

**Wareham Cemetery,
Wareham, Dorset
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2151 PRIVATE

C. R. STEPHENS

43RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

12TH DECEMBER, 1916 Age 26

Claude Ralph STEPHENS

Claud Ralph Stephens was born at Port Adelaide, South Australia on 25th April, 1890 to parents William Richard & Caroline Stephens (nee Snowball). He was baptised at St. Paul's Church, Port Adelaide, South Australia on 25th June, 1890.

Claude Ralph Stephens was a 26 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Fowler's Bay, South Australia when he enlisted at Adelaide, South Australia on 15th July, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2151 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs Mary Ann Berck, Willmott Street, Glanville, South Australia. Claude Stephens stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 1 year with Senior Cadets.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was posted to "C" Company, 2nd Depot Battalion on 15th July, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 3rd Reinforcements of 43rd Battalion on 10th August, 1916.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Anchises* (A68) on 28th August, 1916 with the 11th Infantry Brigade, 43rd Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 11th October, 1916. Pte Stephens had been admitted to the Ship's Hospital on 27th September, 1916 with Mumps.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was admitted to Devonport Hospital on 11th October, 1916 with mumps. He was discharged from Devonport Military Hospital on 18th October, 1916 & was to report to Perham Downs.

The following was reported on Pte Stephens' Casualty Form – Active Service – no date "*Previously reported M.O. to Wool 13.10.16 now advised still on strength of this Depot*" – No. 1 Command Depot, Perham Downs.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was taken on strength of No. 1 Command Depot (Perham Downs, Wiltshire) on 23rd October, 1916.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was marched out to Wareham (No. 4 Command Depot) on 27th October, 1916.

The Hospital Admissions form records that Private Claude Ralph Stephens was admitted to Military Hospital at Wareham on 20th November, 1916.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was reported at Command Depot, Wareham on 30th November, 1916 with Pneumonia – serious.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens died at 5.55 pm on 12th December, 1916 at Military Hospital, Wareham, Dorset, England from Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for Claude R. Stephens, aged 26, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Wareham, Dorset, England.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was buried on 15th December, 1916 in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England – Plot number B. C. 12 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Base Records contacted Mrs M. A. Berck, of Willmott Street, Glanville, South Australia, sister of the late Private Claude Ralph Stephens, in March, 1921 asking if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself 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. No reply was received from Mrs Berck. Further investigations were carried out & in August, 1922 the Base Commandant, 4th District Base advised Base Records that they had been in contact with the second eldest brother, Mr A. H. Stephens, of Rosewater, South Australia, who advised that both parents were deceased & the eldest brother – Mrs William Stephens was last heard of in Kent, England about twelve years ago. (William Richard Stephens had died in 1899 & Caroline Stephens had died in 1908).

A Statutory Declaration was completed on 4th September, 1922 by A. H. Stephens, of Rosetta Street, Rosewater, South Australia declaring that they would preserve with all due care any War Medals & other items given in their care on account of the service of the late Private Claude Ralph Stephens & would produce them to the Department of Defence at any time upon receipt of its demand in writing.

Mrs Mary A. F. Berck, sister & listed as next-of-kin of the late Private Claude Ralph Stephens, signed for a package on 24th March, 1918 of personal items belonging to the late Pte Stephens. She had also received a photo of the grave of her late brother in March, 1918. Another package belonging to the late Private Claude Ralph Stephens was signed for on 16th October, 1922 by A. H. Stephens.

Private Claude Ralph Stephens was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Stephens' second eldest brother – Mr A. H. Stephens, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private C. R. Stephens – service number 2151, of 43rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private C. R. Stephens is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 137.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

C. R. Stephens 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.



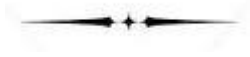
National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

(55 pages of Pte Claude Ralph Stephens' 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



Private Claude Ralph Stephens



Newspaper Notices

IN THE COURTS

“TWO-UP”

Claude Ralph Stephens who appeared before Mr. T. Gepp, S.M., at the Port Adelaide Police Court on Monday, denied having played two-up off Cannon street on Sunday. The arresting constable stated that he saw a number of boys congregated on a vacant allotment apparently playing two-up. Defendant was observed in the act of throwing up two pennies, and when the constable appeared on the scene there was a general scamper, but Stephens was captured. In the witness box he denied having, played any game but football. The S.M., however, did not believe him, and in fining him 10/ and 15/ costs, remarked that these illegal games must be stopped. Future delinquents would not be dealt with so leniently.

(The Register, Adelaide, South Australia – 6 July, 1909)

THE WAR

249th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dangerously Sick

2151 Pte C. R. STEPHENS, Glanville

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 December, 1916)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

STEPHENS – On the 12th December, in hospital, England, Pte C. R. Stephens, of pneumonia, aged 26 years. Thy will be done. – Inserted by his sister, niece and nephew.

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 18 December, 1916) &

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 19 December, 1916)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

STEPHENS – On the 12th December, at London Hospital, Private C. R. Stephens, nephew of Mrs E. Holman, Peel-street, Yatala, and brother to Harold, Willochra.

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 December, 1916) &

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 December, 1916) & (Chronicle, Adelaide, South Australia – 23 December, 1916)

257th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Died of Illness

2151 Pte C. R. STEPHENS, Glanville (died 12/12/16)

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 27 December, 1916)

THE LATE PRIVATE C. R. STEPHENS.

Information has been received that Private Claude R. Stephens died on pneumonia in a London hospital on December 12. Prior to enlisting he was for several years engaged in farming on the West Coast. He was 26 years of



Private C. R. Stephens

age. Two of his brothers are at the front, and another brother resides at Willochra. He was loved by all who knew him.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 30 December, 1916)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

STEPHENS – In loving memory of my loving nephew, Private C. R. Stephens, who died in England on December 12, 1916. – Inserted by his loving aunt, M. Holman, Lipson-street, Port.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude R. Stephens, died in England, December 12, 1916.

Too far away your grave to see,
But not too far to think of thee.
Sunshine passes, shadows fall,
But sweet remembrance outlasts all.

-Inserted by his loving brothers, Harold, of Willochra, and Private R. A. Stephens, Egypt.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of our dear brother, Private Claude Stephens, died in England, December 12, 1916.

His heart was brave, he knew no fear,
He now sleeps in a soldier's grave.
Forget, he knows we never will.

-Inserted by his loving brothers, Private A. H. and Trooper R. A. Stephens (returned). On active service.

STEPHENS – In memory of Private C. R. (Claude) Stephens.

Little did I think when I bade you good-bye,
It was the last 'twixt you and I;

Not even his lifeless form did I see,
But for ever he will be remembered by me.

-Inserted by his loving sister-in-law, Bella, and children.

*(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 December, 1917) &
(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 December, 1917)*

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude R. , No. 1512, died at Wareham, England, December 12, 1916.
Gone, but not forgotten.

-Inserted by his sister and brother-in-law, on active service, and children.

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 17 December, 1917)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

STEPHENS – In loving memory of my loving nephew, Private C. R. Stephens, who died in England on December 12, 1916. – Inserted by his loving aunt, M. Holman, Lipson-street, Port.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude R. Stephens, died in England, December 12, 1916.

Too far away your grave to see,
But not too far to think of thee.
Sunshine passes, shadows fall,
But sweet remembrance outlasts all.

-Inserted by his loving brothers, Harold, of Willochra, and Private R. A. Stephens, Egypt.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of our dear brother, Private Claude Stephens, died in England, December 12, 1916.

His heart was brave, he knew no fear,
He now sleeps in a soldier's grave.
Forget, he knows we never will.

-Inserted by his loving brothers, Private A. H. and Trooper R. A. Stephens (returned). On active service.

STEPHENS – In memory of Private C. R. (Claude) Stephens.

Little did I think when I bade you good-bye,
It was the last 'twixt you and I;
Not even his lifeless form did I see,
But for ever he will be remembered by me.

-Inserted by his loving sister-in-law, Bella, and children.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude R. , No. 1512, died at Wareham, England, December 12, 1916.
Gone, but not forgotten.

-Inserted by his sister and brother-in-law, on active service, and children.

(Chronicle, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 December, 1917)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

STEPHENS – In loving memory of our dear brother, Private C. R. (Claude) Stephens, 43rd Battalion, died December 12, 1916, Wareham Military Hospital, England.

It is nice to be remembered
And this our wish will show;
We hold you still in memory
As years may come and go.
He died an Australian hero,
Trying to save us all.

-Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, Albert and Bella; also brother Dick (on active service abroad)/

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude Stephens, who died in England, on December 12, 1916. –
Inserted by his auntie, Mrs E. Holman.

STEPHENS – In loving memory of Private Claude R. Stephens, died in England, December 12, 1916.

Too far away your grave to see,
But not too far to think of thee.

-Inserted by his loving brothers, Harold, and Trooper R. A. Stephens, on active service.

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 December, 1918) & (*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 December, 1918)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

STEPHENS – In loving memory of our dear brother, Private C. R. (Claude) Stephens, 43rd Battalion, died December 12, 1916, Wareham Military Hospital, England.

Our sad thought roam
To a dear brother's grave so far from home,
His actions speak, though his voice is still.
Forget him, no, we never will.

-Inserted by his loving brothers and sister-in-law, Albert and Bella, Dick

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 20 December, 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 C. R. Stephens does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England

Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset contains 71 Commonwealth War Graves. Wareham Military Hospital, with 185 beds, was at Worgret Camp during the First World War and the regimental depot of the Royal Armoured Corps was at nearby Bovington during the Second World War. Wareham Cemetery contains 49 First World War burials and 15 from the Second World War, 5 being unidentified. The cemetery also contains 12 German burials, 1 being an unidentified airman. *(Information from CWGC)*



Wareham Cemetery, Wareham *(Photos courtesy of Tracy Dunne)*



Photo of Private C. R. Stephens' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England.



(Photo courtesy of Tracy Dunne)



Private C. R. Stephens' headstone marked by red arrow (Photo from "[Following the Twenty-Second](#)")