England. Loving remembrances last for ever. Inserted by his loving mother, father, sisters and brothers.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 January, 1922)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SAUNDERS – In loving remembrance of our dear son and brother, Sid. 19th Batt., who passed away at Monte Video, January 3, 1919.

Peace, perfect peace.

Inserted by his loving parents, sisters and brothers.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 3 January, 1924)

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 S. C. M. Saunders does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Sun Went Down

While Yet It Was Day

Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England

Weymouth became a depot for Australian forces in 1916 and 83 of the 147 First World War burials in Melcombe Regis Cemetery are of Australian servicemen; most of these graves are scattered in the old part. The 36 Second World War burials are in the extension. The cemetery also contains seven war graves of other nationalities and one non-war burial.

(Information from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00333

Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919

Identified, front row, left to right: unidentified; Butler; 5917 Private Edgar Allan Thornell, 22nd Battalion (Bn), died 9 August 1918; 1207 Corporal Jesse Adams Davis, 12th Bn, died 15 November 1918.

Back row: 5329 Private Frederick Albert Archer, Anzac Provost Company, died 6 November 1918; 5990 Private Albert Robert Blackmore, 12th Bn, died 2 November 1918; 11099 Driver Matthew Charles Percival Nettle, 6th Australian Field Artillery Brigade, died 22 October 1918; 3942 Private Walter Alick Weckman, 51st Bn, died 9 November 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00332

Some of the Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919

Identified, left to right: Captain Francis Arthur Deravin, Australian Army Medical Corps, died 8 July 1917 aged 41 years (large headstone); 138 Private Louis Nelson Matthews, 27th Battalion, 4 July 1917; 5082 Private Victor George Smith, 21st Battalion, died 13 November 1918.



(Photo courtesy of Steve Stewart)



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)





(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

Australians in Weymouth

What was life like for the Australians?

The Camp

Within the camp, there were educational facilities as well as medical rooms which helped to recover and re-educate the soldiers. There was help provided for soldiers suffering with physical or emotional impairments, such as massage rooms, psychotherapy training rooms and a remedial gymnasium. This strengthened the men to help them recover from their injuries. The educational aspects were diverse, allowing soldiers to pick a completely different profession for when they went back home. This included architecture, motor engineering, electrical and carpentry classes. Another option allowed the soldiers to be retrained in their previous professions which may have become more difficult, due to loss of limbs or new techniques that may have been created whilst they were at war.

The Town

Weymouth benefited hugely from the influx of Australian and New Zealand soldiers. One shop that still exists today is the Acutt's clothing store, which used to sell everything a soldier could possibly need for his uniform, from the whole jacket to just the buttons and epaulettes. As well as Acutt's, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia also opened up their own branch in Weymouth, for the soldiers to use during their time over here, which highlighted the permanence of their stay. There was also a monthly newsletter that circulated amongst the men, which was produced by local company Sherrens, which still operates on the Granby Industrial estate.

Special Events

The Australian recovery camps took special occasions very seriously, such as Christmas and Easter, to try and reduce the ache of home sickness and being away from their family and friends. Most camps tried to make their soldiers feel at home, with large celebrations with Christmas dinners and special guest performances at Easter. However, there were also other special events that gained press attention, such as the opening of the YMCA building, which used to be on Abbotshay Road. This provided help and welfare to the Australian soldiers, such as free food and blankets. There were fundraising days for the prisoner-of-war soldiers that had been captured during the fall of the Kut, who were mainly Dorset soldiers. From these fundraising days in Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport, the towns managed to raise £3,600 to help comfort the prisoners.

Entertainment

Entertainment was a highly important aspect of the soldiers' lives whilst they were in Weymouth. It kept the soldiers motivated and in high spirits whilst they were ill or injured, in hopes of helping to speed up their recovery. Throughout the camps in Weymouth, there was always something to watch or listen to, whether it was singing and acting companies who toured round the camps or at the Pavilion Theatre on the Esplanade. Sometimes, the soldiers even made their own entertainment, with marching bands and choirs being set up by the YMCA building in Westham. There were also balls and dances at the camps themselves and even a small trip to the Alexandra Garden along the Esplanade. Dating also became a significant part of the soldiers' lives, with many Weymouth women losing husbands and boyfriends at war. Finding comfort with the new soldiers at the camp, this led to many marriages between the two groups, and some migrating back to Australia with their new families, or staying here and leaving their families.

3

THESE BOYS BEARING ACUTT BROTHERS

AMERICAN OFFICERS UNIFORMS.

PAVILION THEATRE, THE ESPLANADE, WEYMOUTH.

#weyforward

The National Lottery

Images courtesy of Australian War Memorial, Newsletter originals published by Sherrens, Ltd. Weymouth



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

Australians in Weymouth

From Weymouth to Auswey - A Soldier's Récovery



During the First World War between 1914 and 1918, many injured soldiers who were mostly from Australia and New Zealand, were brought to Weymouth. They were known as ANZACS (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). They were placed in Repatriation and Rehabilitation camps in Westham, Littleton, Chickerell and Portland. This was in the hope of sending them back to the line of action in France or back home to Australia due to lack of fitness. Weymouth was picked as the place to set up camp, as it was seen as a relaxing seaside location. This would help to heal the sick and injured Australians who had been fighting in major battles of the war or on the Western Front between France and Belgium.



Although thousands of ANZACS passed through Weymouth during the First World War, there are some soldiers who unfortunately did not make it home. These soldiers are proudly buried in the Melcombe Regis cemetery. This is only 100 metres away from one of the major camps in Westham, with 142 soldiers buried in the cemetery, 83 from Australia and 59 from New Zealand. These graves are similar to some of the war memorials and graves placed around Europe, much like the Somme in France. Unfortunately, there are too many grave names to be displayed on this board, but they can be found on the website link at the bottom of this board.



Past and Present Westham

As you can see on the map of the Westham camp, many of the street names have an Australian connection, highlighting the history of the area. Residents of the housing estates, which are now built where the camp once stood, are still digging up remains of the camp, such as bullets or cooking equipment.



Modern Day Street Names	Westham Camp - December 1916
Queen Close	Soldiers Huts
Swine Road	Company Officers
Queensland Road	Regimental Institute
Kitchener Road	Minutemen Rifle Range
Corporation Road	Officers' Mess
Shark Road	Shower Block
Longcroft Road	Vehicle Shed, Mob Store
Wessex Road	Home Shelter
Parth Street	Cool Yard
Melcombe Street	Cook House
Adelaide Crescent	YMCA
Abbotsbury Road	Dung Pit
Sydney Street	Fire Hydrant
Shirecroft Road	





Photo of Private S. C. M. Saunders' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England.



(Photo Find a Grave – Janice Dennis)



(Photo from CWGC – David Warren)