

**St. James Churchyard Cemetery,
Dover, Kent
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



30438 GUNNER

A. G. SIM

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

7TH JUNE, 1918 Age 22

For Of Such

Is The Kingdom Of Heaven

Alec Gustavus SIM

Aleck Gustavus Sim was born at Cashel, near Cosgrove, Victoria in May, 1896 to parents John Alexander & Catherine Margaret Sim (nee Witchell).

Alec Gustavus Sim attended Ballarat Agricultural High School, Victoria & Business College.

Alec Gustavus Sim was a 20 year old, single, Farmer (as per Embarkation Roll, however he is listed as Bank Official in information provided by his father for the Roll of Honour) from Colac, Victoria when he enlisted at Melbourne, Victoria on 21st June, 1916 with the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade, 22nd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 30438 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. Sim, of Wongadell, Lake Bolac, Victoria. Alex Sim stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served for 6 months with Senior Cadets & 2 years with Citizen Forces & was still serving. As Alec Sim was under the age of 21 years, both parents had to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. John Sim & Catherine M. Sim both signed their consent.

Gunner Alec Sim was posted to Field Artillery Brigade Reinforcements at Maribyrnong on 22nd June, 1916. He was transferred to 2nd F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade, 22nd Reinforcements on 2nd November, 1916 as Driver.

Driver Alec Gustavus Sim embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 23rd November, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 29th January, 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.

Driver Alec Sim was marched in to Australian Details Camp 6 & 7 at Perham Downs, Wiltshire from Australia on 30th January, 1917.

Driver Alec Sim was marched in to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Larkhill, Wiltshire from Perham Downs on 26th March, 1917.

Driver Alec Sim proceeded overseas to France from R.B.A.A. at Larkhill via Southampton on 4th October, 1917.

Driver Alec Sim was marched in to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Rouelles on 5th October, 1917. He was marched out to 3rd Australian Field Artillery Brigade on 9th October, 1917.

Driver Alec Sim was taken on strength with 3rd Army Brigade, A.F.A. from 22nd Reinforcements 2nd F.A.B. from Australian General Base Depot in France & posted to 7th Battery on 11th October, 1917.

Driver Alec Sim reverted to the rank of Gunner on 13th January, 1918 at his own request.

Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim was wounded in action with gas poisoning on 23rd May, 1918. He was admitted to 20th Casualty Clearing Station then transferred to Ambulance Train 36 on 24th May, 1918. Gunner Sim was admitted to 7th Canadian General Hospital on 25th May, 1918 suffering from the effects of gas poisoning. Gunner Sim was transferred to England on 3rd June, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen*. (According to information supplied by Mr John Sim, father, for the Roll of Honour, Gunner Alec Sim was wounded at Paschendale.)

War Diary – 3rd Australian Field Artillery Brigade

23rd May, 1918 – Casualties – 7th Bty 3 O.R. wounded Gassed.

103rd Bty 1 O.R. Killed

(Information from the Australian War Memorial)

Gunner Alec Sim was admitted to Military Hospital, Dover, Kent, England on 3rd June, 1918 – seriously ill with gas poisoning.

Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim died at 7.40 pm on 7th June, 1918 at Military Hospital, Dover, Kent, England from Wounds – Gas Poisoning as a result of enemy action. The Hospital Report states “..died on 7th June from Heart Failure due to Acute Bronchitis.”

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A death for Alec G. Sim, aged 22, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Dover, Kent, England.

Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim was buried at 2 pm on 11th June, 1918 in St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England – Plot number M. K. 22 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Gunner Alec Sim - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag. Gun Carriage, Band, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were present. The grave will be turfed shortly and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf a relative in Australia to obtain the fullest details possible of the wounds, death & burial of Gunner Sim. A letter from L. M. Stewart, Military Hospital, Dover reads: *"Re the late 30438 Pte A. G. Sim, A.I.F. This question has been answered by the only nurse now here who was in this Ward at the time. Pte Sim's relations were written to direct and this nurse tells me that they also heard from a lady in Australia that they understood was the fiancé of Pte Sim's. Up to the present we have always written direct to the relations of any overseas men in the same way as for the British, but I understand from the Australian Red Cross that they would prefer for the letters to go to them."*

Another handwritten letter found in the file from Solton Manor, near Dover has the following questions which were answered by Staff Nurse A. Vickers (?):

- I. What were his wounds. *Severely gassed*
- II. Did he suffer much? *No but a little depressed due to difficulty in breathing caused through the gas.*
- III. What was the cause of death? *Broncho-pneumonia*
- IV. Was he conscious when he died, & if so do you know of any messages? *He was conscious but did not speak of his relations.*
- V. How long was he in Dover? *Five days*

Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner Sim's father – Mr J. Sim, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922). Apparently the Memorial Plaque was returned on 16th December, 1922 & sent to "Untraceables."

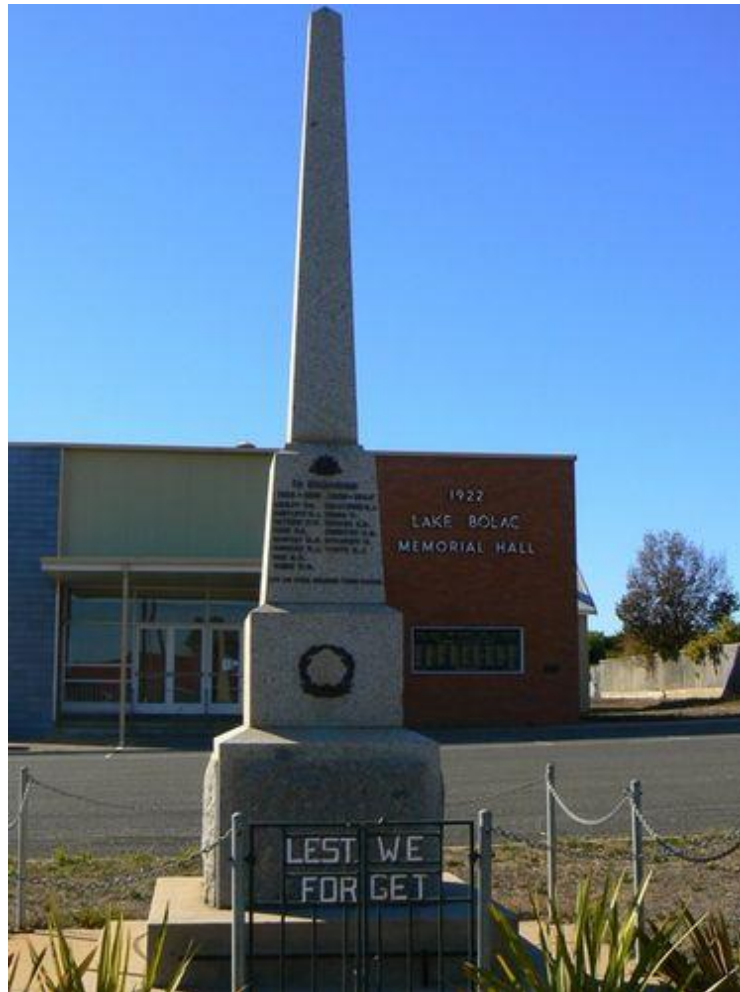
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim – service number 30438, aged 22, of 3rd A.F.A. Bde., Australian Field Artillery. He was the son of John and Catherine Margaret Sim, of Lake Bolac, Victoria, Australia. Native of Cosgrove, Victoria.

Gunner A. G. Sim is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 13.

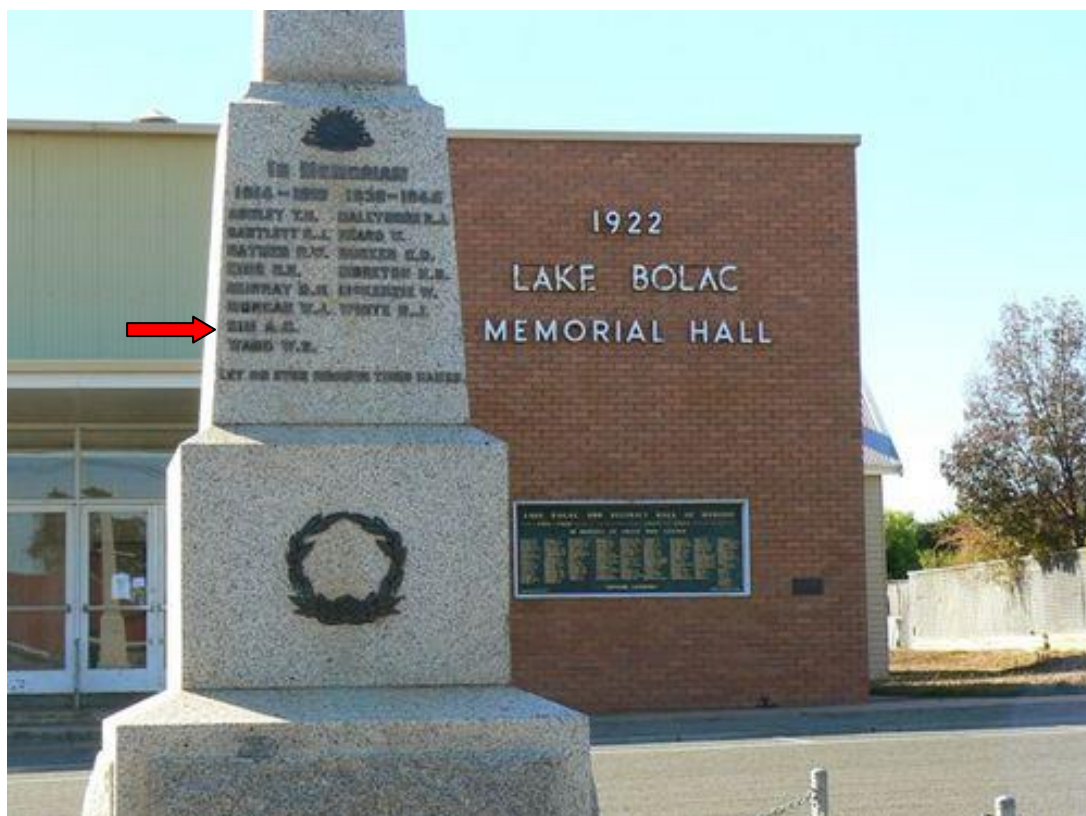


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

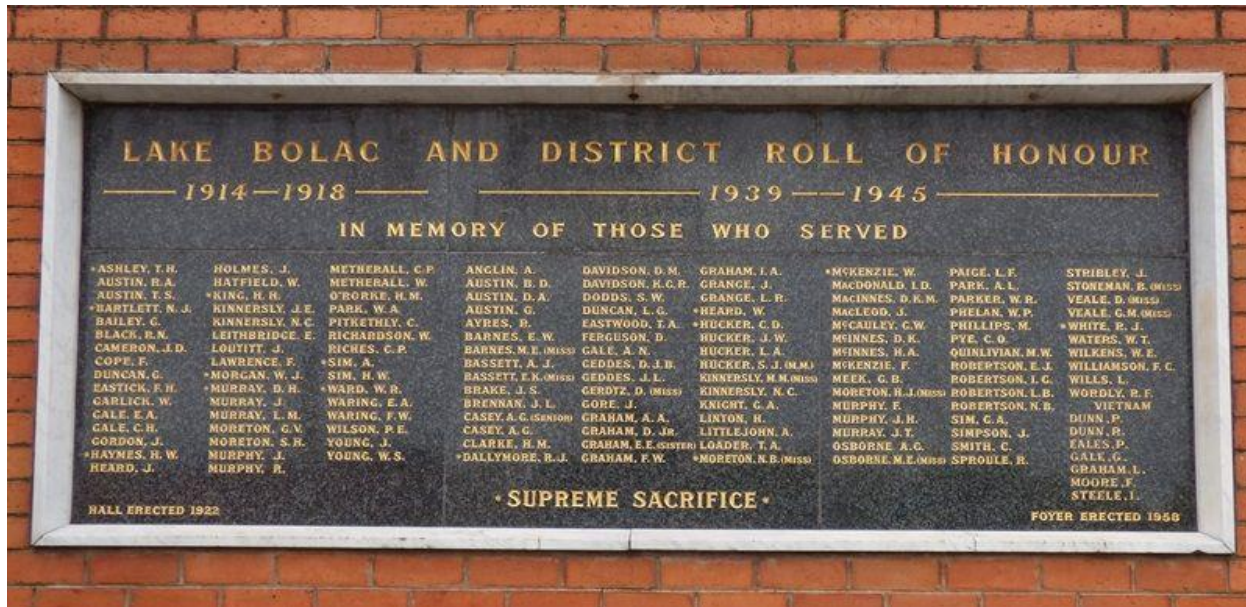
A. Sim is remembered on the Lake Bolac War Memorial located in front of Lake Bolac Memorial Hall.



Lake Bolac War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia –Kent Watson)



A. Sim is remembered on the Lake Bolac and District Roll of Honour which is located in Memorial Hall, Montgomery Street, Lake Bolac, Victoria.



Lake Bolac and District Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Graeme Saunders)

A. Sim is remembered on the Cosgrove & District Roll of Honour, located in Dookie Memorial Hall, Mary Street, Dookie, Victoria.

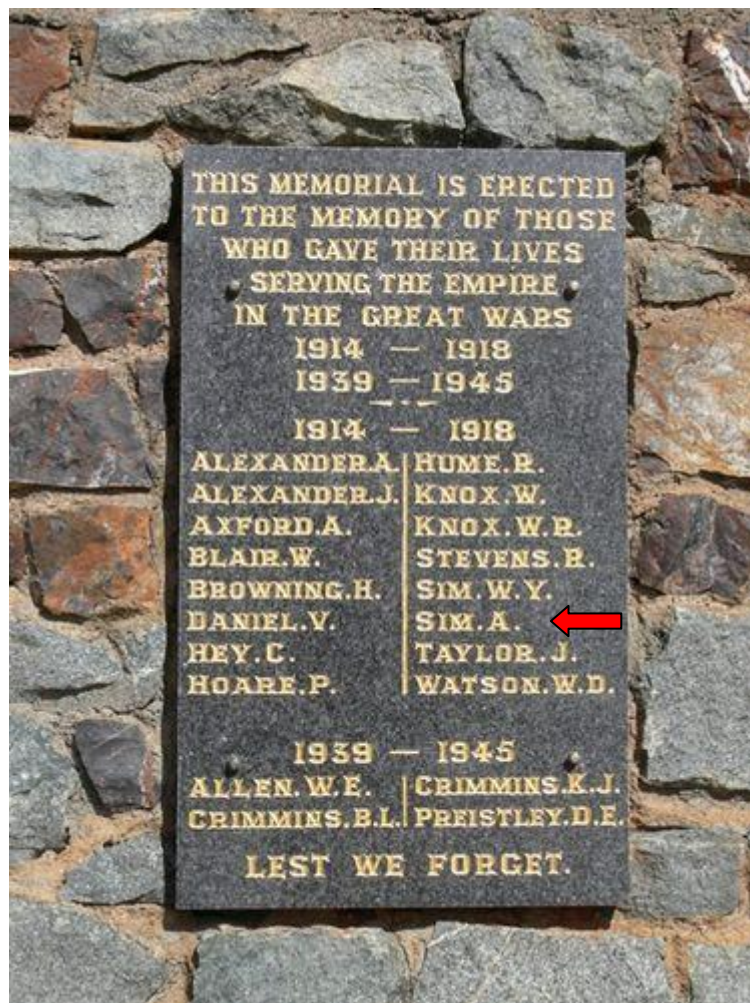


Cosgrove & District Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)

A. Sim is remembered on the Dookie Cenotaph, located at Baldock & Mary Streets, Dookie, near Cosgrove, Victoria.



Dookie Cenotaph (Photos from Monument Australia – Graeme Saunders)

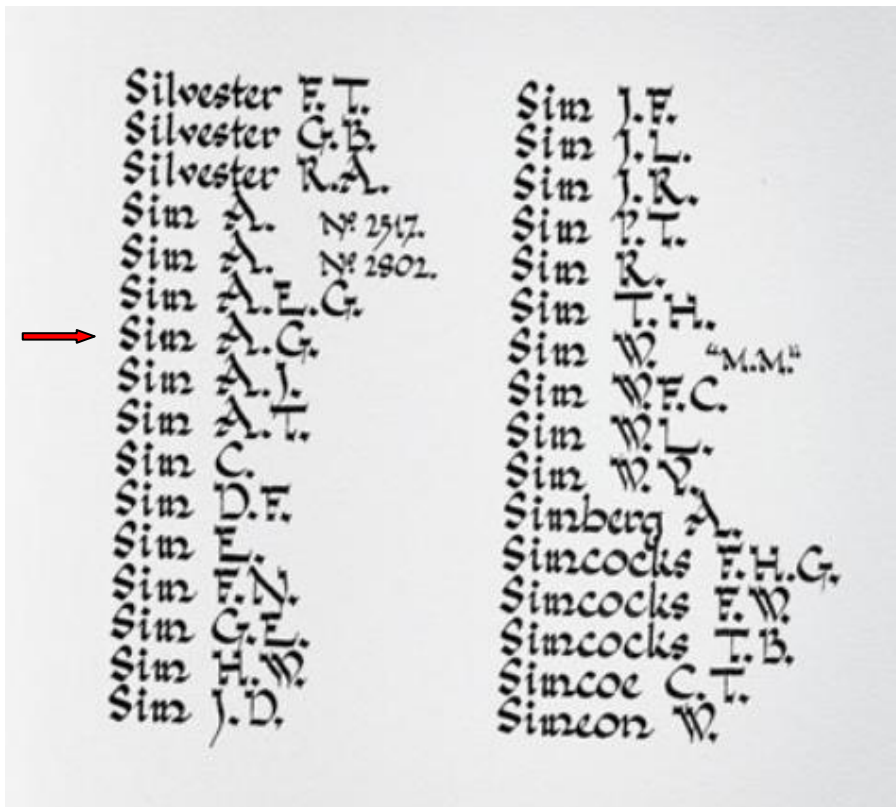


A. Sim is remembered on the Union Bank Honour Roll for World War 1 (Part A) which was located at Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria & was last known at ANZ Bank in Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria.



Union Bank Honour Roll (Photo from Victorian Heritage Database)

A. G. Sim is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.





Alec Gustavus Sim is remembered on the Pictorial "Lest We Forget" fallen soldiers of Dookie, Victoria.



(Photo from Shepparton Theatre Arts Group Inc. Facebook page)

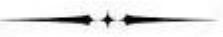
(50 pages of Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives

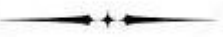


Connected to Gunner Alec Gustavus Sim –

Older brother – Company Q.M.Sgt. Henry Walter Sim, 6086 4th Motor Transport Company (late 5th Battalion). Enlisted 23rd August, 1915. Embarked 28th July, 1916. Returned to Australia & disembarked 19th June, 1920. Entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal.



Alec Gustavus Sim



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL

Mr A. G. Sim, ledger-keeper at the Union Bank, left Colac yesterday to go into camp. He makes the eighth officer of the bank who has enlisted from the local branch for service with the A.I.F.

(Colac Reformer, Victoria – 17 June, 1916)

DIED ON SERVICE

SIM – Officially reported died from the effects of gas at Dover Military Hospital, on June 7, 1918, Gunner Alec G. Sim, 7th Battery, 3rd A.F.A. Brigade, the dearly loved youngest son of Mr and Mrs J. Sim, Lake Bolace, and loved brother of W. J and Cpl. H. W. (on active service), aged 22 years.

“For of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 19 June, 1918)

DIED ON SERVICE

SIM – Officially reported died from the effects of gas at Dover Military Hospital, on June 7, 1918, Gunner Alec G. Sim, 7th Battery, 3rd A.I.F. Brigade, much loved nephew of Mr and Mrs L. H. Smith, Doncaster.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 June, 1918)

DIED ON SERVICE

SIM – In sad and loving memory of my dear friend, Gunner Alex. G. Sim, who died from effects of gas on June 7, 1918, at Dover Military Hospital.

(Inserted by his loving friend, Elsie Boyd, Brunswick)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 June, 1918)

CASUALTY

We regret to have to announce the death of Gunner A. G. Sim, son of Mr John Sim, of Wongadill, Lake Bolac, who died in the Dover Hospital from the effects of gas received in France. He was formerly ledgerkeeper in the Colac branch of the Union Bank. He enlisted in June 1916. He is the third officer out of eight enlistments from this branch who have made the supreme sacrifice.

(Colac Reformer, Victoria – 22 June, 1918)

DISTRICT WAR CASUALTIES

In the 411th official list of Australian casualties ... Dvr A. G. Sim (Lake Bolac) has died of wounds

(Ararat Chronicle and Willaura and Lake Bolac Districts Recorder, Victoria – 25 June, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SIM – In sad and loving memory of our beloved son and brother, Gnr. Alec G. Sim, who died on 7th June, 1918, from effects of gas poisoning, at Dover Military Hospital.

“And when your country shall appear great to you, consider then that her glories were purchased by valiant men, and by men who had learned their duty.”

“The brightest link in our love-chain broken.”

-(Inserted by his sorrowing parents and brothers, W. J. and Gnr. H. W Sim, on active service.)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 June, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SIM – In memory of my dear friend, Alec. G. Sim, who died at Dover Military Hospital on the 7th June, 1918. Just a year ago to-day.

-Inserted by Elsie Boyd, Brunswick.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 9 June, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SIM – In sad, though proud memory of our beloved son and brother, Alec. G. Sim, 3rd F.A.B., who died from the effects of gas poisoning on 7th June, 1918. (Inserted by his sorrowing parents and brothers).

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 June, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SIM – In proud and loving memory of our dear brother, Gunner Alec. G. Sim, 6th Battery, A.F.A., who died at Dover, England, on the 7th June, 1918, from effects of gas-poisoning received at Albert, France.

Ever lovingly remembered.

(Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, H. W. and M. J. Sim, Lake Bolac).

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 June, 1922)

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)

Gunner A. G. Sim does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

For Of Such Is The Kingdom Of Heaven

St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England

St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover contains 719 identified casualties. There are 8 Australian servicemen from World War 1 buried here – 7 Australian Imperial Force soldiers & 1 Royal Flying Corps.

During the First World War, Dover was a port of embarkation for troops bound for the Western Front and between August 1914 and August 1919 some 1,300,000 Commonwealth sick and wounded were landed there. The port was bombed in 1915 and again in August 1916.

There are 373 identified burials of the 1914-1918 war here. In addition there are 19 unidentified burials, 9 of whom can be named as victims of the Zeebrugge Raid, and these 9 are inscribed on a Special Memorial on the Cross of Sacrifice in the Zeebrugge Plot.

In 1940, Dover was the headquarters for the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk and nearly 200,000 of the 366,000 British and Allied troops brought back during the operation were landed there. Throughout the war Dover was a particular target for the long range guns on the French coast and between September 1939 and May 1945 there were no less than 742 attacks by air raid and shelling.

Most of the 356 Second World War burials are contained in a special war graves plot at the far end of the cemetery. The plot, known as the Dunkirk plot, contains many graves from the Dunkirk operation. 22 of these burials are unidentified. There are also 8 Foreign National war burials and 3 non war service burials in the cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photo by js – Find a Grave)



(Photos from CWGC)



Photo of Gunner A. G. Sim's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. James' Churchyard Cemetery, Dover, Kent, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ralph Surry – taken 2018)



Private Sim's Headstone with Australian Flag in

St. James Churchyard Cemetery, Dover (Photos courtesy of Ralph Surry – taken 2018)









(Photo courtesy of Mitchell Carr)