

**Western Necropolis Cemetery,
Glasgow, Scotland
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



478 PRIVATE

T. S. VIRTUE

1ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

9TH DECEMBER, 1916 Age 25

With Jesus

Which Is Far Better

Thomas Smith VIRTUE

Thomas Smith Virtue was born at Kinning Park, Glasgow, Scotland in May, 1891 to parents William Virtue and Barbara Ferguson Virtue (nee Smith).

Thomas Smith Virtue attended Shields Road School, Glasgow, Scotland.

The 1901 Scotland Census recorded Thomas S. Virtue as a 9 year old Scholar, living with his family at 20 Avon Street, Glasgow, Scotland. His parents were listed as William Virtue (Cab Driver, aged 50, born Ireland) & Barbara Virtue (aged 43, born Monquhitter, Aberdeenshire). Thomas was one of eight children listed on this Census – Sarah S. Virtue (Park Butcher's Saleswoman, aged 21, born Monquhitter, Aberdeenshire), Isabella M. Virtue (Dressmaker, aged 19, born Paisley, Renfrewshire), Williamina Virtue (Dressmaker's Machinist, aged 16, born Rutherglen, Lanarkshire), Bethia Virtue (aged 15, born Rutherglen, Lanarkshire), Archibald Virtue, Scholar, aged 13, born Glasgow, Lanarkshire), then Thomas, William Virtue (Scholar, aged 8, born Glasgow, Lanarkshire) & Annie S. Virtue (aged 9 months, born Glasgow, Lanarkshire).

Barbara Virtue, mother of Thomas Smith Virtue, died in 1902.

Thomas William Virtue, father of Thomas Smith Virtue, died in 1905 or 1908.

According to information supplied by his sister, Ella M. Brown, for the Roll of Honour – Thomas Smith Virtue came to Australia when he was 17 years old.

Thomas Smith Virtue was a 23 year old, single, Ironworker from (care of Mrs Brown) 69 Thompson Street, Drummoyne, NSW when he enlisted on 27th August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 478 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as W. Virtue, H.M.S. "Eridge" c/o PO London.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was posted to 1st Battalion A.I.F. "D" Company on 27th August, 1914 for recruit training

Private Thomas Smith Virtue embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Afric (A19)* on 18th October, 1914 with the 1st Infantry Battalion "D" Company.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue embarked from Alexandria on 5th April, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) for the Gallipoli Campaign on Troop ship *Minnewaska*.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was wounded at Gallipoli between 25th & 29th April, 1915. He was admitted to No. 1 General Hospital at Heliopolis on 30th April, 1915 with gunshot wounds to arm. Pte Virtue was discharged to Zeitoun Base Details from Helouan on 8th June, 1915, fit for duty. Pte Virtue was admitted to Helouan Convalescent Hospital on 19th June, 1915 with bullet wound to arm & discharged to duty on 29th June, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue rejoined his Battalion at Gallipoli on 13th July, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was accompanying Major Kindon, (wounded) to Hospital on 11th August, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was written up for a Crime on 2nd September, 1915 at Mustapha – for being drunk in town on 24th August, 1915. He was fined 5/-.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was recorded as having a gunshot wound to head & being discharged to duty from Military Hospital at Ras-el-Tin on 2nd September, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue reported to Overseas Base Depot from Ras-el-Tin on 4th September, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was written up for a Crime at Alexandria on 4th October, 1915. He was 1. Absent without leave from 10 pm on 29th September, 1915 till 10.30 pm on 29th September, 1915; 2. Being improperly dressed & 3. Breaking away from escort. He was awarded 28 days detention.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was transferred from Australian Overseas Base to Detention at Cairo on 4th October, 1915. He was admitted to No. 1 Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 7th October, 1915 with "Kidneys & Liver" (War

Gratuity Schedule records "Kidney trouble & Nerves" & admitted to Luna Park Hospital) & then transferred to Australian & New Zealand Convalescent Camp at Helouan on 16th October, 1915. Pte Virtue was discharged to Base at Zeitoun on 21st October, 1915. .

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was admitted to Hospital at Abbassia on 3rd November, 1915 & discharged to Details on 23rd November, 1915.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was reported to be with No. 1 Training Battalion at Aerodrome Camp, Heliopolis on 19th February, 1916. (According to a letter written to Senator Pearce in May, 1916, by Mrs E. Brown, sister of Pte T. S. Virtue, stating that her brother had only received two letters from her since he had joined with the first contingent & the last word she had received from him was that he was acting as Pay Corporal, 1st Training Battalion at Aerodrome Camp, Heliopolis. She also stated that her brother had been "wounded at the landing & he was also at the Lone Pine engagement".)

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was admitted to No. 9 Stationary Hospital at Marseilles on 17th May, 1916 from H.M.T. *Caledonian*. He was discharged on 8th June, 1916.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue reported to 1st Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 15th June, 1916.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was promoted to Acting Corporal at Base Depot with extra duty pay from 1st August, 1916. Acting Corporal Thomas Smith Virtue reverted to the rank of Private on 5th November, 1916 & ceased to draw extra duty pay at 1st Australian Divisional Base Depot.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was on furlough to England from 23rd November, 1916.

1st Battalion

The 1st Battalion was the first infantry unit recruited for the AIF in New South Wales during the First World War.

The battalion was raised 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. The battalion took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 as part of the second and third waves, and served there until the evacuation in December. Its most notable engagement at Gallipoli was the battle of Lone Pine in August. Two members of the battalion, Captain A. J. Shout and Lieutenant L.M. Keysor were awarded Victoria Crosses for their valour at Lone Pine, Captain Shout posthumously.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli in December 1915, the battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in operations against the German Army, principally in the Somme Valley in France and around Ypres in Belgium.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was admitted to 3rd Scottish General Hospital, Stobhill, Glasgow, Scotland on 30th November, 1916, severely sick, whilst on furlough. ("Casualty Form – Active Service" records Pte Virtue was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital with pneumonia (severe) on 1st December, 1916). Pte Virtue was reported on 1st December, 1916 to be dangerously & seriously ill at 3rd General Hospital, Glasgow.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue died at 7.15 pm on 9th December, 1916 at 3rd Scottish General Hospital, Stobhill, Glasgow, Scotland from Pneumonia.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was buried on 14th December, 1916 in Western Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland – Plot number N. 1 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

A War Pension was granted to Annie Virtue, of Lyons Road, Five Dock, sister of the late "Virtue, Thomas Smith, 478 S/Major 18th Batt" in the sum of £1:10 per fortnight, granted from 15th February, 1917.

Mrs Ella M. Brown, Lyons Road, Five Dock, Sydney, wrote to Base Records in February, 1917 stating that she was the next of kin to No. 478 Quarter Master Sergeant T. S. Virtue, who was her brother. She stated she held his last Will & Testament & was the Executrix of the Will. Mrs Brown stated that her youngest brother William Virtue happened to be in port in Scotland & was able to attend the funeral of their brother but was at present mine sweeping in the North Sea. Base Records replied stating they required the full address of the next of kin shown on the Attestation Papers as "W. Virtue". Mrs Brown wrote to Base Records again in July, 1917 enquiring when she could expect to receive the personal effects of her brother "Q. Mast. Sgt. No. 478 T. S. Virtue, 1st Batt." Base Records advised Mrs Brown to send a copy of the Will to both Base Records & to the District Paymaster, Paddington, NSW.

Base Records contacted Mrs E. Brown, of 41 Collingwood Street, Drummoyne, NSW, in April, 1920 requesting the address of the eldest brother of the late Private Thomas Smith Virtue 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 Brown replied she was the eldest "*Sister but one. She lives in Canada and I don't know her address. I may add that when my late brother was a boy of 12 years of age our parents died. My eldest "sister" got married and went to Canada. I being the "eldest girl left at home with my three younger sisters and three young brothers. I kept the home going myself and the boys and girls went to work. We kept the home going for five years I then got married to my present husband. My brother Tom & little sister Nan continued to live with me after I had got married and my brother left my home in 1914 to join the A.I.F. I have practically been my brother's Guardian since our parents died.*"

Mrs Brown had stated in previous correspondence that she could not give the address of the eldest brother as he had left home & went to Canada. She had heard from friends in England that the eldest brother was in France with the Canadian Forces & never wrote to any of the family.

Base Records advised Mrs E. Brown, sister of the late Private Thomas Smith Virtue, on 6th May, 1920, that they would recommend to the Minister of Defence that the War Medals & other items issuable on account of her late brother be handed to her once she signed the completed Declaration. Mrs E. M. Brown signed a Declaration on 12th May, 1920, that she would undertake to preserve with due care any War Medals or other items given into her custody on account of the service rendered by the late No. 478 Private T. S. Virtue & would return them to the Department of Defence upon demand in writing should they be required for the purpose of being handed to someone having a prior claim that herself. Mrs E. M. Brown, sister of the late Private Thomas Smith Virtue, signed as receipt of the Victory Medal on 20th July, 1922. (no details are listed regarding the other two medals).

Mrs E. M. Brown, of Hay Street, Collaroy, NSW wrote to Base Records in October, 1923 stating she was the next of kin of the late "Q. Mast. Sgt. T. S. Virtue, No. 478, 1st Batt" & had received her brother's previous medal and was asking if there was a Bronze Plaque which she "was supposed to receive". Base Records replied that the Memorial Plaque and Scroll, in respect of the late No. 478 Private T. S. Virtue had been issued by the London Authorities to the soldier's brother- Mr W. Virtue, H.M.S. "Erdige", c/o G.P.O. London.

Private Thomas Smith Virtue was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Pte Virtue's next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1921 to Pte Thomas Virtue's eldest brother – Mr William Virtue in London).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Smith Virtue – service number 478, aged 25, of 1st Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of William and Barbara Smith Virtue. Born at Glasgow.

Private T. S. Virtue is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 31.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Thomas Virtue is remembered on the Roll of Honour inside Drummoyne Presbyterian Church, corner of Lyons Road & college Street, Drummoyne, NSW.



Drummoyne Presbyterian Church Roll of Honour (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW)

T. Virtue is remembered on the Balmain Rowing Club Roll of Honour, located in Balmain Rowing Club, White Street, Balmain, NSW.



Balmain Rowing Club Roll of Honour (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW)

T. S. Virtue is remembered on the Drummoyne War Memorial, located at the corner of Lyons Road & Marlborough Streets, Drummoyne, NSW.



Drummoyne War Memorial (Photo by J. Bar)

Thomas Smith Virtue is remembered in the Roll of Honour books held in the Hall of Honour inside The Scottish National War Memorial. The north side of the Hall of Honour is divided by columns into bays, each dedicated to a different regiment and enhanced with battle honours and consecrated colours. On the broad shelf in front of each of the bays, the names of the dead are listed in leather-bound books.



The Scottish National War Memorial & the Hall of Honour & the Roll of Honour books.

(Photos from The Scottish National War Memorial)



Mr L. McKay, of 143 Hudson Parade, Clareville Beach, NSW , wrote to Army Records, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne in September, 1968 enquiring into the Gallipoli Medallion that was to be issued to all Veterans & their next of kin who served in Gallipoli. Mr L. McKay was enquiring on behalf of his wife - Annie Simpson McKay (nee Virtue) who was at the time ill in hospital. He stated that his wife, the sister of Thomas Virtue, was the only surviving member of Tom Virtues' family. Mr L. McKay wrote to Army Records again to advise that his wife - Annie Simpson McKay (nee Virtue) had died suddenly at Mona Vale Hospital, NSW on 20th September, 1968. He stated she was survived by

himself & their four daughters. A completed Application form for the Gallipoli Medallion had been enclosed with the letter.

(94 pages of Pte Thomas Smith Virtue'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



Private Thomas Smith Virtue

Newspaper Notices

THE 256TH LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Q.M.S. T. S. VIRTUE, Scotland

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 25 December, 1916)

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 T. S. Virtue does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

With Jesus

Which Is Far Better

Western Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland

The Western Necropolis is a large cemetery complex north of Glasgow City Centre. Adjoining this site are the following large cemeteries: Glasgow Lambhill and Glasgow St Kentigerns Cemetery, all three are separate but adjoin each other. Glasgow Garnet Hill Hebrew Burial Ground and Glasgow Crematorium Memorial is also at this site.

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.

Glasgow was one of the ports of embarkation for the British Expeditionary Force in 1914 and several military hospitals opened in the city during the First World War, including the 3rd and 4th Scottish General (1,200 beds each), and the Merryflats War Hospital (500 beds). Battalions of a number of Scottish regiments had their headquarters at Glasgow during both wars, most notably the Highland Light Infantry. The Clydeside shipyards were targeted by German bombers during the Blitz, and Glasgow suffered a particularly ferocious attack on the night of 13/14 March 1941 when many civilians and servicemen were killed.

Glasgow Western Necropolis contains 355 First World War burials, many of them grouped together in Section P, with a small group of Australian graves in Section N. A screen wall near the main entrance carries the badges of the

regiments represented in Sections P and H. The 124 Second World War burials are scattered throughout the cemetery, although there are two among the earlier war graves in Section P. Also in this group are two inter-war service burials and two German war graves.

There are 11 Australian Soldiers from World War 1 buried in Western Necropolis Cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice in Western Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland *(Photo from CWGC)*

Photo of Private T. S Virtue's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Western Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland.



(Photo from Ben – Find a Grave)



Some of the Australian Headstones in Western Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland (Photo from CWGC)

Private T. S Virtue's headstone marked by red arrow

