

**Towcester Road Cemetery,  
Northampton, Northamptonshire**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**2975 PRIVATE**

**R. C. SCANES**

**53RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**6TH MAY, 1918 Age 23**

*Far Away*

*From Sight And Speech*

*But Not Too Far*

*For Thoughts To Reach*

## Reginald Clarence (Reg) SCANES

Reginald Clarence Scanes was born at Cooma, New South Wales in 1894 to parents Samuel and Margaret Scanes (nee Kirk).

Reginald Clarence Scanes was a 21 year old, single, Mail Driver from 7 Malcolm Street, Erskineville, New South Wales when he enlisted on 14th June, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2975 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Margaret Scanes of 7 Malcolm Street, Erskineville, New South Wales. Reginald Scanes stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Cadets at Sydney – Royal Artillery.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was posted to Dubbo Depot Battalion on 28th June, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Depot Signal Training Company at Kiama on 2nd July, 1916. Pte Scanes was transferred to “B” Company, 53rd Battalion on 29th September, 1916.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 26th October, 1916 with the 53rd Infantry Battalion, 7th 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 Reginald Clarence Scanes was marched in to 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was written up on 15th April, 1917 while at Hurdcott for “*Breaking away from parade before being dismissed.*” He was awarded 2 days C.B. (Confined to Barracks).

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was written up on 24th April, 1917 while at Codford, Wiltshire – “*1. Found at Codford without a pass & 2. Travelling in a railway train without a pass.*” He was awarded 4 days C.B. & forfeited 2 days’ pay.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 14th June, 1917 from 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire. He was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 15th June, 1917. Private Scanes was marched out to his Unit from 5th A.D.B.D. on 28th June, 1917 & was taken on strength of 53rd Battalion in France on 1st July, 1917 from 7th Reinforcements.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes proceeded on leave to UK on 24th February, 1918 & rejoined his Unit from leave on 12th March, 1918.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was wounded in action – Gassed on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 55th Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 – gassed shell then transferred to 55th Casualty Clearing Station. Private Scanes was transferred to Ambulance Train on 18th April, 1918 & admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, on 19th April, 1918 with gas poisoning. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship on St. Andrew on 24th April, 1918.

### 53rd Battalion

The 53rd spent the freezing winter of 1916-17 rotating in and out of trenches in the Somme Valley. In March 1917, the 53rd participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. It was spared the assault but did, however, defend gains made during the second battle of Bullecourt. Later in the year, the AIF's focus of operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium. The 53rd's major battle here was at Polygon Wood on 26 September.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This came in late March and the 5th Division moved to defend the sector around Corbie. The 14th Brigade took up positions to the north of Villers-Bretonneux and held these even when the village fell, threatening their flanks.

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

## War Diary – 53rd Battalion

*FRONT LINE- 17th April, 1918:*

*At 4.30 am the enemy artillery bombarded VILLERS-BRETONEUX and vicinity with gas shells and continued until about 9 am. Our support and reserve lines were also shelled very heavily with gas shells, and in all about 8,000 gas shells including YELLOW, BLUE and GREEN + of calibre from 77mm to 8 inch were used by the enemy in this intense bombardment. The wind was very favourable to enemy. All ranks wore their respirators for five hours. The following officers became gas casualties.....(9 Officer's names listed) and 155 O/R's.*

*By 7 pm the whole staff at B. H.Qrs had been evacuated and Major P. T. Roberts D.S.O. took command and Lt. Lamberton acted as Adjutant and handed over all stores to incoming unit. We were relieved by the 56th Battalion.....*

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was admitted to Northampton War Hospital, Duston, Northamptonshire, England on 25th April, 1918 – Gassed shell.

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes died at 4.30 pm on 6th May, 1918 at Barry Road Hospital, Northampton, Northamptonshire, England from Gas gangrene & septic Pneumonia.

A death for Reginald C. Scanes, aged 23, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Northampton, Northamptonshire, England.

The War Hospital, Duston contacted Administrative Headquarters on 6th May, 1918 to inform them that Private Scanes, 2975, 53rd Battalion had died. *“Relatives were not informed only address known is on a letter is patient's possession – Mabel 15 St. Mark's Rd., Nottinghill.”*

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was buried at 2 pm on 10th May, 1918 in Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton, Northamptonshire, England – Plot number 447. 3. 17368 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Reginald Clarence Scanes - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths which were sent by the Hospital Staff and Patients and friends. Gunn Carriage, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were present. Prior to the interment a service was held by the Rev. Birks in Christchurch, Northampton, a party of Australian soldier patients from the Barry Road V.A.D. Hospital, Northampton, followed the remains to the Cemetery. 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.*

Names of relatives and friends present at the funeral – FRIENDS - Mr & Miss Parkinson, 15 St. Mark's Road, Notting Hill, London.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Reginald Clarence Scanes contains a report by Informant - Lieutenant H. J. Barker, 53rd Battalion, A.I.F. Home address 81 Denison Street, Waverley. The report reads: *“Informant described Scanes as about 5 feet 3 inches high, rather stocky build, medium complexion, aged about 20 years. Scanes was a Signaller.*

*Informant states that on 17.4.18 the battalion was in supports at Villers Bretonneux. About 10 or 11 am Scanes and Informant were gassed at the same time. Scanes was not far away from Informant, and they saw each other at the Dressing Station soon afterwards, but neither of them was in a condition to speak to each other on account of the effects of the gas. They parted at the Dresssing Station and Informant heard afterwards that Scanes was dead.*

*Informant added that Scanes was in his Section and was one of his best men.”*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Reginald Clarence Scanes also contains a letter from Gertrude MacKinnell, 5 St. Paul's Terrace, Northampton which reads: *"I am very grieved to have to tell you that Pte R. Scanes 2975 53rd Battn. died at Barry Road Aux. Hpl., here about 5 o'clock this evening, He was admitted on April 25th suffering from gas poisoning and though very ill at first he became much better, and was not put on the danger list until late Saturday night last. I saw him every day except Sundays and he was well enough to sit up in bed and talk to me, although his eyes were very red and inflamed. On Saturday when I was with him about 5.30 pm, I thought him very ill, and sent him up some grapes and jelly, but they said it was a return of the gas. Later that evening Sister tells me he was put on the danger list, though they did not notify me. I do not go to the Hpls. on Sundays, and today when I went there I found the poor boy unconscious, and he passed away this evening. I have not heard yet whata arrangements are made about the funeral, but if he is buried here, there are several men from his Battn. who will like to attend, and of course I should go too. He was such a nice boy, though I had not much time to get to know him, and we are all so dreadfully upset about it."*

Private Reginald Clarence Scanes was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Scanes' father – Mr S. Scanes, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Reginald Clarence Scanes – service number 2975, aged 23, of 53rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Samuel and Margaret Scanes, of 7 Malcolm Street, Erskineville, New South Wales.

Private R. C. Scanes is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 158.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*



R. C. Scanes is remembered on the Erskineville Town Hall Honour Roll, located in Erskineville Town Hall, 104 Erskineville Road, Erskineville, Sydney, NSW.



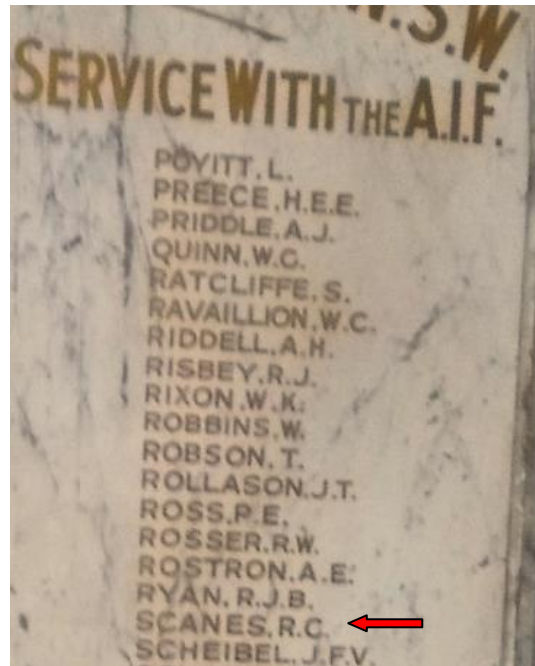
Erskineville Town Hall Honour Roll (Photos from Register of War Memorials in NSW)



R. C. Scanes is remembered on the Postmaster General's Department in NSW Honour Roll, located at the Westin Hotel, cnr Martin Plaza and George Street, Sydney, NSW (Formerly Sydney G.P.O.).



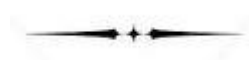
Postmaster General's Department in NSW Honour Roll (Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



**Postmaster General's Department in NSW Honour Roll**

(52 pages of Private Reginald Clarence Scanes' 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*







AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ART90956

**Private Reginald Clarence Scanes** (*Artwork by Murray Kirkland*)



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

SCANES – France, May 6, 1918, died from gas poisoning, Sig. R. C. Scanes. Missed by his comrades at G.P.O. stables.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 29 May, 1918)



## The Men In The Trenches Need Relief



SIG. R. C. SCANES,  
Erskineville.  
Died of Gas Gangrene.

(Sydney Mail, NSW – 10 July, 1918)

### IN MEMORIAM

#### On Active Service

SCANES – In loving memory of Signaller Reginald C. Scanes, 53rd Batt., who died at Northampton, England, from gas gangrene, on May 6, 1918, aged 23 years.

Far away from all who loved him,  
In a hero's grave he lies  
And, though his body resteth,  
His memory never dies.

Inserted by his parents, brothers and sister Anna.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear brother and uncle, Signaller Reginald Clarence (Reg) Scanes, 53rd Battalion, died of gas gangrene, England, May 6, 1918. Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, nephew and nieces, Sam and Beat. Scanes and family, Kogarah.

SCANES – In loving memory of Signaller Reginald C. Scanes, 53rd Batt., who died at Northampton, England from gas gangrene, on May 6, 1918, aged 23 years and 7 months.

Far away from sight or speech,  
But not too far our thought to reach.

Inserted by his fond sister, Mabel I. Scanes.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Reg., who died of gas poisoning in England, May 6, 1918.

His duty done.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Lila and C. Pettingell.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear friend, Reginald Scanes, who died from gas, May 6, 1918.

He gave his life for us all.

Inserted by Mr and Mrs McKinnon and Florrie and Alice.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1919)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private Reginald C. Scanes, who died with gas gangrene in England, May 6, 1918.

A beautiful memory left behind –

A duty nobly done.

Inserted by his parents, brother and sister, Albert and Anna.

SCANES – In loving memory of my dear brother, Pte Reg. C. Scanes, who died from gas gangrene in England, May 6, 1918, aged 23 years. Inserted by his fond sister, Mabel I. Scanes.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Signaller R. C. Scanes, died in England, May 6, 1918.

No one he loved was by his side

To hear his last faint sigh.

Or whisper just one loving word

Before he closed his eyes.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Lila and C. Pettingell.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1920)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In memory of our son and brother, Reginald, Signaller, 53rd Battalion, who died of wounds in England, May 6, 1918.

Sunshine passes , shadows fall

Love and remembrance outlasts all.

Inserted by his parents, brothers and sisters.

SCANES – In loving memory of my dear brother, Signaller Reg. C. Scanes, died of wounds, England, May 6, 1918.

Over the sea our sad thoughts roam

To where our dear brother sleeps far from home.

Inserted by his sister, Mabel I. Scanes.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Signaller Reg. C. Scanes, died Northampton Hospital, May 6, 1918. Inserted by L. and C. Pettingell.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1921)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In memory of our son and brother, Reginald, who died of wounds in England, May 6, 1918.

Loving memories last for ever.

Inserted by his parents, brothers and sister, Anna.

SCANES – In loving memory of my brother, Reginald, who died of wounds in England, May 6, 1918. Inserted by his fond sister, Mabel Scanes.

SCANES – In loving memory of Reg., died from gas, Northampton, England, May 5, 1918. Inserted by his sister and brother-in-law, L. and C. Pettingell.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1922)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In loving memory of our son and brother, Reginald C. Scanes, who died in England May 6, 1918.

Inserted by his parents, brothers and sister, Anna.

SCANES – In loving memory of Reg. C. Scanes, died in England May 6, 1918, gas gangrene. Inserted by his fond sister, Mabel I. Scanes.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 7 May, 1923)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In loving memory of our son and brother, Reginald, died May 6, 1918, in England. Memory like the ivy clings. Inserted by his parents, brothers and sister, Anna.

SCANES – In fond memory of my brother, Reginald, died May 6, 1918, England. Inserted by his sister, Mabel.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1924)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **On Active Service**

SCANES – In memory of our son and brother, Reginald, died in England May 6, 1918. Inserted by his parents, brothers and sister, Anna.

SCANES - In fond memory of my brother, Reginald, died in England May 6, 1918. Inserted by his sister, Mabel Ileen Scanes.

SCANES – In loving memory of Reg., died at Northampton Hospital, England, May 6, 1918. Inserted by Lila and C. Pettingell.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1925)*

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

SCANES – In memory of our son and brother, Reginald, who died in England May 6, 1918. Inserted by his parents, brothers and sisters.

SCANES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Reg., died of gas, Northampton, England, May 6, 1918. Inserted by Lila and C. Pettingell.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 6 May, 1926)*

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### 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 R. C, Scanes does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*Far Away From Sight And Speech  
But Not Too Far For Thoughts To Reach*



## **Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton, Northamptonshire, England**

Northampton (Towcester Road) Cemetery contains 116 First World War burials and 17 from the Second World War, most of which form a combined war graves plot to the left of the chapel. The cemetery also contains five non-war service burials and three Czech war graves.

*(Information & photos from CWGC)*



**Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton**





Photo of Private R. C. Scanes' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton, Northamptonshire, England.



*(Photo from Great War Forum - Biffo)*



**Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton**

*(Photo from CWGC)*