

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



29578 BOMBARDIER

W. G. SMITH

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

16TH JANUARY, 1919 Age 28

*Deeply Mourned By
Mother, Sisters & Brothers
Of Moonee Ponds*

Walter George SMITH

Walter George Smith was born at Moonee Ponds, Victoria in 1890 to parents David & Eliza Smith (nee Cousins).

Walter George Smith attended Essendon State School, Victoria.

The 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Maribyrnong, subdivision of Moonee Ponds, Victoria, recorded Walter Smith, Butcher, of 22 Lethbridge St, Moonee Ponds.

Walter George Smith was aged 25 years & 10 months, single & a Butcher from 22 Lethbridge Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria when he enlisted on 20th March, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 29578 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs E. Smith of 22 Lethbridge Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.

Private Walter George Smith was posted to 19th Depot Battalion at Geelong, Victoria on 2nd May, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Field Artillery Brigade Reinforcements at Maribyrnong, Victoria on 11th May, 1916 as Gunner.

Gunner Walter George Smith was admitted to Clearing Hospital at Maribyrnong from 18th July, 1916 having had contact with Measles. He was transferred & admitted to Ascot Vale Isolation Camp from 24th July, 1916 & rejoined Field Artillery Reinforcements at Maribyrnong on 29th July, 1916. He was transferred to 118th Howitzer Battery from 31st August, 1916.

Gunner Walter George Smith embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Aeneas (A60)* on 3rd October, 1916 with the Australian Field Artillery – 118th Howitzer Battery & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 19th November, 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.

Gunner Walter George Smith proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 2nd January, 1917 on *Princess Henrietta* from R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) – Camp 21, Larkhill, Wiltshire. He was marched in to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 30th December, 1916 (date as per Casualty Form – Active Service). Gunner Smith was transferred to 3rd Divisional Artillery at Etaples on 7th January, 1917 & was taken on strength of 3rd A.D.A.D. in the Field on 9th January, 1917.

Gunner Walter George Smith was transferred to 3rd D.A.C. (Divisional Artillery Column) on 10th March, 1917 & was taken on strength of 3rd Artillery Details the same day. He was transferred to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) in France on 20th March, 1917 & was marched into A.G.B.D. at Etaples, France on 21st March, 1917. Gunner Smith was marched out from A.G.B.D. on 7th April, 1917 & was taken on strength of 6th (Army) Field Artillery Brigade - 106th Battery in France on 8th April, 1917.

Gunner Walter George Smith was on Leave to UK from 27th October, 1917 & rejoined his Unit from Leave on 9th November, 1917.

Gunner Walter George Smith was appointed Acting Bombardier on 23rd September, 1918.

Acting Bombardier Walter George Smith was wounded in action in France on 17th October, 1918. He was admitted to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 17th October, 1918 with Shrapnel wounds to Head & right Shoulder. Acting Bombardier Smith was transferred & admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 18th October, 1918. He was transferred to England on 8th December, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Head.

Mrs E. Smith, 22 Lethbridge Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria was advised by Base Records on 5th November, 1918 that Gunner W. G. Smith had been admitted to Hospital in France on 17th October, 1918 – wounded.

Acting Bombardier Walter George Smith was admitted to 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell, England on 9th December, 1918 with a wounded head.

Base Records advised Mrs E. Smith, 22 Lethbridge Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria on 1st January, 1919 that Gunner W. G. Smith had been transferred on 9th December, 1918 to 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell, London, England suffering from a wound in the head.

Bombardier Walter George Smith died at 7.30 pm on 16th January, 1919 at 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell, England from wounds received in action – G.S.W. Head & Meningitis.

A death for Walter G. Smith, aged 28, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Bombardier Walter George Smith was buried on 21st January, 1919 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground – Grave number 182758.

From the burial report of Bombardier Walter George Smith - Coffin was good, polished Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and conveyed to the graveside where the "Last Post" was sounded, and the burial service conducted by Chap the Rev: D. L. Freer, of the A.I.F. London. 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.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. Smith, 22 Lethbridge Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria on 26th June, 1923 stating that the site of her son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row H Grave 5.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - IV. H. 5. Bombardier Walter George Smith now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Bombardier Walter George Smith contains a request from the Red Cross to find all possible particulars into his wounds, death and burial.

- A Report on 27th December, 1918: *"Doing very well, very cheerful."*
- A Red Cross Visitor wrote on 13th January, 1919: *"Bad head case 2 operations became unconscious last night, still so & rather worse tonight."*
- A Red Cross Visitor wrote on 27th January, 1919: *"Cannot find out any further particulars. He was unconscious all the time – wit the exception of a few hours from Saturday till the Thursday he died. His end was quite peaceful. He had no suffering and it was a happy release. I sent a cable to his Mother at Christmas and he had written. He was buried at Brookwood Cemetery I believe."*

Walter George Smith requested in his Will dated 7th September, 1917 that all his personal estate be bequeathed to Eliza Smith, 22 Lethbridge St, Moonee Ponds, Victoria, Australia.

The Ancient Order of Foresters, Essendon, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 4th February, 1919 requesting a certificate of the proof of death of No. 29578 Gunner Walter George Smith, 118 Howitzer Battery, Australia Fields Artillery.

Base Records replied to The Secretary, Ancient Order of Foresters on 22nd March, 1919 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 29578 Bombardier G. W. Smith, 6th (Army) Field Artillery Brigade.

Bombardier Walter George Smith was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Bombardier Smith's mother – Mrs E. Smith, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Bombardier Walter George Smith – service number 29578, aged 28, of 6th Bde., Australian Field Artillery. He was the son of David & Eliza Smith.

W. G. Smith is remembered on the Moonee Ponds Anglican Church Honour Roll, located in St. Thomas's Anglican Church, 760 Mt Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.

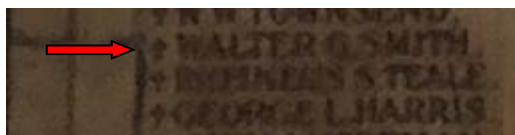


Moonee Ponds Anglican Church Honour Roll (Photo from Empire Call – Kim Phillips)

Walter G. Smith is remembered on the St. Thomas' Anglican Church Honour Roll (framed mosaic), located at 760 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.



St. Thomas' Anglican Church Honour Roll (Photo courtesy of St. Thomas' Church)



W. G. Smith is remembered on the Essendon School Roll of Honour, located in Essendon Raleigh Street State School, Victoria.



Essendon School Roll of Honour (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Don Mountain)

Bombardier W. G. Smith is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 14.



Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(55 pages of Bombardier Walter George Smith'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

DIED ON SERVICE

SMITH – On the 16th January, 1919, Gunner Walter G. Smith, No. 29578, 106 Howitzer Battery, after two and a half years' active service, die dof gunshot wounds to the head, at No. 1 General Hospital, Camberwell, London, beloved youngest son of Eliza and the late David Smith, loving brother of Alf, Dave, Will, Fred, Albert, Annie, Edie.

Deeply loved, dearly mourned.

Inserted by his loving mother, sisters, brothers, 22 Lethbridge street, Moonee Ponds.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 January, 1919)

BEREAVEMENT CARDS

MRS SMITH and Family desire to express their sincere and heartfelt THANKS to all kind friends and relatives for cards, letters, telegrams, and visits during their recent sad bereavement in the loss of a dear son and brother (Walter), on London (late A.I.F.), 22 Lethbridge street, Moonee Ponds.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 February, 1919)

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)

Bombardier W. G. Smith does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Deeply Mourned By Mother, Sisters & Brothers Of Moonee Ponds

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Bombardier W. G. Smith's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

