

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

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3196 PRIVATE**

**W. J. SUTHERLAND**

**4TH AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS**

**23RD APRIL, 1918 Age 35**

*In Loving Memory  
Of My Dear Husband  
And Our Dear Father*

## William John SUTHERLAND

William John Elliott was born at Coolah, New South Wales to mother Kathleen (Kate) Elliott. His birth was registered in the district of Dubbo, NSW in 1884. No father was listed.

Kate Elliott married John Sutherland in 1884 in the district of Dubbo, NSW.

William John Sutherland attended school at Coolah, New South Wales.

Kathleen Sutherland, mother of William John Elliott, died in 1897 at Mudgee, NSW.

William John Sutherland married Emma Louisa Down on 11th October, 1913 in Queensland.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kennedy, subdivision of Hughenden, Queensland recorded William John Sutherland, Shearer, from Stamford.

Hazel Emily Sutherland, daughter of William John & Emma Louisa Sutherland, was born on 3rd June, 1914.

The 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Kennedy, subdivision of Charters Towers, Queensland recorded William John Sutherland, Shearer, & his wife Emma Louisa Sutherland, Home Duties, from Millchester Road.

William John Sutherland was a 33 year old, married, Shearer from Craven Street, Charters Towers, Queensland when he enlisted at Charters Towers on 2nd October, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3196 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs E. L. Sutherland, Craven Street, Charters Towers, Queensland. William Sutherland stated on his Attestation Papers that he had 3 years with Rifle Club.

Private William John Sutherland was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 6th October, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 7th Reinforcements of 4th Pioneer Battalion on 9th October, 1916.

Private William John Sutherland embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Kyarra* (A55) on 17th November, 1916 with the 4th Pioneer Battalion, 7th Reinforcements. Private Sutherland failed to re-embark on HMAT *Kyarra* at Fremantle, Western Australia on 28th November, 1916 & was marked as A.W.L. (Absent without Leave).

Private William John Sutherland was posted as a Deserter at Durban on 15th December, 1916. This has been crossed out in red - cancelled. Private Sutherland was fined £5 and awarded 28 days detention.

Private William John Sutherland re-embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Persic* (A34) on 29th December, 1916 with 46th Battalion, 8th Reinforcements. The details for the next-of-kin listed on this Embarkation Roll were – Mrs Emma Louisa Sutherland c/- Mrs Maudson, Milchester Road, Charters Towers, Queensland. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 3rd March, 1917

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 William John Sutherland was marched in to 12th Training Battalion, No. 14 Camp at Codford, Wiltshire on 4th March, 1917 from Australia.

Twins – Iris Elsie & Dorcas Maud Sutherland, daughters of William John & Emma Louisa Sutherland, were born on 9th March, 1917.

Private William John Sutherland was marched in to Pioneers Battalion – No. 26 Camp at Larkhill, Wiltshire on 12th March, 1917 from 12th Training Battalion.

Private William John Sutherland was sent sick to Isolation Camp at Fovant, Wiltshire on 1st May, 1917.

Private William John Sutherland proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 4th June, 1917 to reinforce the 4th Pioneers. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France from England on 6th June, 1917. Private Sutherland was marched out to his Unit from 4th A.D.B.D. on 20th June, 1917 & was taken on strength of 4th Pioneer Battalion in France on 21st June, 1917.

Private William John Sutherland was sent sick to 13th Field Ambulance on 29th January, 1918 then transferred the same day to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station. He was transferred to Ambulance Train 20 on 31st January, 1918 & admitted to 2nd Australian General Hospital on 31st January, 1918 with Haemorrhoids.

Private William John Sutherland was transferred & admitted to 1st Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 10th February, 1918 from 2nd Australian General Hospital. He was transferred to No. 3 Rest Camp at Boulogne, France on 11th February, 1918.

Private William John Sutherland was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 17th February, 1918 from Hospital. He was transferred from A.I.B.D. on 18th February, 1918 to 40th Stationary Hospital at Harfleur with Piles.

#### **4th Pioneer Battalion**

The 4th Pioneer Battalion was an Australian infantry and light engineer unit raised for service during the First World War as part of the all volunteer Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Formed in Egypt in March 1916, the battalion subsequently served on the Western Front in France and Belgium, after being transferred to the European battlefields shortly after its establishment. Assigned to the 4th Division, the 4th Pioneer Battalion fought in most of the major battles that the AIF participated in between mid-1916 and the end of the war in November 1918. It was subsequently disbanded in early 1919.

The 4th Pioneers were established on 16 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 4th Division. The battalion was formed in the aftermath of the failed Gallipoli campaign when the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was expanded as part of plans to transfer it from the Middle East to Europe for service in the trenches along the Western Front. This expansion saw several new infantry divisions raised in Egypt and Australia, as well as specialist support units such as machine gun companies, engineer companies, artillery batteries and pioneer battalions, which were needed to meet the conditions prevalent on the Western Front.

Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. The pioneer concept had existed within the British Indian Army before the war, but had not initially been adopted in other British Empire forces. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

Consisting largely of volunteers drawn from Queensland, the battalion consisted of four companies, under a headquarters company. The battalion's first commanding officer was Lieutenant Colonel James Corlette. For a period in 1917, the 26-year-old Vernon Sturdee, who later rose to be Chief of the General Staff, served as commanding officer. The battalion subsequently served on the Western Front from mid-1916 until the end of the war. To identify the battalion's personnel, they were issued with a purple and white unit colour patch. The colours were in common with other Australian pioneer battalions, while the circle shape denoted that the unit was part of the 4th Division.

After arriving in Europe in mid-1916, the 4th Pioneers gained their first experience of trench warfare around Armentieres, which was considered a quiet sector where newly arrived troops could gain experience prior to being committed to more hectic parts of the front.....

*(Extract of Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)*

Private William John Sutherland embarked for England from France on 30th March, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Carisbrook Castle* with Diabetes Mellitus.

Private William John Sutherland was admitted to War Hospital, Exeter, England on 31st March, 1918 with Diabetes Mellitus – severe. He was transferred to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield on 17th April, 1918.

Mrs E. Sutherland, wife of Private William John Sutherland, was advised by Base Records on 12th April, 1918 that Private William Sutherland was ill. She was later advised on the same date that Private William Sutherland had been admitted to War Hospital, Exeter, England on 31st March with Diabetes Mellitus – severe.

Private William John Sutherland was placed on the dangerously ill list around 22nd April, 1918.

Private William John Sutherland died at 7.30 pm on 23rd April, 1918 at 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from Diabetes Mellitus.

A death for William J. Sutherland, aged 34, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private William John Sutherland was buried at 10.30 am on 26th April, 1918 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Grave No. 50. Now recorded by Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Plot number Aust. 49 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private William John Sutherland - *Coffin was good Polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag and surmounted by a beautiful wreath. Gun Carriage was supplied by the A.S.C. and Firing Party, Bugler and Bearers were supplied by Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London. Prior to the interment a service was held by Chaplain T. Terry in the Parish Church. The grave will be turfed immediately and a headstone will be erected by the Authorities of the 1st Aust. Aux. Hpl. Harefield. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives or friends present at funeral: Brother – 2686 Pte H. Sutherland, 4th Pioneer Battalion, A.I.F., No. 1 Command Depot, Sutton Veny. Uncle – Mr George Doidge, 12 Albert Street, Millon, Cumberland.

Private William John Sutherland requested in his Will, dated 8th January, 1917, that in the event of his death he appointed Emma Louise Sutherland, of Millchester Rd, Charters Towers, Queensland, as Executor of his Will & also bequeathed her the whole of his property & effects.

A War Pension was awarded to Emma Louise Sutherland, Millchester Rd, Charters Towers, Queensland, widow of the late Private William John Sutherland, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 27th June, 1918.

The Australian Natives Association, Charters Towers Branch wrote to Base Records on 2nd August, 1918 requesting a copy of the Death Certificate of Private W. J. Sutherland as it was “*required so as to pay mortality allowance to this wife.*” A death certificate was sent by Base Records on 16th August, 1918.

Private William John Sutherland was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Sutherland's widow - Mrs E. L. Sutherland, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William John Sutherland – service number 3196, aged 35, of 4th Australian Pioneers. He was the son of John and Kate Sutherland; husband of Emma Louisa Sutherland, of Ismail St, Ayr, Queensland.

Private W. J. Sutherland is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 174.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

The Charters Towers & District Roll of Honour is a framed paper honour roll which commemorates those who served in World War 1. It was located to Charters Towers RSL, 8 Prior Street, Charters Towers, Queensland but the RSL apparently closed in Marc, 2013.



**Charters Towers & District Roll of Honour** (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

The Charters Towers War Memorial, located at Gill Street, Charters Towers, Queensland does not list individual names.



**Charters Towers War Memorial** (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

W. J. Sutherland Charters Towers Wall of Remembrance located at Charters Towers RSL Club, Prior Street, Charters Towers, Queensland.





Charters Towers Wall of Remembrance

W. J. Sutherland 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)



(53 pages of Private William John Sutherland'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**

### **CASUALTY LIST**

W. J. Sutherland, Charters Towers, ser. ill;

*(The Telegraph, Brisbane, Queensland – 26 April, 1918)*

---

### **DEATH**

SUTHERLAND – At the Military Hospital, England, Private William John Sutherland, died April 23rd, the beloved husband of Emma Louisa Sutherland, Millchester Road.

Deeply regretted.

*(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland – 4 May, 1918)*

---

### **CASUALTIES**

#### **399th LIST**

#### **NAMES OF QUEENSLANDERS**

#### **DIED OF ILLNESS**

W. J. Sutherland, Charters Towers, 23/4/18 (prev. rep. ill, ser.).

*(The Daily Standard, Brisbane, Queensland – 11 May, 1918)*

---

### **THE ROLL OF HONOR**

#### **CHARTERS TOWERS HONORED DEAD**

During the Great War, Charters Towers played a noble part, for it contributed well nigh 1600 fighting men for the Empire's army, and about 20 of its nurses went overseas on their errands of mercy. Many of its sons fell on the battlefield, and now that the war is virtually over, it is seen that the casualties of men killed in action, missing, prisoners of war, and died from illness, total approximately 169. Below we publish the names which are taken from records kept at the Town Hall.....

Pte W. J. Sutherland...April 23, 1918

.....

*(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland – 7 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 W. J. Sutherland does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Loving Memory Of My Dear Husband And Our Dear Father*

## **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 W. J. Sutherland's 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)





THE ANZAC CEMETERY, HAREFIELD, LAWRENCE, PHOTO