

**Paddington Old Cemetery,  
Kilburn, Greater London, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**1167 SAPPER**

**C. M. SHERIFF**

**AUSTRALIAN MINING & BORING COMPANY**

**23RD FEBRUARY, 1919 Age 47**

## Charles MacKern SHERIFF

Charles MacKern Sheriff was born on 2nd November, 1872 at Broadstairs, Kent, England to parents Charles Edward and Isabel Dorothea Sheriff (nee MacKern). His birth was registered in the district of Thanet, Kent, in the December quarter of 1872 as "Shirrefs."

According to information provided by his brother for the Roll of Honour - Charles MacKern Sheriff came to Australia when he was 4 years old.

Charles MacKern Sheriff attended All Saints Grammar School, St. Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria.

According to information provided by his brother for the Roll of Honour - Charles MacKern Sheriff had served with the Imperial Bushmen of New South Wales in the South African War. He had been awarded a Medal & 3 clasps for his Service. (Charles MacKern Sheriff stated on his Attestation Papers for World War 1 that he had served with 1st NSW Bushmen in Boer War & had been discharged at end of War after 2 years' service.)

Charles MacKern Sheriff was a 44 year old, single, Well Sinker (listed by his brother on information form for the Roll of Honour as a Prospector & Mine Owner) from Onslow, Western Australia when he enlisted on 27th November, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1167 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Sheriff, Rugby Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne, Victoria. Charles MacKern Sheriff had lost the middle finger from his right hand.

Charles MacKern Sheriff was posted to Mining Corps on 27th November, 1915 with the rank of Sapper. He was promoted to the rank of Provisional Corporal on 29th December, 1915 then Sergeant on 6th February, 1916.

Sergeant Charles MacKern Sheriff (surname as per Embarkation Roll) embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Ulysses* (A38) on 20th February, 1916 with the Mining Corps – No. 3 Company.

Sergeant Charles MacKern Sheriff was reduced to ranks on 17th April, 1916 as the result of a Court Martial.

Charles MacKern Sheriff disembarked at Marseilles, France on 5th May, 1916. He entrained at Marseilles & detrained at Hazebrouck on 8th May, 1916.

Charles MacKern Sheriff was appointed Lance Corporal at Hazebrouck on 16th May, 1916.

Lance Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was detached for Duty with Grenade School on 2nd June, 1916 & rejoined Mining Corps on 18th June, 1916 from 2nd Army Grenade School.

Lance Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was on duty with 104th Field Company at Baillene from 19th June, 1916. He was transferred to 4th Australian Pioneer Battalion in France on 1st October, 1916 & was taken on strength with 4th Pioneer Battalion the same day.

### 4th Pioneer Battalion

The 4th Pioneer Battalion was an Australian infantry and light engineer unit raised for service during the First World War as part of the all volunteer Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Formed in Egypt in March 1916, the battalion subsequently served on the Western Front in France and Belgium, after being transferred to the European battlefields shortly after its establishment. Assigned to the 4th Division, the 4th Pioneer Battalion fought in most of the major battles that the AIF participated in between mid-1916 and the end of the war in November 1918. It was subsequently disbanded in early 1919.

The 4th Pioneers were established on 16 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 4th Division. The battalion was formed in the aftermath of the failed Gallipoli campaign when the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was expanded as part of plans to transfer it from the Middle East to Europe for service in the trenches along the Western Front. This expansion saw several new infantry divisions raised in Egypt and Australia, as well as specialist support units such as machine gun companies, engineer companies, artillery batteries and pioneer battalions, which were needed to meet the conditions prevalent on the Western Front.

Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. The pioneer

concept had existed within the British Indian Army before the war, but had not initially been adopted in other British Empire forces. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

Consisting largely of volunteers drawn from Queensland, the battalion consisted of four companies, under a headquarters company. The battalion's first commanding officer was Lieutenant Colonel James Corlette. For a period in 1917, the 26-year-old Vernon Sturdee, who later rose to be Chief of the General Staff, served as commanding officer. The battalion subsequently served on the Western Front from mid-1916 until the end of the war. To identify the battalion's personnel, they were issued with a purple and white unit colour patch. The colours were in common with other Australian pioneer battalions, while the circle shape denoted that the unit was part of the 4th Division.

After arriving in Europe in mid-1916, the 4th Pioneers gained their first experience of trench warfare around Armentieres, which was considered a quiet sector where newly arrived troops could gain experience prior to being committed to more hectic parts of the front. Their stay within the nursery sector was short, as the 4th Division was sent to the Somme shortly afterwards to replace the 2nd Division around Pozieres, arriving in late July – early August. They subsequently took part in the defence of the heights during the final phase of the Battle of Pozieres. This would be their first major battle of the war and for the next two-and-a-half-years, the battalion took part – albeit in a support role only and never in their infantry role – in most of the major battles that involved Australian troops, such as: the Battle of Mouquet Farm, the Battle of Bullecourt, the Battle of Messines, the Third Battle of Ypres, the German spring offensive – with defensive actions around Hebuterne and Dernancourt – and the Hundred Days Offensive, which finally brought an end to the war in November 1918. The battalion's final actions were fought around Bellenglise, along the St Quentin Canal, in mid-September 1918 in support of the 4th Division's final assault on the Hindenburg Line. After the conclusion of hostilities, the battalion's personnel were slowly repatriated back to Australia for demobilisation and the battalion was disbanded in April 1919.

*(Extract of Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)*

Lance Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was promoted to Corporal on 1st October, 1916 with 4th Australian Pioneer Battalion.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was promoted to Temporary Sergeant on 11th November, 1916, vice Sergeant Herbert transferred.

Temporary Sergeant Charles MacKern Sheriff was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance on 18th November, 1916 then transferred to Casualty Rest Station the same day. He reverted to the rank of Corporal on being evacuated sick & was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance on 18th November, 1916. Corporal Sheriff was transferred & admitted to 38th Casualty Clearing Station on 18th November, 1916 with Conjunctivitis then transferred to Ambulance Train 26 on 19th November, 1916. He was admitted to 9th General Hospital at Rouen, France then on 4th December, 1916 he was transferred to England from Havre on Hospital Ship *Carisbrook Castle* with Bronchitis.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was admitted to Northampton War Hospital, England on 5th December, 1916 with Bronchitis (slight). He was transferred to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield on 12th January, 1917 & was discharged then granted furlough from 16th January, 1917 to 31st January, 1917 & was then to report to Perham Downs.

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

Isabella Dorothea Bunton Mackern Shirreffs, mother of Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff, died on 14th February, 1917.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was marched out from No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 26th February, 1917 to Brigade Hospital for duty.

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Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital, Bulford, Wiltshire on 4th March, 1917 with V.D. (Prostitute in London 9 days prior). He was transferred to Parkhouse with Mumps on 4th March, 1917 & discharged to Convalescent Training Company on 19th March, 1917. (Total VD Period -16 days).

Charles Edward Shirrefs, father of Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff, died on 19th May, 1917 at Sandringham, Victoria.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was marched out to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs on 24th May, 1917. He was medically classified as A3 (medically & dentally fit) on 25th May, 1917.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff was marched out to Pioneer Training Battalion at Fovant, Wiltshire on 28th May, 1917. He was marched out to Dinton, Wiltshire on 29th May, 1917.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 20th August, 1917 from Pioneer Training Camp, No. 4 Camp Fovant. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 21st August, 1917. Corporal Sheriff was marched out from 4th A.D.B.D. on 30th August, 1917 to join his Unit. He rejoined his Unit on 2nd September, 1917.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff reported sick on 16th October, 1917. He rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 3rd November, 1917.

Corporal Charles MacKern Sheriff reverted to the rank of Private at his own request on 3rd November, 1917.

Private / Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was attached to Mining & Boring Company on 20th November, 1917. He was attached from 4th Pioneer Battalion – pending absorption.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was taken on strength of Australian Electrical and Mechanical Mining and Boring Company on 5th May, 1918 from 4th Pioneer Battalion from attachment.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was sent sick to Hospital on 2nd November, 1918. He was admitted to 42nd Stationary Hospital with Eczema on 2nd November, 1918 & was discharged to duty (Scabies) on 1st December, 1918.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was marched in to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Rouelles, France on 3rd December, 1918 from Hospital.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was admitted to 39th General Hospital at Havre on 9th December, 1918 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was discharged to O.C. Reinforcements at Havre on 27th December, 1918 having had Boils. Sapper Sheriff was on Leave from 31st December, 1918 to 14th January, 1919.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was sent to sick to 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford on 4th January, 1919 while on Leave from France with Furunculosis.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was admitted to No. 3 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, England on 3rd February, 1919 with Influenza. He was reported to be dangerously ill on 10th February, 1919. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Influenza 3.2.19 followed by Empyema Pneumonia Death 23.2.19.*"

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff died at 23.50 hrs on 23rd February, 1919 at No. 3 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, England from Pneumonia Empyema. (The Morning State of Sick form recorded he died from Influenza also the second last page of the Service Record file – "Summary page" recorded he died from Influenza.)

A death for Charles M. Sheriff, aged 46, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Dartford, Kent, England.

Sapper Charles MacKern Sheriff was buried in Paddington Cemetery, Kilburn, Greater London, England – Plot number 1 M. 14331 (now referred to as Paddington Old Cemetery) and has a shared Private Family Headstone. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

From the burial report of Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff - *Coffin was Oak. The late soldier was accorded a full military funeral, firing party, bugler and pall-bearers from A.I.F. Headquarters, London being in attendance. The coffin draped with the Australian Flag and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths was conveyed to the graveside by the pall-bearers from the A.I.F. Headquarters.*

*The floral tributes were sent by the following:- Dr & Mrs Shields, 17 Park Lane, London; Major Griffiths; Mr & Mrs Herbert Carr; Walker C Griffiths; Grace and George; Mary and Douglas.*

*The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the burial service was conducted by the Rev. E. Makeham, C. of E. Chaplain of the A.I.F. Headquarters, London. The Grave will be turfed and an Oak Cross erected by the A.I.F. A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Relatives and Friends Present at the Funeral: Dr & Mrs Shields (Sister and Brother-in-law) 17 Park Lane, London & Major Griffiths (Uncle).

Sergeant Charles Mackern Sheriff, of No. 1 Section, No.3 Company Miners Battalion, appointed his sister Ellen Agnes Sheriff, of "Avon" Rugby Road, Oakleigh, near Melbourne, Victoria as sole Executrix of his Will & devised and bequeathed all his real & personal estate to his sister. His Will was date 7th March, 1916.

Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sapper Sheriff's brother – Mr G. W. Sheriff, as the closest next-of-kin as both parents were deceased. (Scroll sent March, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" 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.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff – service number 1167, aged 47, of Australian Mining and Boring Company. He was the son of the late Charles Edward and Isabel Dorothea Sheriff.

Sapper C. M. Sheriff is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 27.



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

C. M. Sheriff is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

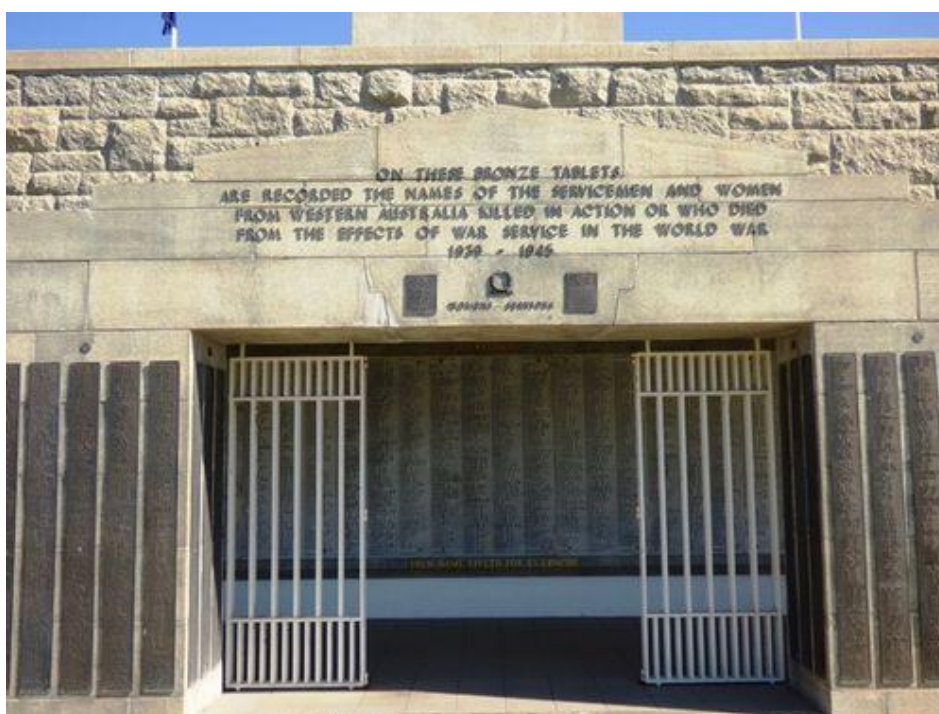
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



**Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)**

**& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names**

*(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)*





**Engineers Panel** (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

The Onslow War Memorial, located at Beadon Point, Onslow, Western Australia does not list individual names.



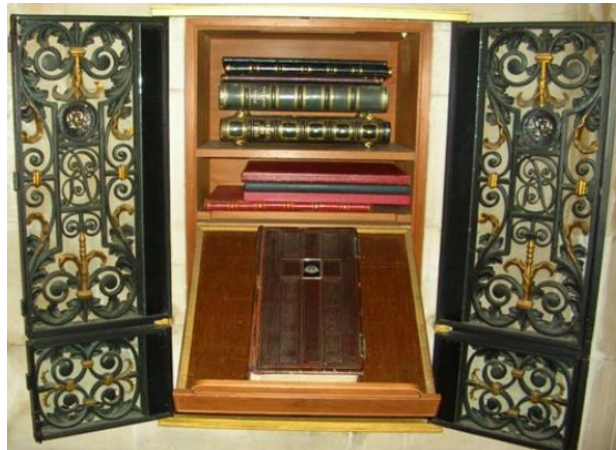
**Onslow War Memorial** (Photo by Julie Chiang)

Sapper C. M. Sheriff is remembered on the Tunnellers' Roll of Honour, located in The Chapel of All Souls, St Paul's Cathedral, London, England.

From the *Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 23 July, 1921.

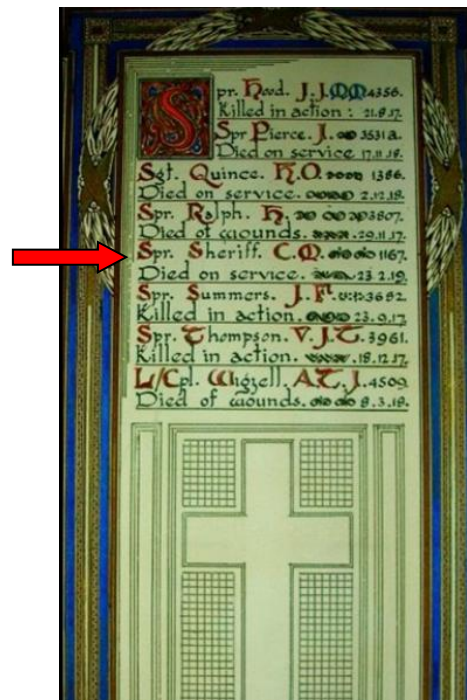
**ENGINEERS' ROLL OF HONOUR**

The Royal Engineer War Memorial Committee are arranging to deposit a roll of honour of all ranks of the Royal Engineers whose names were officially published as killed in action or died of wounds or disease in the war in the chapel of St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Engineer corps of the dominions, colonial, and Indian armies have been invited to deposit similar rolls of honour in St. Paul's, to be attached to that of the Royal Engineers. This invitation has been accepted in Australia. The roll will be inscribed on vellum and enclosed in a casket of Australian timbers to rest on a slab of Australian marble. To defray the cost subscriptions of 1/, restricted to members of the A.I.F. Engineers, A.M.F. Engineer units, and relatives and friends of those members of the A.I.F. Engineer units, including Signals, A.E.M.M. and B Companies, and Tunnelling Corps who fell in the war, are to be received by the president of the committee. Major J. E. Fraser, D.S.O., or Captain E. H. Cottee, R.A.E., Engineer Depot, Park-road, Paddington. The amount to be raised in this State is £70. Competitive designs for the roll and the casket are to be invited and particulars may be obtained from the brigade-major of Engineers, Victoria Barracks.



**Tunnellers' Roll of Honour**

(Photos by Robin Sanderson, Paris with permission of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral)





(57 pages of Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff'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) & National Archives*



**Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff** (Photos courtesy of Phil Hurren)



### Connected to Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff:

Nephew – Henry Hunter Griffith:

Medical Practitioner – applied for a Commission in the Australian Imperial Force on 1 February, 1916. Appointed Major with No. 3 Transport Staff on 17th November, 1917.

Died on 23 March, 1919 at 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, London, England from (1) Pneumonia, Myocardial Failure (2) Syncope.

Nephew - Geoffrey Carmichael Griffith:

Enlisted 12th August, 1915 as a 25 year old, Farmer. Embarked with 14th Reinforcements of 14th Battalion as Private 4502. Disembarked at Egypt on 22nd March, 1916.

Wounded in Action on 7th August, 1916. Died of wounds received in action at Pozieres on 9th August, 1916. Buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery, France.



### Newspaper Notices

#### **VICTORIAN CASUALTIES**

##### **List No. 463 Issued**

##### ENLISTED IN OTHER DISTRICTS

##### DIED OF ILLNESS

C. M. SHERIFF, Sandringham, 23/2/19

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 April, 1919)

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#### Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff has a shared Private Family Headstone.

## Paddington Old Cemetery, Kilburn, Greater London, England

There are 207 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war here. 130 of the burials are in a Service Plot (denoted in the entries as S.P.) and a Screen Wall memorial commemorates 50 whose graves, throughout the cemetery, are not marked by headstones. There are 4 Commonwealth burials of the 1939-1945 war and 43 non-war Service burials.

Visitors to the Screen Wall in Paddington Cemetery are advised that the war casualties are listed alphabetically by surname.

*(Information from CWGC)*

Paddington Old Cemetery is located in Willesden Lane, Kilburn. Also known as Paddington Cemetery or Willesden Lane Cemetery.



*(Photo by Irid Escent)*



*(Photo by Oxyman)*

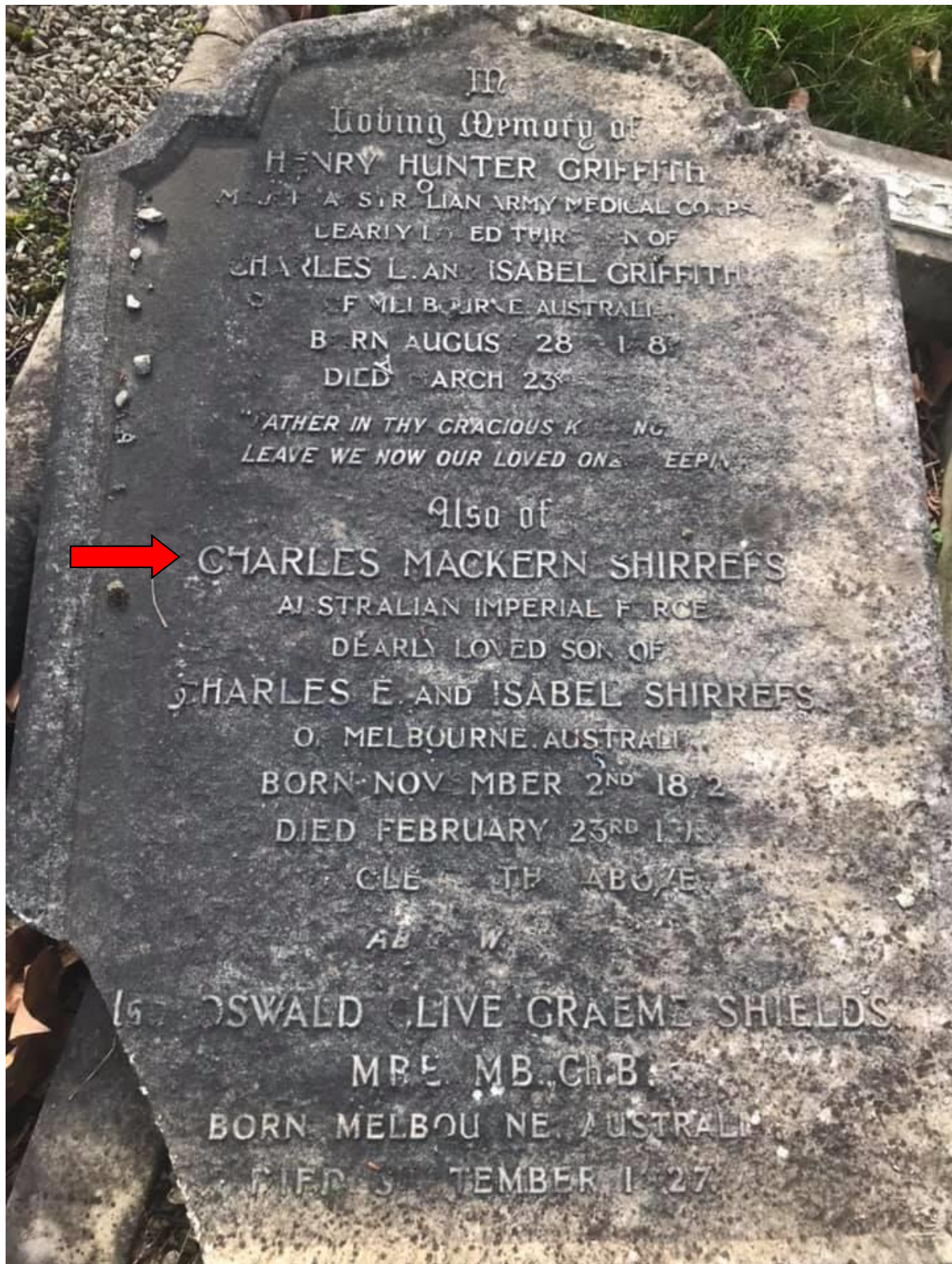


*(Photo from Friends of Paddington Old Cemetery)*

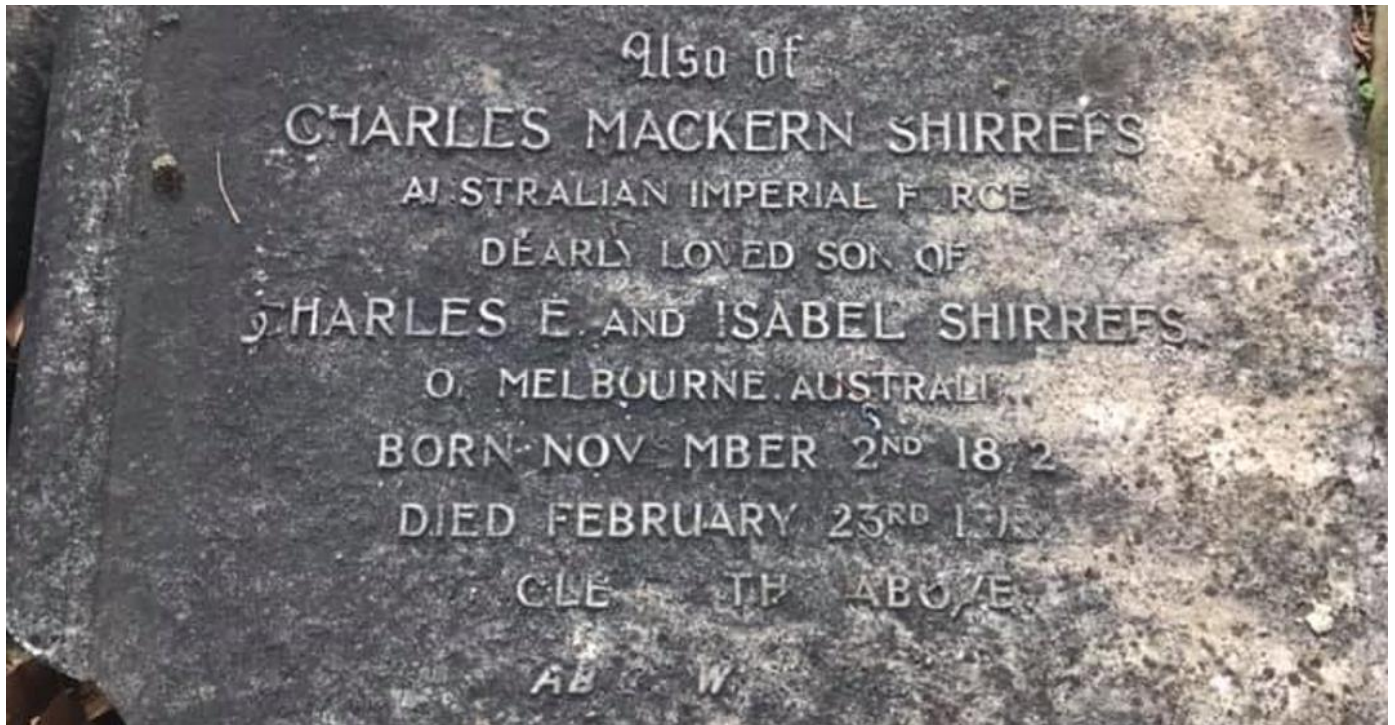
Photo of Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff's shared Private Headstone in Paddington Old Cemetery, Kilburn, Greater London, England.

*\*\*Note the spelling of the surname on the headstone – “SHIRREFS” also the headstone reads “Charles Mackern Shirrefs as Uncle of the above (referring to Major Griffith); however the Burial Report for Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff lists Major Griffith as Sapper Sheriff’s Uncle.*

*George Walter Sheriff, brother of Sapper Charles Mackern Sheriff, completed the information form for the Roll of Honour for the Australian War Memorial & listed their surname as “SHERIFF”.*



(Photo courtesy of Paul Owen – Friends of Paddington Old Cemetery)



*Also of*

*CHARLES MACKERN SHIRREFS*

*Australian Imperial Force*

*Dearly Loved Son Of*

*Charles E. And Isabel Shirrefs*

*Of Melbourne, Australia*

*Born November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1872*

*Died February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1919*

*Uncle Of The Above*

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(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)