

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3004 PRIVATE

W. D. STARLING

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

18TH MAY, 1918 Age 27

*In The Cause
Of Righteousness*

Walter David STARLING

Walter David Starling was born at Diamond Creek, Victoria in 1890 to parents George David/ Davey Starling & Margaret Anne Starling (nee Stewart). (Note: father's middle name of "David" is listed on Victorian Births, Deaths & Marriages website, however there are several Family Trees on Ancestry that list his middle name as "Davey")

Walter David Starling attended school at Diamond Creek, Victoria.

Walter David Starling married Eveline (Ebbie) Smith in 1913 in Victoria. A son – Raymond Walter Starling was born in 1914.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Corangamite, subdivision of Terang, Victoria recorded Walter David Starling, Factory employee, from Glenormiston.

The 1914, 1915 & 1916 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Corangamite, subdivision of Terang, Victoria recorded Walter David Starling, Factory employee, & his wife Eveline Starling, Home Duties, from Glenormiston.

Walter David Starling was a 25 year old, married, Motor Driver from Terang, Victoria when he enlisted on 26th January, 1916 at Warrnambool, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Methodist & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Evelyn Starling, Glenormiston South, Victoria.

Private Walter David Starling was posted to 21st Depot Battalion at Warrnambool, Victoria on 9th February, 1916* with New Recruits. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 29th Battalion on 26th January, 1916* & transferred to Broadmeadows on 31st March, 1916. (* dates as per Statement of Service form)

Private Walter David Starling, Service number 3004, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 4th April, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Egypt (no date recorded). He embarked from Alexandria on 6th June, 1916 on H.M.T. *Franconia* & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 16th June, 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.

Private Walter David Starling was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 11th September, 1916 from 8th Training Battalion in England. He was taken on strength of 29th Battalion in France on 28th September, 1916 from Reinforcements.

Private Walter David Starling reported sick on 10th January, 1917 with Dental problems. He was admitted to 14th Australian Field Ambulance on 10th January, 1917 & discharged to duty on 13th January, 1917. Private Starling rejoined his Battalion on 15th January, 1917.

Private Walter David Starling was on Leave from 26th August, 1917 & rejoined from Leave on 6th September, 1917.

Private Walter David Starling was wounded in action on 20th April, 1918. He was admitted to 11th Australian Field Ambulance on 20th April, 1918 with shrapnel wound/s to Back then transferred to 20th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. A mobile X Ray was completed on Private Starling on 20th April, 1918: "*F.B. lies in posterior part of the Body of III Dorsal vertebra & probably ___ on spinal canal.*" (Note: F.B = Foreign body). Private Starling was transferred to 16th Ambulance Train on 21st April, 1918 then admitted to 20th General Hospital at Camiers on 22nd April, 1918 with Shrapnel wound/s to Back. He was invalided to England on 24th April, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Ville de Liege*.

29th Battalion

The 29th Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria on 10 August 1915. Having enlisted as part of the recruitment drive that followed the landing at Gallipoli, and having seen the casualty lists, these were men who had offered themselves in full knowledge of their potential fate.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916. The 29th Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916. The nature of this battle was summed up by one 29th soldier: "the novelty of being a soldier wore off in about five seconds, it was like a bloody butcher's shop". Although it still spent periods in the front line, the 29th played no major offensive role for the rest of the year.

In early 1917, the German Army withdrew to the Hindenburg Line, allowing the British front to be advanced. The Germans, however, made selected stands to delay this advance and the 28th Battalion was involved in defeating a counter-attack at Beaumont on 23 March. The battalion subsequently missed the heavy fighting to breach the Hindenburg Line during the second battle of Bullecourt as the 8th Brigade was deployed to protect the Division's flank. The only large battle in 1917 in which the 29th Battalion played a major role was Polygon Wood, fought in the Ypres sector in Belgium on 26 September.

Unlike some AIF battalions, the 29th had a relatively quiet time during the German Spring Offensive of 1918 as the 5th Division was in reserve for a lot of the time. When the Allies took to the offensive again, the 29th fought in a minor attack at Morlancourt on 29 July, and then in August and September took part in the great advance that followed the battle of Amiens. The 29th fought its last major action in September when the 5th and 3rd Australian Divisions, and two American divisions attacked the Hindenburg Line across the top of the 6-kilometre-long St Quentin Canal tunnel; the canal was a major obstacle in the German defensive scheme. The offensive of 1918, however, had strained the AIF almost to breaking point. On 12 October the 29th Battalion was disbanded to provide reinforcements for other 8th Brigade units.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary of 29th Battalion

Corbie (Bde Reserve) 20th April, 1918:

9 am – Inspection as usual of men & billets by Platoon Commanders. Salvage carried on energetically & great deal of valuable material salvaged. Received orders that 29th Bn would relieve 42nd Bn night 21/22 inst.

Our artillery active during the day on enemy defences & movement. Enemy artillery very active all day. Between 12 noon & 6 pm 120 5.9" & 4.2 " fell in Corbie. All the men ordered into cellars. We suffered casualties 1 Sgt killed & 2 men wounded. Also very active on Vaire & Hamelet.

Movement again about Mericourt & Bois de Vaire. Day fine – visibility good. Foggy night. Advance party sent on to 42nd Bn to take over.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Walter David Starling was admitted to The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 24th April, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Back & Paraplegia (dangerous). Another X-Ray was completed on 10th May, 1918 : "Large F.B. at level of 3rd Dorsal vertebrae. No abnormality of chest."

Base Records advised Mrs E. Starling, Glenormiston South, Victoria, wife of Private Starling, on 3rd May, 1918 that No. 3004 Private W. D. Starling, 29th Battalion has been reported wounded. She was advised on 14th May, 1918 that his condition was stationary. Mrs Starling was advised again on 15th May, 1918 that Private Walter Starling had been admitted to King George Military Hospital, London with gunshot wound to Back & Paraplegia on 24th April, & his condition was dangerous.

Private Walter David Starling died at 4.45 pm on 18th May, 1918 at The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action – G.S.W. Back. In a Telegram from The King George Hospital, London, to Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F., London "Regret report death No 3004 Pte Walter David STARLING 29th A.I.F. at 4.45 today 18 May Wounds in action Brother present recommend funeral Tuesday."

A death for Walter D. Starling, aged 27, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Lambeth, Surrey, England.

Private Walter David Starling was buried at 1.30 pm on 23rd May, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 181,030.

From the burial report of Private Walter David Starling - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral. The Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were supplied by Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths. Chaplain Holden, Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London, officiated at the graveside. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. 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.*

Names of relatives and friends present at the Funeral – Brother 2789 Sergeant F. Starling, 8th Bn. Mr O. Starling, Martham, near Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk, Mr J. Starling, Kepps, Martham, Gt Yarmouth and Mr C. Button, 18 St. Margarets Avenue, Harringay, N. 15.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. Holmes (remarried widow of the late Private W. D. Starling) on 21st April, 1923 stating that the site of No. 3004 Private W. D. Starling's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row D Grave 20. *"While the actual place of burial remains unchanged the previous registration allotted thereto has been altered to conform with the uniform layout of this Cemetery."*

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - IV. D. 20. Private Walter David Starling now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Walter David Starling contains a letter from The Matron, The King George Hospital, Stamford Street which reads: *"In reply to your enquiry concerning 3004 Pte W. D. Starling, 29/A.I.F., this patient who was admitted on April 24th had a gun shot wound of spine penetrating his chest. He was very ill on admission and did not improve and died at 4.45 pm on May 18th. He was buried at Brookwood Cemetery and the other patients in his ward subscribed for a handsome wreath which was placed on his coffin. Pte Starling's brother was with him when he died and the Ward Sister wrote to his wife giving al particulars."*

The National Mutual Life Association of Australasia Limited, Melbourne, Victoria wrote to Base Records on 1st August, 1918 requesting confirmation of the death of Policy No. 300700 Walter David Starling & particulars for identification purposes.

Base Records replied to the General Manager, National Mutual Life Association on 6th August, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 3004 Private W. D. Starling, 29th Battalion, together with Identification particulars.

Eveline Starling, Kolora, via Terang, wrote to Base Records on 10th October, 1918 requesting *"a certificate of death of my Husband (deceased) No. 3004 Pte Walter David Starling, A Company, 29th Battalion. And could you find out for me if he left a will, as I don't know what to do until, I find that out....."*

Base Records replied to Mrs E. Starling on 16th October, 1918 enclosing a Certificate of report of death of the late No. 3004 Private W. D. Starling, 29th Battalion. Base Records advised they had no notification of a Will.

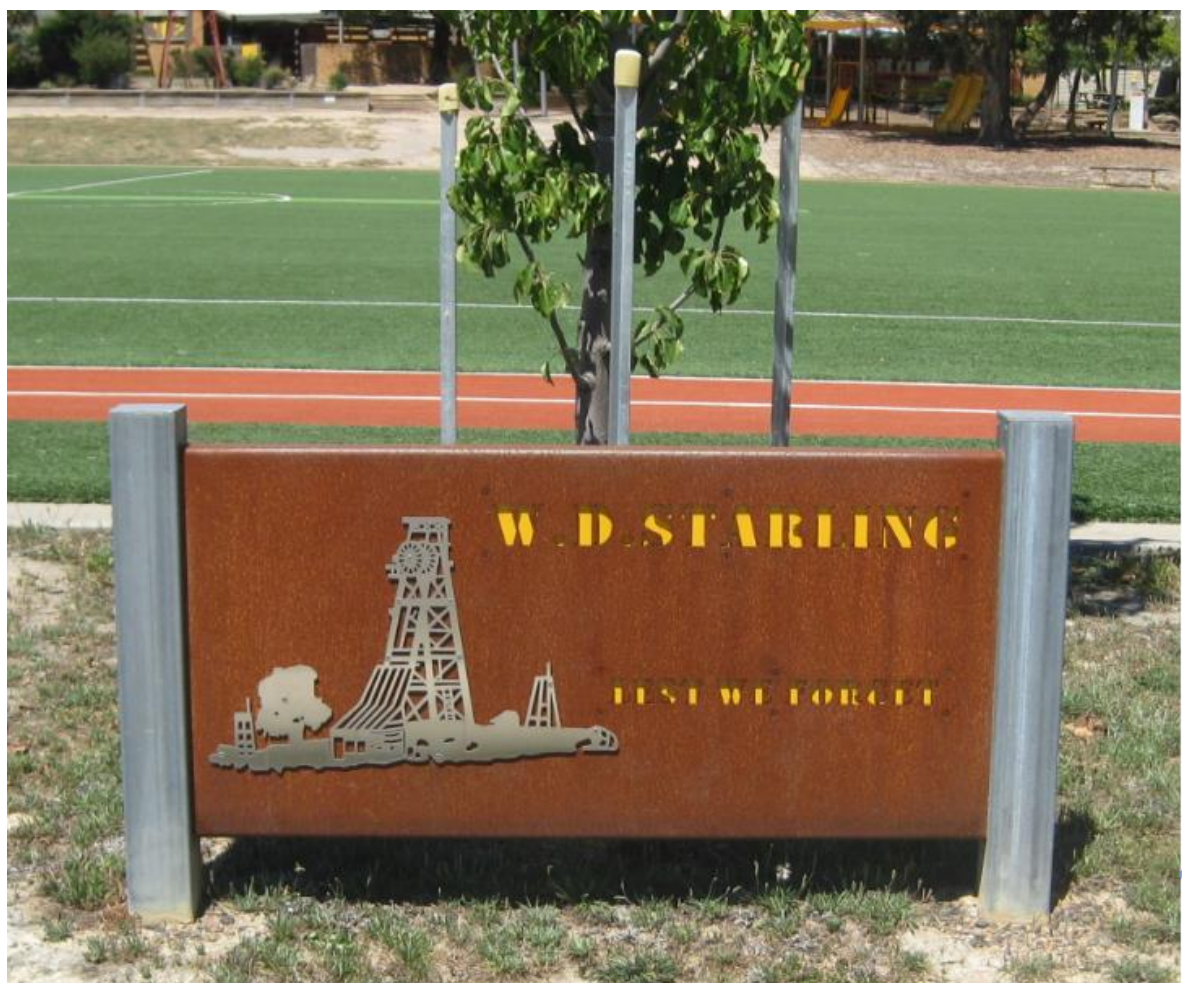
Private Walter David Starling was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Starling's remarried widow - Mrs E. Holmes, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent January, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Walter David Starling – service number 3004, aged 27, of 29th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George Davies Starling & Margaret Starling; husband of Eveline Starling, of The Sisters, Terang, Victoria, Australia.

W. D. Starling is remembered on the Yarrambat Primary School Avenue of Honour, located at Yan Yean Rd, Yarrambat, Victoria.

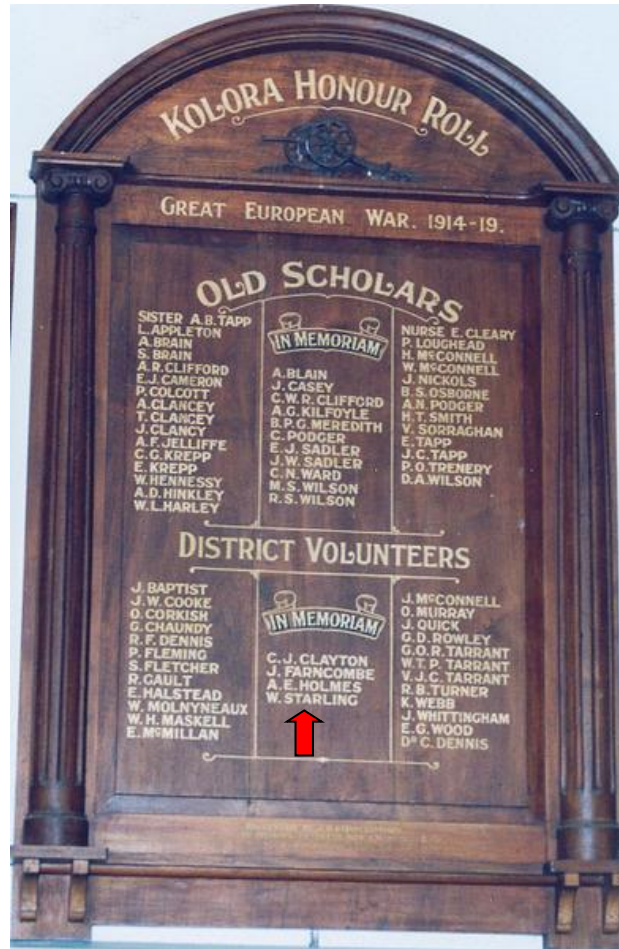


Yarrambat Primary School Avenue of Honour (Photos by Kevin Cameron)



W. D. Starling is remembered on the Tanck's Corner (Yarrambat) Primary School Honour Board.

W. Starling is remembered on the Kolora State School Honour Roll, located in Kolora Hall, Kolora Lane, Kolora, Victoria.



Kolora State School Honour Roll (Photo from Victorian Heritage Database)

W. D. Starling is remembered on the St. Katherine's Church, St. Helena Honour Board, which was located in St. Katherine's Anglican Church, 279 St. Helena Road, St. Helena, Victoria & is now located at Greensborough Historical Society, 34 Glensburn Road, Lower Plenty, Victoria.

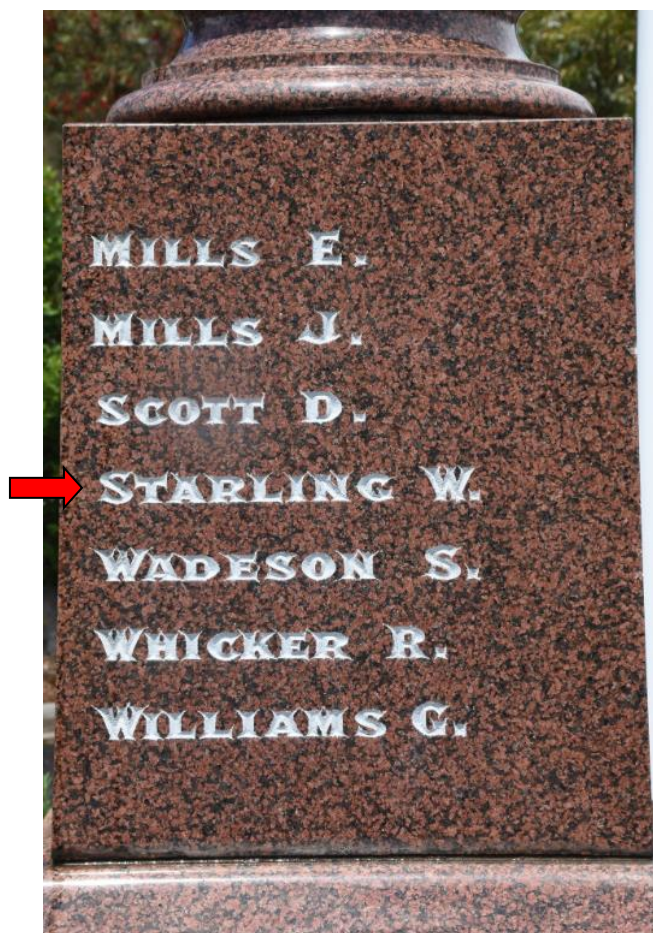


St. Katherine's Church, St. Helena Honour Board (Photo from Victorian Collections)

W. Starling is remembered on the Diamond Creek War Memorial, located at Community Centre, Reserve Circuit, Diamond Creek, Victoria.



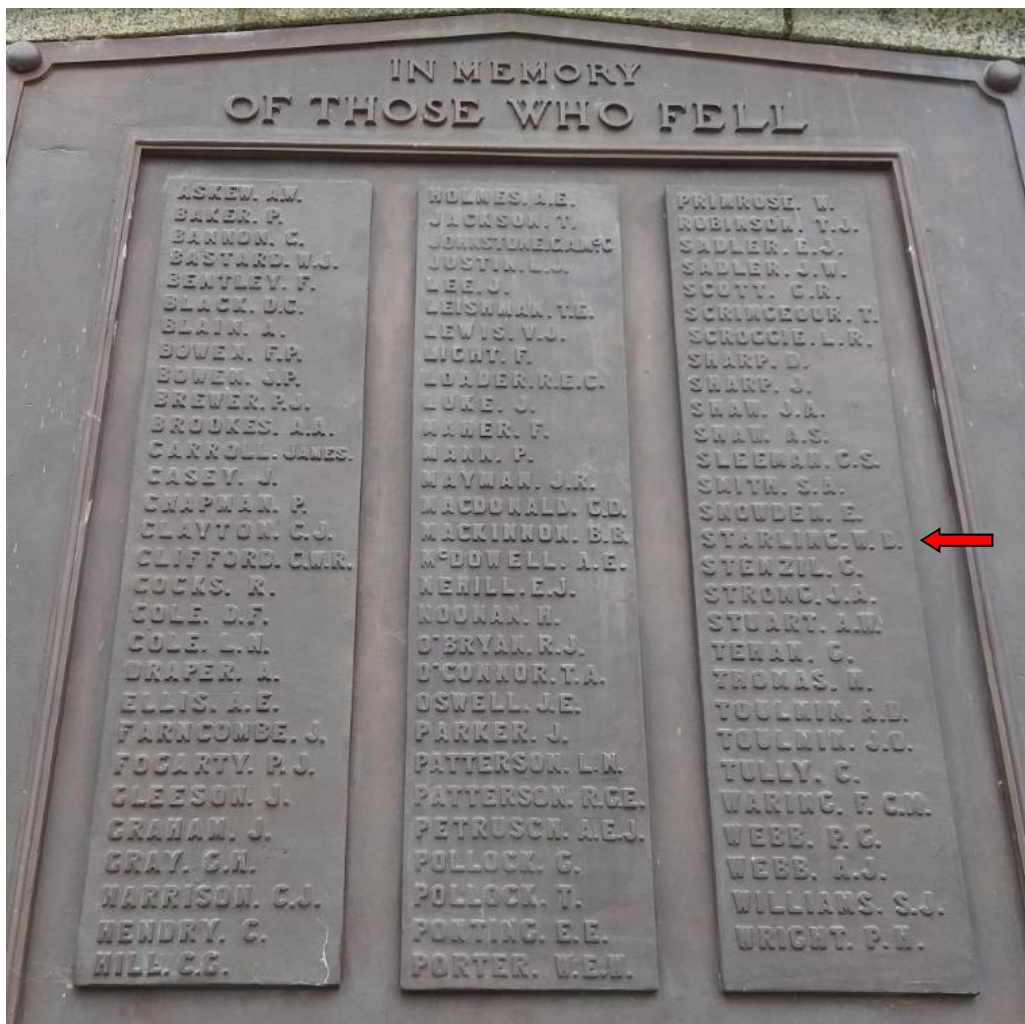
Diamond Creek War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)



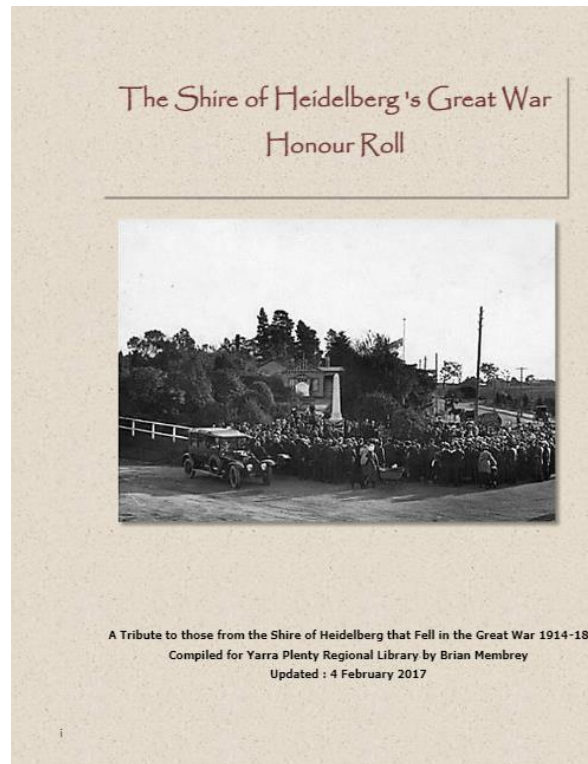
W. D. Starling is remembered on the Terang War Memorial, located on High Street, Terang, Victoria.




Terang War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Western Front Association Central Victoria Branch)



Private Walter David Starling is remembered in the Shire of Heidelberg's Great War – In Memoriam



 **The Shire of Heidelberg's Great War – In Memoriam**

Starling, Walter David

Key Address : Diamond Creek [\(Index\)](#)

Rank and Unit : Private, 29th Battalion Infantry Embarked 29 Infantry 1 to 6 Reinforcements (November 1915 - April 1916)

Embarked : HMAT Euripides
Ship Number : A14
Date of Embarkation : 04/04/1916
Place of Embarkation : Melbourne

Service Number : 3004 Enlisted : 26/01/1916 At : Warrnambool

Born At : Diamond Creek Educated At : Diamond Creek State School

Date of Death : 18/05/1918 Aged : 27

Place of Death : (of wounds) The King George Hospital, London

Buried At : Brookwood Military Cemetery, (Australian Military section), United Kingdom

Occupation : Motor driver

Marital Status : Married Religion : Methodist

Next of Kin/Family : Parents George David and Margaret Starling (nee Stewart)
Wife Evelyn Starling (nee Smith)

Eyewitnesses : "The 3004 Pte W. D. Starling, 29th A.I.F. was admitted to this hospital on April 24th had a gunshot wound of the spine penetrating chest. He was very ill on admission and did not improve and died at 6.45 p.m. on 18th. Pte Starling's brother was with him when he died and the Ward Sister wrote to his wife giving all details" (Matron, King George Hospital)


Notes : Starling was born and raised at Diamond Creek and enlisted showing his wife Evelyn at Glenormiston South. The couple married in 1913 and had one child, a son Raymond born in 1914 at Terang, his father George, like many in the district, was an orchardist.

Starling was wounded in the back near Corby, France on 20 September, 1918 and repatriated to England two days later and then admitted to King George Hospital on the 24th, noted as dangerously ill with paraplegia on entry. He survived another three weeks with little of any hope of recovery and died on the 28th.

His widow by the time of returning the circular had re-married to become Mrs Holmes, living at The Sisters, via Terang, just a few kilometres from Glenormiston.

A brother of the serviceman, 2789, Frederick George Starling also served in the A.I.F. with the 6 Battalion, earning the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Military Medal. He is shown at Diamond Creek as an alternative contact and was noted at Walter's funeral along with two English relatives, shown as C. and J. Starling from Norfolk.

The circular for another serviceman included, 2641, Private George Francis Fineran suggested that he and Walter and Fred Starling were brothers-in-law. A late inclusion in our Roll, James Stewart Union was also a cousin of Walter Starling - their mothers sisters. Margaret Starling passed away in June, 1920.



Group portrait of 2589 Private Fred George Starling (right), another man in uniform and two young women, perhaps sisters, sitting on a wooden bench. The Starling, an orchardist from Diamond Creek in the Yarra Valley, Vic, enlisted on 16 July 1915 and embarked with the 5th Reinforcements of the 24th Battalion on 27 October 1915. He survived the war, winning two awards: The Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and Military Medal (MM) and was promoted to Lance Corporal. He returned to Australia on 24 August 1918. (Walter Starling had not enlisted when the image was taken).

STARLING - Died of wounds, King George's Hospital, London, 18 May. Private Walter David, beloved youngest son of Margaret and George Starling, Diamond Creek, aged 27 years after a years active service. Duty nobly done. (Inscribed by his loving parents)

The Shire of Heidelberg's Great War | Starling, Walter David 220

Private W. D. Starling is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 116.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(59 pages of Private Walter David Starling'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 Private Walter David Starling:](#)

Older brother – Frederick George Starling – Enlisted on 16th July, 1915 as a 31 year old, single Orchardist from Diamond Creek, Victoria. Embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT Ulysses (A38) on 27th October, 1915 as Private 2789 with 24th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements.

Wounded in action in France on 18th August, 1916. Rejoined his Battalion on 18th January, 1917 from wounded. Promoted to Lance Corporal from 14th May, 1917.

Awarded Military Medal for Bravery in the Field in October, 1916 & the Distinguished Conduct Medal in May, 1917.

Wounded in action in Belgium on 20th September, 1917.

Returned to Australia 24th August, 1918 due to Gunshot wound/s to left Hand. Medically discharged from Australian Imperial Force on 28th October, 1918.

Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

DA14858

Private Walter David Starling



Newspaper Notices

VICTORIA'S ROLL OF HONOR

401st CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

W. D. Starling, Glenormiston

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 21 May, 1919)

Death

STARLING – Died from wounds 18th May, at King George's Military Hospital, London, Private W. D. Starling, beloved husband of Evelyn Starling, and second son of G. D. Starling, of Diamond Creek: aged 29 years,

(Terang Express, Victoria – 28 May, 1918)

TERANG

Mrs Starling, of Glenormiston, on Saturday last received news that her husband, Private W. D. Starling, had died from wounds in the King George Military Hospital, London, on May 18. The late Private Starling, who was the second son of Mr G. D. Starling, of Diamond Creek, was 29 years of age.

(The Colac Herald, Victoria- 29 May, 1918)

THE 408th CASUALTY LIST

VICTORIAN NAMES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private W. D. Starling, Glenormiston South

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 15 June, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

FINERAN – In loving memory of my dear husband, Corporal G. F. Fineran, who was killed in action at Pozieres on July 25, 1916; also my dear brother, Private W. D. Starling, who died of wounds, King George Military Hospital, England, May 18, 1918.

Ever remembered.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 25 July, 1919)

AT TANCK'S CORNER

Anzac Day was duly celebrated at the school on Wednesday afternoon in the approved way. The late Anzac and A.I.F. men's noble sacrifices were recalled. Some hand some wreaths were presented by the school children and placed about the honor roll - a beautiful one in black wood, and containing the following names--A. Apted, *T. Cameron, *J. W. Gillow, J. Holmes, A. Laing, *D. Laing, J. Palmer, W. J. Pepper, *W. D. Starling, A. S. Toll, J. W. Thomson.

Wreaths were presented by Misses Mavis and Alma Collins, and another by Miss Marion Craig. Miss Joyce Maher brought suitable flowers.

(Advertiser, Hurstbridge, Victoria – 3 May, 1929)

YARRAMBAT

Armistice Day

Armistice Day was fittingly celebrated at the local school, the half masting of the flag and two minutes' silence being observed. The names on the honor roll were read and silent tribute paid to the following soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice: -T. Cameron, J. H. Gillow, A. Laing, W. D. Starling. Three beautiful wreaths were brought by the following girls Mavis and Alma Collins, Marion Craig and Olive Brown.

(Advertiser, Hurstbridge, Victoria – 15 November, 1929)

**Other news items regarding the Armistice Day Ceremonies were placed in other years

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 W. D. Starling does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In The Cause Of Righteousness

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 Private W. D. Starling's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

