

**Warrington Cemetery,
Warrington, Cheshire/Lancashire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



771 PRIVATE

E. N. M. SOMMER

10TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

26TH JANUARY, 1919

Emil Nicolai Martin SOMMER

Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was born in Copenhagen, Denmark around 1887.

According to information provided by his sister for the Roll of Honour, Emil Sommer came to Australia when he was 23 years of age. He had served in the Danish Military Service & was also a Sailor.

Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was a 29 year old, single, Fireman from Adelaide, South Australia when he enlisted on 21st March, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 771 & his religion was Lutheran. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Miss N. Wells, Adelaide Hospital, Adelaide, South Australia. Emil Sommer had tattoos on both forearms.

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was posted to "B" Company on 21st March, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to Machine Gun Reinforcements on 1st April, 1917 then transferred to Machine Gun Depot at Seymour on 27th April, 1917.

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Nestor (A71)* on 21st November, 1917 with the 8th Machine Gun Company, 14th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 15th December, 1917.

Private Emil Sommer embarked from Australian Camp at Suez on 31st December, 1917 on HMAT *Maple* & disembarked at Alexandria on 2nd January, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer embarked from Alexandria on 8th January, 1918 on HMT *Abbasieh* & disembarked at Southampton, England on 24th January, 1918.

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 Emil Sommer was marched in to No. 2 & 5 Camps at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England on 25th January, 1918. He was admitted to Group Clearing Hospital at Sutton Veny on 20th March, 1918 with Influenza & discharged on 30th March, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 7th April, 1918 to reinforce 10th Battalion.

Private Emil Sommer was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 8th April, 1918. He was marched out to his Unit on 10th April, 1918 & was taken on strength with 10th Battalion, from Reinforcements, in the field on 11th April, 1918, having originally been with 8th Machine Gun Company.

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was wounded in action on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 87th Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to right shoulder then transferred to 13th Casualty Clearing Station on 22nd April, 1918. Pte Sommer was transferred to Ambulance Train 29 on 22nd April, 1918 & admitted to 54th London General Hospital the same day. Pte Sommer was invalided to England on 24th April, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Brighton*.

War Diary – 10th Battalion

15/4/18 – Battalion is in Support to 3rd A. I. Brigade Line which is defending HAZEBROUCK. The line is held on a four Company frontage, consisting of Platoon Strong Posts, each Company having three platoons in the line and one platoon in support.

(Extract of War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was admitted to Middlesex War Hospital, Clacton on Sea which was affiliated with Military Hospital at Colchester on 24th April, 1918. He was transferred to Theydon Towers Hospital, Thedon-Bois, Epping on 6th May, 1918 then transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, Great London on 24th May, 1918 with gunshot wounds to right shoulder & fractured Scapular. He was discharged to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 5th June, 1918.

Communications were sent to Miss N. Wells, Adelaide Hospital, Adelaide, South Australia, listed as the next-of-kin of Private Emil Sommer, to advise that he was wounded & in hospital but they were returned "address unknown". Notices were placed in the South Australian newspapers in June, 1918 for Miss N. Wells to contact Base Records, Melbourne. Miss Nellie Wells wrote to Base Records in November, 1918 advising her new address was 24 Kent Terrace, Norwood, South Australia.

Private Emil Sommer was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire from 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield on 6th June, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer was marched out to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott from No. 3 Command Depot on 20th July, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer was sent sick to Group Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 14th September, 1918 with Influenza. He was discharged & marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 18th September, 1918.

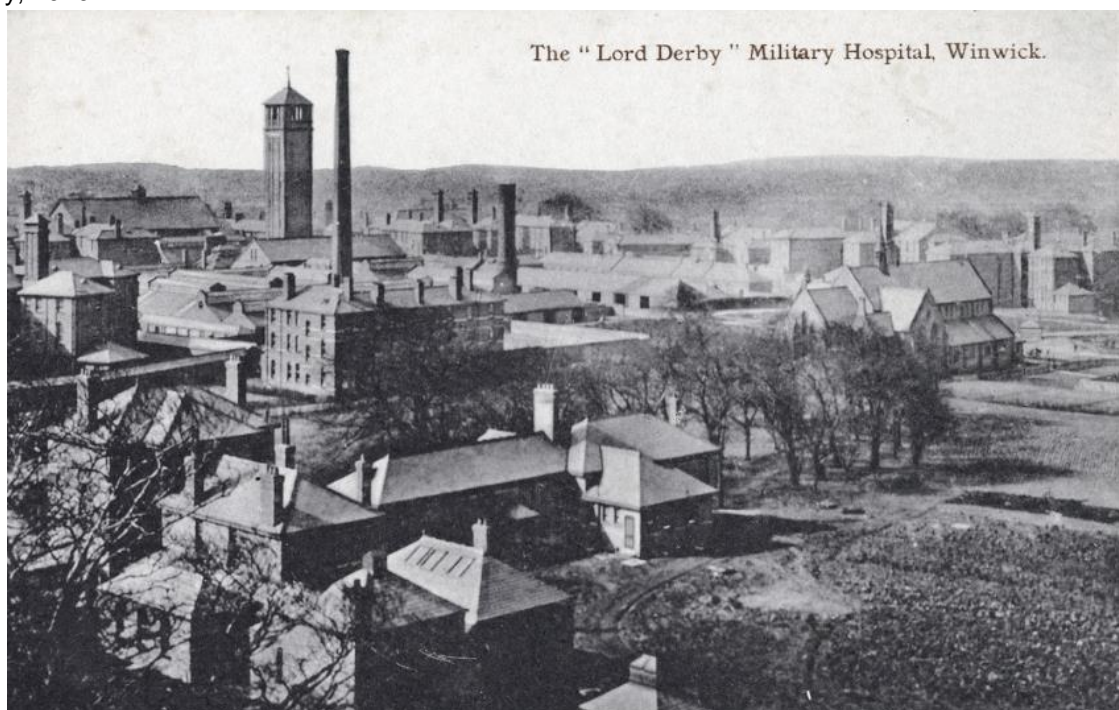
Private Emil Sommer was reported Absent without leave on 21st September, 1918 & returned on 21st September, 1918. This was dismissed on 24th September, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer was reported Absent without leave on 25th September, 1918 & returned on 1st October, 1918.

Private Emil Sommer was admitted to Military Hospital at Tidworth, Wiltshire on 10th October, 1918 under Mental Observation. The Hospital Admissions form recorded the following details :- "*Acute Delusions. Manic ___ & very violent. Denies his nationality (he is Dutch) says at one time he is an Australian & at another that he is Scotch. Dangerous to himself & others.*"

Private Emil Sommer was transferred to Welsh Metropolitan War Hospital, Whitchurch near Cardiff for Mental Observation on 12th October, 1918 with Acute Mania.

Private Emil Sommer was transferred to the Lord Derby War Hospital, Warrington, Lancashire, England on 28th October, 1918. Private Emil Sommer was reported as dangerously & seriously ill at the Warrington War Hospital on 1st January, 1919.



Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer died at 11.45 am on 26th January, 1919 at The Lord Derby War Hospital, Warrington, Lancashire, England from G.P.I. (General Paralysis of the Insane). (Note: A memo from the Commandant A.I.F. Headquarters states Pte Ernie Nicolai Martin Sommer was listed as having died from the effects of Gas poisoning, as a result of enemy action.)

A death for Emil E. M. Sommer, aged 31, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Warrington, Lancashire, England.

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was buried on 31st January, 1919 in Warrington Cemetery (Manchester Road), Warrington, Cheshire/Lancashire, England – Plot number C. NC. 762 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and conveyed to the graveside, where the "Last Post" was sounded and the burial service conducted by the Rev. T. L. Clewes, of Warrington. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

According to records held by Base Records, Melbourne the next-of-kin of the late No. 771 Private Ernie Nicolai Martin Sommer was Mrs J. O'Leary, (Miss N. Wells was now Mrs J. O'Leary as advised by 4th Military District to Base Records in February, 1919), (Friend), of 4 Sydney Place, off Halifax Street, Adelaide, South Australia. The Legatee was recorded as Mrs Madsen, (Sister), of Rancavgade 29, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Private E. N. M. Sommer requested in his Will that the whole of his property and effects be given to his sister - Mrs Madsen, of Rancavgade 29, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Base Records contacted Mrs J. O'Leary, 4 Sydney Place, off Halifax Street, Adelaide, South Australia, in June, 1921 stating that she was registered on the records as the next-of kin of the late Private E. N. M. Sommer & were enquiring if his mother & father were still living & if he had any brothers & 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. Mrs J. O'Leary replied to Base Records stating that Pte Sommer's father had died when he was a youth & his mother had died a few years back. Mrs O'Leary stated that Pte Sommer had two sisters but one had died while he was in Australia.

Private Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Sommer's sister (issued from London) - Mrs Madsen, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private E. N. M. Sommer – service number 771, of 10th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private E. N. M. Sommer is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 60.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

E. N. M. Sommer is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

(76 pages of Pte Emil Nicolai Martin Sommer'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



Newspaper Notices

403rd CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Wounded

771 Pte E. N. M. SOMMER, Adelaide

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 1 June, 1918)

447th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ill

771 Pte E. N. M. SOMMER, Norwood, p.r. wnd

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 30 November, 1918)

THE AUSTRALIANS

CASUALTY LIST NO. 458

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

771 - Pte E. N. M. SOMMER, Norwood (January 26, 1919; c.n.s.; p.r. ill)

(Observer, Adelaide, South Australia – 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)

Private E. N. M. does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Warrington Cemetery, Warrington, Cheshire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Warrington was the depot for the South Lancashire Regiment for both wars and was home to the Lord Derby War Hospital and White Cross Auxiliary Hospital during the First World War. During the Second World War, a shore establishment of the Fleet Air Arm was stationed there. Warrington Cemetery contains 199 First World War burials, 74 of them in a war graves plot with a Cross of Sacrifice. The 102 Second World War burials are scattered. A Polish airman is also buried in the cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice & War Graves in Warrington Cemetery *(Photo by David Dixon)*

Photo of Private E. N. M. Sommer's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Warrington Cemetery, Warrington, Cheshire/Lancashire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Len Scott)

