

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2052 PRIVATE

J. SHAW

18TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

5TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 32

Thy Will Be Done

John SHAW

John Shaw (junior) was born at Woodford Island, Maclean, Clarence River, New South Wales in 1883 to parents John & Mary Shaw (nee Fraser).

John Shaw attended Maclean Superior Public School, New South Wales.

John Shaw (senior) died on 2nd September, 1898 at Woodford Island, Maclean, New South Wales.

Mary Fraser, mother of John Shaw, died on 27th May, 1900 at Maclean, New South Wales.

John Shaw was a 31 year old, single, Farmer from Woodford Island, Maclean, New South Wales when he enlisted on 23rd July, 1915 at Liverpool, Sydney, New South Wales with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Presbyterian & his next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs M. Harrison, Brushgrove, Clarence River, New South Wales. John Shaw stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with Volunteer Scottish Rifles (Company disbanded).

Private John Shaw was posted to 3rd Reinforcements of 20th Battalion.

Private John Shaw, Service number 2052, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Runic (A54)* on 9th August, 1915 with the 20th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements.

20th Battalion

The 20th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. A sprinkling of the 20th'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. The 20th left Australia in late June, trained in Egypt from late July until mid-August, and on 22 August landed at ANZAC Cove.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private John Shaw was transferred to 18th Battalion from 20th Battalion. He was taken on strength of "A" Company, 18th Battalion at Gallipoli Peninsula on 29th September, 1915 from 3rd Reinforcements of 20th Battalion.

Private John Shaw disembarked at Alexandria ex Mudros on 9th January, 1916 (after the evacuation from Gallipoli).

Private John Shaw proceeded from Alexandria on 18th March, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th March, 1916.

Private John Shaw was written up for a Crime at Moascar – Overstaying Leave from noon on 4th March, 1916 to noon on 7th March, 1916 & Drunkenness. This was admonished on 8th March, 1916 by Major G. Murphy & he forfeited 4 days' pay.

Private John Shaw reported sick on 15th April, 1916. He was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance at Fort Romfu on 15th April, 1916 with Influenza. He was transferred to 2nd Australian Divisional Rest Station on 16th April, 1916 & rejoined his Unit on 24th April, 1916.

Private John Shaw reported sick again on 26th April, 1916. He was admitted to 7th Australian Field Ambulance on 27th April, 1916 with Influenza then transferred to Divisional Rest Station on 28th April, 1916 – P.U.O (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin). Private Shaw was transferred & admitted to 8th Casualty Clearing Station on 6th May, 1916 with Influenza & Debility. He was transferred to No. 18 Ambulance Train on 6th May, 1916 & admitted to Australian Vol. Hospital on 7th May, 1916. Private Shaw embarked for England on 17th May, 1916 on Hospital Ship *St. Dennis*.

Private John Shaw was admitted to Hospital in England (Note: no date or hospital name recorded). He was transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital in England on 26th May, 1916 with Influenza.

Base Records contacted Mrs M. Harrison, Bushgrove, Clarence River, NSW, next of kin of Private Shaw, on 25th May, 1916 to advise that No. 2052 Private J. Shaw, 18th Battalion was in Hospital at Colchester, England suffering from Influenza & Debility.

Maggie Harrison, Edenbank, Brushgrove, wrote to Base Records on 10th July, 1916 stating she had received a cable message from London asking her to cable £15 to Commonwealth Bank London for Private 2052 Shaw & *"Which I do not think is genuine. He is ill in Hospital at Colchester & I don't think he would require such a sum of money as he draws 2/- per day of his pay...."* The letter continued with Maggie Harrison asking the advice of Base Records on how she could contact the Military Authorities."

Base Records replied to Mrs M. Harrison on 26th July, 1916 advising *"... this office is unable to state whether the cable you have received is genuine, but should you decide to send the money, in order to obviate any chance of fraud, it is suggested that you transmit same through the Commonwealth Bank, at the same time asking that a request for identification be included."*

Private John Shaw was transferred on 21st July, 1916 to Australian Convalescent Hospital, Woodcote Park, Epsom recovering from Influenza.

Private John Shaw was transferred to 5th Training Battalion on 15th August, 1916 from No. 1 Command Depot. He proceeded overseas to France on 5th September, 1916 from 5th Training Battalion. Private Shaw was marched in to 2nd Australian Divisional Base at Etaples, France on 6th September, 1916 & rejoined 18th Battalion in the Field on 14th September, 1916.

Private John Shaw was A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from 9 pm on 3rd December, 1916 until 2 pm on 4th December, 1916. He was awarded a forfeiture of 2 days' pay on 5th December, 1916.

Private John Shaw reported sick on 26th June, 1917 & was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance with Bronchitis. He was transferred to No 7 Ambulance Train on 26th June, 1917 & was admitted to 8th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 29th June, 1917. Private Shaw embarked for England on 9th July, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Kalyan*.

18th Battalion

The 18th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. It left Australia in early May, trained in Egypt from mid-June until mid-August, and on 22 August landed at ANZAC Cove.

The battalion had not been ashore a day when it was committed to the last operation of the August Offensive ' the attack on Hill 60 ' which lasted until 29 August and cost it 50 per cent casualties. For the rest of the campaign the 18th played a purely defensive role, being primarily responsible for holding Courtney's Post. The last members of the battalion left Gallipoli on 20 December.

After further training in Egypt, the 18th Battalion proceeded to France. Landing there on 25 March 1916, it took part in its first major battle at Pozieres between 25 July and 5 August. The battalion returned to the Pozieres trenches for a second time in late August. After a spell in a quieter sector of the front in Belgium, the 2nd Division including the 5th Brigade, came south again in October. The 18th Battalion was spared from having to mount an attack across the quagmire that the Somme battlefield had become, but did have to continue manning the front through a very bleak winter.

In 1917 the 18th was involved in the follow-up of German forces during their retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and was involved in some particularly heavy fighting around Warlencourt in late February. The battalion took part in three major battles before the year was out: the second Bullecourt (3-4 May) in France; and Menin Road (20-22 September) and Poelcappelle (9-10 October) in Belgium.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private John Shaw was admitted to 1st London General Hospital, England on 10th July, 1917 with Catarrh T.B. He was transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield on 1st August, 1917.

A Medical Report was completed on 6th August, 1917 at 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield on Private John Shaw who it was recorded was aged 46 & a Butcher. His disability was listed as Pulmonary Tuberculosis which had originated in France with B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) on 27th July, 1917. *"Patient states: Had been in bad health since Xmas 1916, had cold & pains in chest. Lost his voice three or four times since Xmas. Pains across front of chest and down right axilla. Expectoration has been streaked with blood at time, not for the past month. Very little expectoration now. Now feels better but still weak and a little pain in chest. Never any illness before he joined the Army. No chest trouble in family."* His present condition was listed as *"Looks rather more than his age. Thin; says he has lost a stone in weight since Xmas. Still pain in chest, chiefly in the rt nipple, some under shoulder blades R & L...."* The Medical Officer in charge of the case believed that Private Shaw's disability was due to Active Service & exposure & that he should be discharged as permanently unfit. The Medical Board agreed on 7th August, 1917 that Private John Shaw was permanently unfit for General Service & permanently unfit for Home Service.

Private John Shaw was discharged from 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield to Furlo from 9th August, 1917 to 23rd August, 1917 & was then to report to Weymouth.

Base Records contacted Mrs M. Harrison, Bushgrove, Clarence River, NSW, next of kin of Private Shaw, on 23rd July, 1917 that Private J. Shaw had been admitted to 1st London General Hospital on 10th July, 1917 suffering from Catarrh Tenitraent.

Private John Shaw was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset, England on 20th August, 1917.

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 & Dorset. Later Training & Convalescing Units were combined under the one Command Depot.

Private John Shaw was admitted to Camp Hospital at Monte Video, Dorset on 16th September, 1917 dangerously ill – N.Y.D. (not yet determined)

Base Records contacted Mrs M. Harrison, Bushgrove, Clarence River, NSW, next of kin of Private Shaw, on 21st September, 1917 to advise that Private John Shaw was dangerously ill. Mrs Harrison was advised on the same date that Private Shaw had been admitted to Monte Video Camp Hospital, Weymouth, England on 16th September with an illness not yet diagnosed – dangerous.

Private John Shaw died on 5th October, 1917 at Monte Video Camp Hospital, Weymouth, Dorset, England from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

A death for John Shaw, aged 46, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Weymouth, Dorset, England.

Private John Shaw was buried on 8th October, 1917 in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England – Plot number II. C. 3175 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private John Shaw - Coffin was Elm with brass fittings. Chaplain A. H. Mitchell officiated at the Funeral & wrote *"The deceased soldier was well known to me. I visited him frequently during his illness and was with him just prior to his death. He bore his illness with patience and was highly regarded by his comrades."*

Private John Shaw requested in his Will dated 18th July, 1915 that Edward James Harrison, his brother-in-law be appointed as Trustee & Executor & that all his property both real & personal be converted into money & to be divided equally between all his nieces and nephews.

The Postmaster General's Department, General Post Office, Sydney, NSW wrote to Base Records on 26th November, 1917 with the following: *"I have to intimate it was reported in the 355th Casualty List of 22nd instant that "Private John Shaw, Bushgrove (previously reported ill, 2nd occasion, dangerously)", died of illness on the 5th ultimo. Will you kindly advise me the date of birth, occupation and next-of-kin of the deceased soldier."*

The District Finance Officer, 2nd Military District, forwarded a letter to Base Records on 22nd December, 1919 from E. J. Harrison, Bushgrove, Clarence River, NSW who was requesting a Death Certificate for No. 2052 Private John Shaw.

Base Records replied to E. J. Harrison on 31st December, 1919, enclosing, as requested, a Certificate of report of Death of the late No. 2052, Private J. Shaw, 18th Battalion.

Base Records contacted Mrs M. Harrison, Bushgrove, Clarence River, NSW, on 8th October, 1920 advising that she was registered on the records of the late No. 2052 Private J. Shaw, 18th Battalion, as the next-of-kin but desired to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & was specifically asked if his father and mother were still living, or if he had any brothers (stating the eldest) or any older sisters 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.

Base Records wrote to Headquarters, 2nd Military District on 26th November, 1920 advising : *"On the 8th October last a communication was forwarded to Mrs Maggie Harrison, Brushgrove, Clarence River, NSW, requesting her to advise me whether the parents of the late No. 2052 Private John Shaw, 18th Battalion, are still living, and if so, to furnish me with their names and address; of id they are already deceased to let me know the names and addresses if the late soldier's eldest brother and eldest sister. As no reply has so far been received I shall be obliged if you will endeavour to obtain the information required and advise me as soon as possible as it is desired to dispose of the 1914/15 Star and other War Medals etc., issuable on account of the abovementioned late soldier's service."*

The Provost Marshalls Office, 2nd Military District, Victoria Barracks, Sydney, wrote to The Inspector General of Police, Sydney, on 3rd September, 1921 asking: *"Will you please instruct the Brushgrove Police to interview Mr James Harrison, Farmer, Brushgrove, and ascertain from him if the Late No2052 Private John Shaw 18th Batn was a married man, or had any children, and if his parents are still living, and if not who is the person entitled to received the war medals etc awarded in consequence of his military service. The following is the order in which the medals etc are to be distributed, unless specifically bequeathed by will:- Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father , mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister.....If the person who is lawfully entitled to receive the war medals etc is residing in that district the attached undertaking should be duly filled in and signed and returned to this office."*

Constable 2nd Class Thomas Hinchey, No. 9728, Brushgrove reported back to Inspector General of Police on 16th September, 1921: *"I beg to report having interviewed Mr James Harrison, of Brushgrove, and ascertained that the late No 2052 Private Shaw was a single man, and that his parents have been dead some time. The above named deceased has two sister living in Sydney, No (1) Mrs H. Mc Swan, Address Rosalyn Street, Bellevue Hill, Woollahra, No (2) Mrs J. D. Cameron, No 4, North Street, Leichardt. Number of Mc Swan's house not known."*

Mrs Annie McSwan, "Benoni", Rosslyn St, Woollahra, Sydney, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 19th May, 1921: *"I am writing you in reference to next of kin medals, I am the eldest sister of No 2052 Private John Shaw, of A Co, of 18th Battalion, who died on 5th Sept 917, after two years of service. My sister Mrs Maggie Harrison who was left as next of kin, has died since, am I not entitled to a medal as next of kin. Thanking you very kindly for any trouble I may give you. P.S. The deceased soldier was our only brother. Myself and Mrs C. Cameron both widows."*

Mrs Annie McSwan, "Benoni", Rosslyn St, Woollahra, Sydney, wrote to Base Records on 22nd August, 1921: *"I am very sorry for any delay or inconvenience that may have been caused by not hearing from the next-of-kin of my late brother No 2052 Private John Shaw. The papers no doubt went to my brother in law who's wife was the next of kin during her life time but she has died since my brother & that is how I am now his next of kin she drew his allotment moneys &c & I never heard anything of any of those papers so you will understand I am not in fault, I am only pleased if I could assist in ay way to mask the sacred ___ where my only brothers mortal remains were laid to rest. I am not in a position financially for any expense but shall be willing to throw in my widows mite any time thanking you kindly."*

The Provost Marshalls Office, 2nd Military District, Victoria Barracks, Sydney, wrote to A.I.F. Branch, Medal Section & Base Records on 24th September, 1921 regarding the disposal of War Medals and Decorations awarded to the late No 2052 Private John Shaw 18th Battalion A.I.F.: *"I beg to report that I interviewed Mrs Annie Mc Swan who resides at "Benoni" Rosslyn Street, Bellvue Hill, Woollahra, and she stated that she is the eldest surviving sister of*

the above mentioned deceased soldier, and that both his parents pre-deceased him, and that he was an only son. He was a single man and had no children, and did not specially bequeath the war medals etc in his will. She is desirous of obtaining the War Medals etc of her late brother and duly signed the attached undertaking."

A statement was signed on 23rd September, 1921 by Annie McSwan which reads: *"I Annie McSwan residing at "Benoni" Rosslyn St, Bellevue Hill, Woollahra, do hereby desire to make claim for any War Medals and Decorations awarded to my late brother No 2052 Pt John Shaw (deceased) and if given into my custom I hereby undertake to carefully preserve same and will produce them to the Military Authorities upon demand should any person with a prior claim appear."*

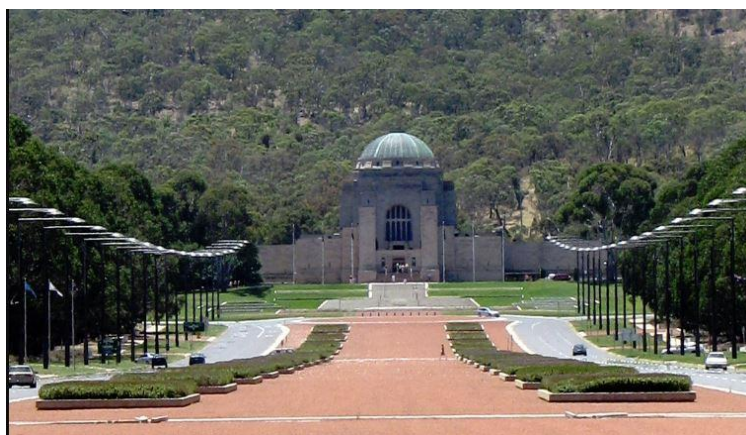
Private John Shaw was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Shaw's sister - Mrs A. McSwan, as the closest next-of-kin. (Victory Medal & British War Medal were signed for by Annie McSwan on 12th April, 1923. Plaque signed for by Annie McSwan on 17th November, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Shaw – service number 2052, aged 32, of 18th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of John & Mary Shaw.

Private J. Shaw is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 87.



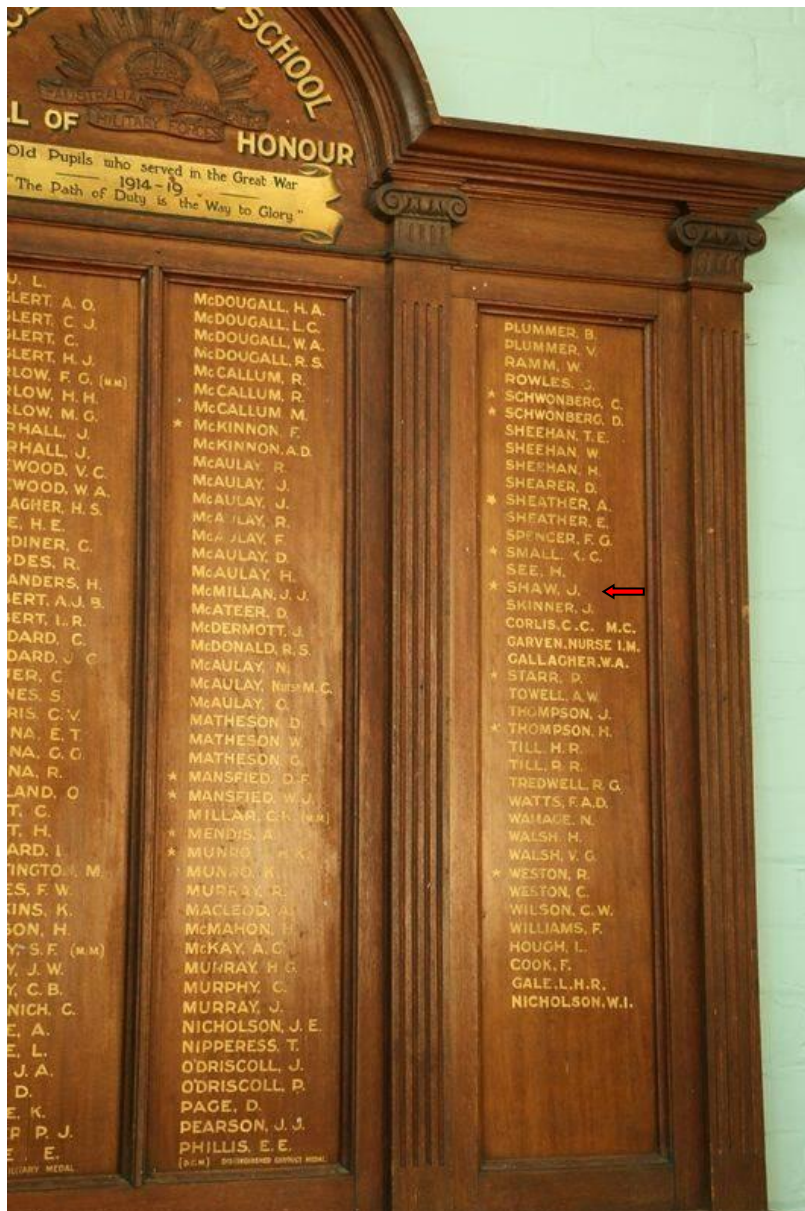
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



J. Shaw is remembered on the Maclean Public School Roll of Honour, located in Maclean Public School, Woodford Street, Maclean, NSW.



Maclean Public School Roll of Honour (Photos from Monument Australia – John Huth)



J. Shaw is remembered on the Maclean Cenotaph, located at Short & River Streets, Maclean, NSW.



Maclean Cenotaph (Photos from Monument Australia)



J. Shaw is remembered on the Brushgrove District Soldiers Helpers League Roll of Honour, located in Brushgrove-Tyndale Hall, Lot 7010 Clarence Street, Brushgrove, NSW.



Brushgrove District Soldiers Helpers League Roll of Honour

(Photo from War Memorials Register of NSW – Peter Hay)

(79 pages of Private John Shaw'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

FROM THE FRONT

SOLDIERS' LETTERS

PTE J. SHAW

Private J. Shaw, writing to Mr. McAulay, Warregah, from Epsom, England, says:— I suppose you have heard that we have landed in France. We were all pleased to hear that we were being sent there. We were all full of the desert. We got a very good reception when we landed at Marseilles, but did not get a chance to have a look at the city. We camped about a mile out that night and boarded the train next morning, which was our home for five days and nights; quite a long train ride, don't you think? We were billeted at a place called Thenis for about a week and given a demonstration of gas and liquid fire. Of course, we all have gas helmets and eye glasses, for a gas they use affects the eyes. The helmets are a success, but it takes a while to get used to them. The gas is like a fog, and moves along very slowly, and keeps working down to the ground; that is why it is so deadly when it gets into a trench. The liquid fire is an awful turnout and would frighten the mischief out of one on first sight. The flames go as high as 30 feet, but, thank goodness, they can't use it much, as they can't keep it low down. The flame has a tendency to rise; so all you have to do when they attack with it is to lie down behind the parapet and it passes right over you, leaving a dense black smoke. We had a good lot of marching when we left the train, but we were all in fair condition and stood it very well. The last half day we came under machine gun and shell fire. That was the reception the square heads gave us. After a few days' well-earned rest we went over to our post in the trenches, which were in a most deplorable state, up to your knees in water, at times and wet all the time. It is a terrible place for rain, and we felt it after coming from a hot place like Egypt. We relieved the Northumberland Fusiliers. We are not far from Armentieres, and it would make you feel sorry to see the state of buildings around here, some of them shelled to the ground. You will be surprised to hear that I have been in hospital for a few weeks. I had the luck to get a dose of influenza and had to be sent to Bologne, where I had to lay in bed for two weeks. I was pretty crook, I tell you. I thought I was going to roll my marble in, but thank goodness, I am getting on splendidly now and will, no doubt, be back in the firing line long before you get this letter. I was surprised when the doctor told me I was being sent to England, but it was a very pleasant surprise, for I was always wishing to have a trip to Scotland, which I will visit when I get my furlough. I have been at Harefield Convalescent Home. It is an Australian home, run by Australian sisters, and the property is owned by a New South Wales Squatter. I left there for Epsom yesterday morning and arrived here about midday. The trip through was beautiful. I had the pleasure of having a run on the tube railway line; it is a wonderful piece of work. I have had a few runs to London; it is some city. No doubt you could live your lifetime there and not see it all; you could put your little Maclean in one of the big buildings and not see it. I suppose you have read a lot about the big naval battle. It was a smash for the first appearance of the German fleet, but they did not stand their ground too long, and were glad to get back into port. They are boasting of a great naval victory, but they have no victory, if they think they have; there is no doubt it was a great loss of good lives and money, but I think we are in a better position than they are. The sinking of Lord Kitchener's boat was another rotten piece of luck. It cast a great gloom over England and everyone is in mourning for a week; I hope that he may come to light, but it looks very much as if he has met his doom.

(The Grafton Argus and Clarence River General Advertiser, NSW – 18 October, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LIST NO. 239

NEW SOUTH WALES

SICK

Pte J. Shaw, Brushgrove

(The Maitland Weekly Mercury, NSW – 11 August, 1917)

CASUALTY LIST

The 355th casualty list....

Died of wounds and other causes – Private J. Shaw (Brushgrove)

(*Daily Examiner*, Grafton, NSW – 22 November, 1917)

BRUSHGROVE HONOR BOARD

SIXTY-SEVEN NAMES

THE UNVEILING CEREMONY

The unveiling of the Brushgrove Honor Board on Saturday evening last was an imposing ceremony. The Literary Institute hall, which was brilliantly decorated with patriotic insignia, was packed to the doors. Stirring patriotic addresses were a feature of the function, which was marked with the warmest fervour. Cr. John Lattimore (President of the Soldiers' Helpers' League) presided and the audience at the outset sang the National Anthem, Miss Gertie Hender son officiating at the piano. The children from the Cowper Public and Convent Schools and Lower Cold stream Public School sang "Bind the Empire," Miss Kitty Garrity accompanying. The children, who had been coached by Rev. Father Fagan and Mr. McLachlan, were prettily attired for the occasion and were accorded an ovation.

The unveiling ceremony was performed by Cr. Lattimore, who expressed his keen sense of the great honor conferred upon him.

The Board is of Australian maple, and of a fine design, triple panelled. At head of the board is inscribed "Brushgrove District Soldiers' Helpers' League — in honor of our brave boys who have responded to the call of duty." The inscription is surmounted by the Australian flag and the Union Jack. The names were read out to a tensely silent audience by Mr. D. Mc Lachlan (hon. sec.), as follows: — H. R. Paine, M. R. S. Paine, H. W. Crouch, A. G. Inmon, E. W. G. Inmon, L. R. Sellers, E. J. Sellers, E. C. Hooker, G. Hooker, A. Gillies, D. Gillies, H. Doust, R. Doust, A. C. Doust, E. M. Dougherty J. L. Dougherty, W. R. Lee, R. Lee, C. E. Lee, H. Piercey, C. Piercey, W. O. Currie, H. H. Smith, C. Pullen, E. R. Pullen, J. W. Pennington, R. H. G. Thompson, E. H. Llewellyn, U. R. R. McLucas. D. B. McPhee, J. S. Connor, F. C. Hughes, M. H. Johnson, C. W. Marsh, F. J. Yaldon, S. F. Beaumont, W. H. Cooper, F. McPhee, M. G. Ensby, H. J. Cowling, R. L. Clare, H. V. Viccars, C. Herkes, J. Dick, P. Johnson, E. J. Hill, E. J. Hadley, R. McGregor, H. Eldershaw, A. G. Bailey, V. M. Archer, J. J. Gard, W. A. Mc Gregor, A. V. Bellamy, W. W. Smith, C. Henderson, R. C. Lattimore, H. Hughes, W. Wills, F. H. Fitt, N. C. Munro, C. W. Hayward, **J. Shaw**, J. Byrnes, G. Young, P. MacGovern, R. Rinkin.

Mr. Lattimore movingly referred to the heroes who had passed to the Great Beyond and said to the mothers and fathers assembled how glorious it was to have boys so brave, so gentle manly and so dutiful. He trusted the people of Brushgrove would remember their heroes for ever and ever. (Applause).

The Rev. Father Fagan delivered a profound and eloquent address and this was followed by the Rev. J. E. Chapman's stirring rendering of "Our Flag Shall Never Come Down," Miss Vera Paine playing the accompaniment. As an encore he sang "Our Flag."

Ven. Archdeacon Tress (Alstonville) contributed a pointed patriotic speech and after a song, "Our Flag," by the children, the Rev. J. E. Chapman addressed the assembly, pointing the moral of the song he had sung earlier, "Our Flag Shall Never Come Down."

Cr. D. L. Archer, J.P., on behalf of the parents of the heroes named on the honor roll, thanked the Soldier's Helpers' League for the fine memorial erected and also returned thanks for the boys at the front.

The chairman announced receipt of news that Privates H. Jr. Cowling and . H. H. Smith, two boys whose names were enrolled, had just been wounded, the latter spending three hours on a raft in the English Channel after a torpedo disaster. He thanked all who had rendered able assistance towards making the function a success, including Father Fagan and Mr. D. Mc Lachlan for tutoring the children singers.

Archdeacon Tress moved a vote of thanks to the chairman and the proceeding ended with cheers for the King and the boys at the front. The board was the work of H. H. Sanders, Grafton.

(The Grafton Argus and Clarence River General Advertiser, NSW – 8 June, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOR

SHAW – On 5th October, at Monte Video Camp Hospital, Weymouth, England, from illness after long service in Gallipoli and France, No. 2052, Private John Shaw, aged 33 years and 10 months.

(Daily Examiner, Grafton, NSW – 24 November, 1917)

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 J. Shaw does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Thy Will Be Done

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.

THE Y.M.C.A. BUILDING

#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, Littlehampton, Chichester 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 |
| Melbourne Street | Cook House |
| Adelaide Crescent | YMCA |
| Abbotsbury Road | Dung Pit |
| Sydney Street | Fire Hydrant |
| Shirecroft Road | |





www.westhamcommunitygroup.co.uk

Photo of Private J. Shaw's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England.



(Photo courtesy of Allan Wood)