

**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard,
Harefield, Middlesex, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



834 PRIVATE

CHARLES EDWARD STEVENS

7TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

26TH JUNE, 1917 Age 24

He Suffered

But Christ Suffered More

Charles Edward STEVENS

Charles Edward Stevens was born on 6th August, 1891 at Croydon, Surrey, England to parents George & Matilda Elizabeth Stevens (nee Weyer). He was baptised on 17th August, 1892 in S.S. Michael & All Angels Church, Croydon, Surrey, England. His parents were listed as George & Matilda Stevens, of 124 Windmill Rd & George Stevens was listed as a Hay Salesman.

The 1901 England Census recorded Charles Edward Stevens as a 10 year old, living with his family at 114 Windmill Road, Croydon, Surrey, England. His parents were listed as George Stevens (Hay Dealer, aged 52, born Croydon, Surrey) & Matilda Stevens (aged 53, born London). Charles was the youngest of six children listed on this Census (all born Croydon, Surrey) – Thomas H. Stevens (Fitter, aged 24), Frank E. Stevens (Butcher, aged 18), Annie E. Stevens (aged 16), Sydney F. Stevens (aged 14), Florence E. Stevens (aged 12) then Charles.

The 1911 England Census recorded Charles Edward Stevens as a 19 year old Whitesmith, living with his family at 114 Windmill Road, Croydon, Surrey, England. His parents were listed as George Stevens (Furniture Remover, aged 62) & Matilda Elizabeth Stevens (aged 62). George & Matilda Stevens had been married for 38 years & had 11 children. Aldo listed in the household was Charles' older sister – Florence Elizabeth Stevens (Bookfolder, aged 21).

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Wimmera, subdivision of Kerang, Victoria recorded Charles Edward Stevens, Driver from Tragowel.

Charles Edward Stevens was a 21 year old, single, Storekeeper from Tragowel P.O., Victoria when he enlisted on 22nd August, 1914 at Kerang, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 834 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – George Stevens, Tragowel P.O., Victoria.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was posted to 7th Battalion on 22nd August, 1914 for recruit training.

Driver (as per Embarkation Roll) Charles Edward Stevens embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 19th October, 1914 with the 7th Infantry Battalion "G" Company.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was reported as Missing on 25th April, 1915 at Gallipoli Peninsula.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was admitted to H.M.H.S. (Hospital Ship) *Southland* between 8 & 11th May, 1915 at Dardanelles having been wounded – both hands, neck & chest. He disembarked at Malta on 18th May, 1915 & was admitted to Military Hospital, Imtarfa, Malta on 18th May, 1915. Private Stevens was discharged to St. George's Hospital, Malta on 28th July, 1915. He was transferred to All Saints Convalescent Camp, Malta on 2nd August, 1915.

7th Battalion

The 7th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 6th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

The battalion was raised by Lieutenant Colonel H. E. "Pompey" Elliott within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving on 2 December. It later took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915, as part of the second wave. Ten days after the landing, the 2nd Brigade was transferred from ANZAC to Cape Helles to help in the attack on the village of Krithia. The attack captured little ground but cost the brigade almost a third of its strength. The Victorian battalions returned to ANZAC to help defend the beachhead, and in August the 2nd Brigade fought at the battle of Lone Pine.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Charles Edward Stevens embarked for England on *Oxfordshire* on 18th September, 1915 from Malta with Shrapnel wounds to Chest. He was admitted to 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, Northfield, Birmingham, England on 24th September, 1915 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) Chest & Concussion.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was marched in to Australian C. T. & G. Base Depot at Abbey Wood, England on 8th November, 1915.

Private Charles Edward Stevens embarked from England on 25th February, 1916 with 26 Draft to join M.E.F.

Private Charles Edward Stevens returned to duty at Egypt from *Huntspill* on 25th March, 1916.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was taken on strength for duty with Headquarters Staff at Tel-el-Kebir on 11th May, 1916 from Details Camp.

Private Charles Edward Stevens embarked from Alexandria on 2nd August, 1916 for Overseas on HMT *Franconia*.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was marched in to No. 3 Camp, Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England on 5th September, 1916 from Headquarters at Tidworth, Wiltshire, England.

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. Later Training & Convalescing Units were combined under the one Command Depot.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was written up for an Offence on 9th October, 1916 – A.W.L. (absent without leave) from midnight on 8th October, 1916 to 7 am on 11th October, 1916. He was awarded 24 hours detention by Officer Commanding 2nd Training Battalion & forfeited a total of 4 days' pay.

Private Charles Edward Stevens proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 4th December, 1916 on *Princess Victoria*. He was marched in to 1st Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 5th December, 1916.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was admitted to 14th Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France on 5th December, 1916 with Mumps. He was transferred to Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 30th December, 1916.

Private Charles Edward Stevens joined 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 3rd January, 1917 from Hospital.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was sent sick to Hospital on 20th March, 1917. He was transferred to England from Calais, France on Hospital Ship *Newhaven* on 6th April, 1917.

7th Battalion

In early 1917, the Germans withdrew to the Hindenburg Line and the 7th Battalion participated in the brief advance that followed and then came to a grinding halt before Bullecourt. The battalion was withdrawn from the front line for training on 9 May 1917 and did not return to action until the Ypres offensive of September and October.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Charles Edward Stevens was admitted to Fort Pitt Hospital, Chatham, England with T.B. on 6th April, 1917. He was transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital on 18th April, 1917.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was admitted to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Middlesex, England on 18th April, 1917 with Tuberculosis.

A Medical Report was completed on Private Charles Edward Stevens on 23rd April, 1917 at No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Middlesex, England. His disability was listed as Tuberculosis which had first occurred in France in April, 1917. "Has had a cough for last ten weeks & has been in Hospital six weeks. Had no lung trouble previous to this & there is no lung trouble in family." Private Stevens' present condition was listed as "Both lungs involved & lobe. Evening temperature to 103° Pulse 108. Frequent night sweats. No haemophysis. States that he has lost a lot of weight. T.B. very numerous." His condition was the result of climatic infection & active service. The Officer in charge of the case recommended that Private Stevens be discharged as permanently unfit. The Medical Board found on 1st May, 1917 that Private Charles Edward Stevens was permanently unfit for General & Home Service.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was reported to be seriously ill with Phthisis on 24th April, 1917 at No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Middlesex, England.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was pronounced out of danger on 12th May, 1917.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was reported to be dangerously ill on 25th May, 1917.

Private Charles Edward Stevens died at 10 am on 26th June, 1917 at 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from Tuberculosis of Lungs.

A death for Charles E. Stevens, aged 24, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was buried at 2.30 pm on 28th June, 1917 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Plot number 30 (changed to Grave No. 26) & is now listed by CWGC as Grave reference - Aust. 26 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private Stevens - Coffin was good, polished Elm. The deceased soldier was buried with full Military honours. Gun carriage (provided by the London Command) conveyed the remains of the deceased soldier to the Cemetery. Band of the 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Firing Party and bugler of the Administrative Headquarters Staff, A.I.F. London were in attendance. A party of patients from the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, followed the remains to the Cemetery. The coffin was draped with the Australian flag and surmounted with several lovely floral tributes. The coffin was borne to the graveside by members of the A.I.F. Prior to the interment a service was held in the Parish Church, Harefield by Chaplain Gregg Macgregor. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. Memorial is being erected by the Authorities of the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield.

Relatives or friends present at the Funeral – Mrs M. Stevens (Mother) 114 Windmill Road, Croydon, Miss G. Stevens, 71 Holland Park Avenue, London W., Miss N. Stevens (sister) Curzon House, Mayfair, London. W., and Miss M. Stevens, 123 Ecclesbourne Road, Thornton Heath.

A War Pension was granted to Matilda Stevens, 114 Windmill Road, West Croydon, Surrey, mother of the late Private Charles Edward Stevens in the sum of 40/- per fortnight from 30th August, 1917.

Miss I. Capper, "Quainton", Lake Charm, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 13th July, 1921 in regards to a newspaper item about unclaimed items at Victoria Barracks. She asked "*If there is anything at the Barracks belonging to the late Pte Chas. E. Stevens; 834, 7th Battalion A.I.F. Will you kindly send such article or articles to me to send to his mother; or send it direct to his Mother whose name & address are given below...*" Base Records replied on 21st July, 1921 stating that records show that the personal effects of the late No. 834 Private C. E. Stevens had been transmitted to the deceased's mother.

Private Charles Edward Stevens was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Stevens' mother - Mrs M. Stevens, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in England).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Charles Edward Stevens – service number 834, aged 24, of 7th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Matilda Stevens, of 114 Windmill Rd., Croydon, England, and the late George Stevens.

C. Stevens is remembered on the Macorna War Memorial, located on Macorna-Pyramid Road, Macorna, Victoria.



Macorna War Memorial (Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – Trevor Linton)



C. E. Stevens is remembered on the Kerang Shire Honour Roll, located at Kerang Memorial Municipal Chambers, Victoria Street, Kerang, Victoria.



Kerang Memorial Municipal Chambers (Photo from AWM – Places of Pride – Trevor Linton)



Kerang Shire Honour Roll (Photo from AWM – Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)

C. E. Stevens is remembered on the Kerang Shire Honour Roll for First World War, located at 47 Victoria Street, Kerang, Victoria.



Kerang Shire Honour Roll (Part B) (Photo from VHD)

Private C. E. Stevens is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 51.

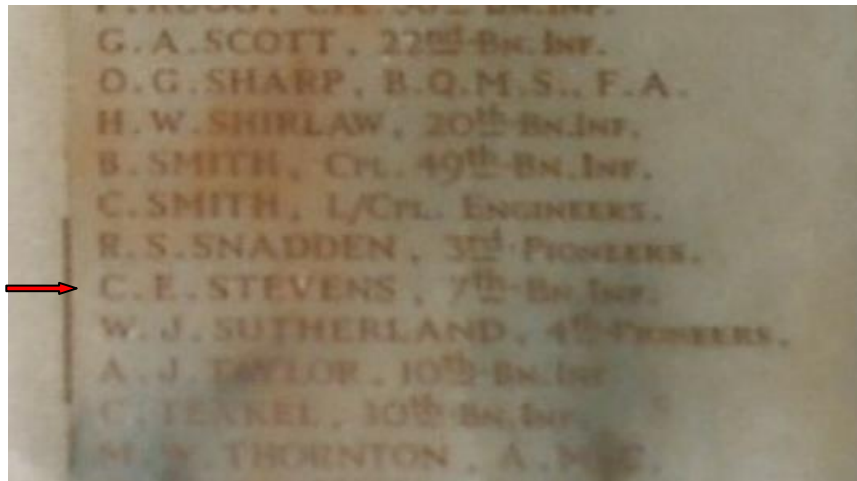


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

C. E. Stevens is remembered on the Australian Soldiers' Memorial in St. Mary the Virgin Church, Church Hill, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield (Photo from War Memorials Online – B. Wood)



(77 pages of Private Charles Edward Stevens' 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



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H06571

Private Charles Edward Stevens



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

THE TWENTY-NINTH LIST

VICTORIA

WOUNDED

Pte C. E. STEVENS, 7th Bat., England

(The Bendigo Independent, Victoria – 2 June, 1915)

ROLL OF HONOR

It has been decided by the Shire Council that at the conclusion of the war a roll shall be established in honor of those resident of the shire and the neighbouring district of Barham who volunteered and were accepted for active service abroad. The following list has been prepared....

P to Z

.....

Stevens, Charles Edward

.....

(Kerang New Times, Victoria – 12 December, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

324th LIST

Died of Illness

Pte C. E. STEVENS, England

(The Bendigo Independent, Victoria – 17 July, 1917)

NOTICE

A RULE to administer the Estate of CHARLES EDWARD STEVENS, late of A.I.F. Abroad, Soldier, formerly of Tragowel, Storekeeper, deceased, intestate, who died on the 26th June, 1917, has been granted to me and creditors, next of kin, and all others having claims against the Estate are required to send in particulars of their claims to the Curator of the Estates of Deceased Persons, New Zealand Chambers, 483 Collins Street, Melbourne on or before the 25th June, 1918, or they may be excluded from the distribution of the estate when the assets are being distributed.

WALTER B. HOUSE

Curator of the Estate of Deceased Persons.

Melbourne, 8th May, 1918.

(Kerang Observer, Victoria – 18 May, 1918)

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 Charles Edward Stevens does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Suffered But Christ Suffered More

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield contains 126 Commonwealth War Graves.

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.

Harefield (St. Mary) Churchyard contains war graves from both world wars. There are 120 First World War graves, mostly those of Australians who died in No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park. Uniquely, their graves are marked by scroll shaped headstones, chosen by the staff and patients at the hospital. In the centre of the Australian plot stands a memorial obelisk which was erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, late Governor of Tasmania and of Western Australia, and Mr. C.A.M. Billyard-Leake, of Harefield Park. The churchyard also contains six graves of the Second World War.

(Information & photos from CWGC)

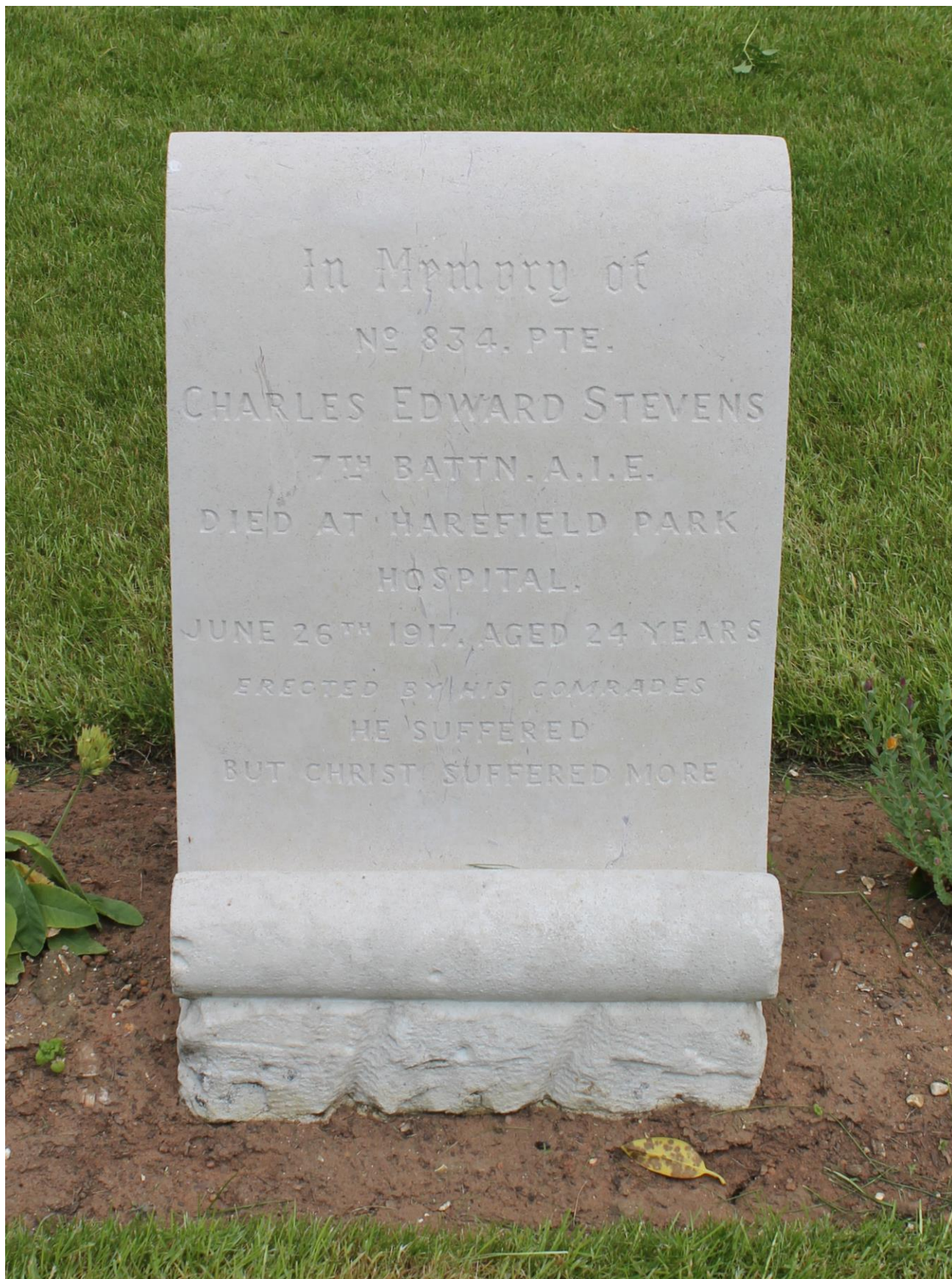




St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield



Photo of Private Charles Edward Stevens' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St Mary the Virgin Church, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photos courtesy of Peter Bennett)



