

**Darwen Cemetery,
Darwen, Lancashire**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



4547 PRIVATE

A. E. WARD

19TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

1ST DECEMBER, 1918 Age 33

In Memory Of

The Dearly Loved friend Of

Mrs E. McCullough Of N.S.W.

Alfred Edmund WARD

Alfred Edmund Ward was born near Warialda, NSW to parents John and Henrietta Ward. (Possible birth details – 1877 registered as Ernest Edward Thomas Ward.)

Alfred Edmund Ward attended Cleveland Street School, Sydney, NSW.

Alfred Edmund Thomas Ward served with the South African contingent with the New South Wales Imperial Bushmen as Private No. 422, attached to "A" Company.

From information provided by Mrs E. McCullough for the Roll of Honour *"He was for several years connected with the circus, both in Africa & the Commonwealth, the latter he toured with Wirth Bros?? as a Cowboy rough-rider, he is believed to be one of the smartest at these performances."*

Alfred Edmund Ward stated he was a 30 year old, single, Labourer (information from the Roll of Honour states he was a Horse Trainer & Circus performer) from 130 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW when he enlisted at Casula, Sydney on 6th December, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Brigade, 19th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4547 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Mrs E. McCullough, of 130 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW. Alfred Ward stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with 6th Imperial Bushmen in South Africa & with Scots Railway Guards in South Africa. William James Harpur, a Shearer, also from 130 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW also enlisted with 5th Infantry Brigade, 19th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements with a service number of 4424.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was posted to 11th Reinforcements, 19th Battalion on 6th December, 1915.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Nestor (A71)* on 9th April, 1916. William James Harpur also embarked on the same day. Private Alfred Edmund Ward embarked again from Alexandria on H.M.T. *Megantic* on 29th May, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 7th 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 Alfred Edmund Ward was absent without leave while at Rollestone, Wiltshire from 24.00 on 12th July, 1916 till 06.00 on 14th July, 1916. He was awarded a total forfeiture of 4 days pay.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward proceeded overseas for France on 5th September, 1916.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was marched in to 2nd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 6th September, 1916.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was marched out on 19th September, 1916 to join his Unit & was taken on strength with 19th Battalion in France on 20th September, 1916.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was sent to hospital sick on 20th November, 1916. He rejoined his Unit on 26th November, 1916.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was sent to Lewis Gun School on 2nd December, 1916. He was sent to hospital sick on 8th December, 1916 from Lewis Gun School. Pte Ward was admitted to 26th General Hospital at Etaples, France on 8th December, 1916. He was transferred to Convalescent Depot on 22nd December, 1916. Pte Ward was admitted to 6th Convalescent Depot at Etaples on 22nd December, 1916. He was transferred to 5th Convalescent Depot at Coyeux & admitted on 30th December, 1916. Pte Ward was transferred to Base Details on 19th January, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 26th January, 1917.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was on leave to England from 29th August, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 11th September, 1917.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was reported as being with his Unit in Belgium on 18th February, 1918.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was on leave to UK from 18th October, 1918.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward died at 9.00 am on 1st December, 1918 at Valemont, Springvale, Darwen, Lancashire (private residence) from Influenza & Pneumonia. Pte Ward had died at the home of his cousin – Mr J. H. Leach, while on leave from France.

According to information provided by a friend, Mrs E. McCullough, Alfred Ward died at the age of 42.

Private Alfred Edmund Ward was buried on 6th December, 1918 in Darwen Cemetery, Darwen, Lancashire, England – Plot number I. 3565 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte A. E. Ward - *The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and surmounted by several wreaths sent from: - Mrs Teauge, Miss Fitzgerald, Mr & Mrs Butterfield, Mr & Mrs Fred Leach, Mr & Mrs J. H. Leach, and many others. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the burial service conducted by the Rev. Lyall R.H. of St. Johns Church, Darwen, Lancs. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. Relatives and Friends present at the Funeral – Cousins – Mr & Mrs Butterfield, Mr & Mrs Bradley, Mr Jack Leach, (Friend) Miss Fitzgerald and Miss Richardson, (Cousins) Mr & Mrs Fred Leach, Mrs Teauge and Mrs Riding.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Alfred Edmund Ward contains a request from the Red Cross due to several enquiries to obtain the fullest details possible of the wounds, death & burial of Private Alfred Edmund Ward. A letter was written by Nora H. Leach for Frederick Leach of Valemont, Spring Vale, Darwen which reads: *"On behalf of my Father who is confined to his bed through sickness, I have great pleasure in replying to your kind enquires with regard to the death of my dear cousin Ernest (Pte A. E. Ward, 4547, 19th Battalion, A.I.F.) which occurred at the above address on December 1st, 1918. It is with great sorrow I have to inform those kind enquirers that he suffered great agony. We buried him with Military Honours in our beautiful little cemetery here, with the reverence and affection he so richly deserved. We have a photograph of our dear cousin and if any of those kind friends would write to me direct, they could have one. I regret your letter was not answered before, but I trust you will accept the reason explained, as sufficient explanation."*

19th Battalion

After further training in Egypt, the 19th Battalion proceeded to France. It took part in its first major offensive around Pozieres between late July and the end of August 1916. After a spell in a quieter sector of the front in Belgium, the 2nd Division, which included the 5th Brigade, came south again in October. The 19th Battalion attacked near Flers between 14 and 16 November, in conditions that Charles Bean described as the worst ever encountered by the AIF.

In 1917, the 19th was involved in the follow-up of German forces after their retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and was one of four battalions to defeat a counter-stroke by a German force, almost five times as strong, at Lagincourt. The Battalion took part in three major battles before the year was out, second Bullecourt (3-4 May) in France, and Menin Road (20-22 September) and Poelcappelle (9-10 October) in Belgium.

The spring of 1918 brought a major German offensive that the 19th Battalion helped to stop. For his actions during the fighting around Hangard Wood on 7 April, Lieutenant Percy Storkey was awarded the Victoria Cross. With this last desperate offensive defeated, the 19th participated in the battles that pushed the German Army ever closer to defeat: Amiens on 8 August, the legendary attack on Mont St Quentin on 31 August, and the forcing of the Beaufort Line around Montbrehain on 3 October. Montbrehain was the battalion's last battle. The casualties of 1918, combined with long-term leave for 1914 enlistees, and dwindling new enlistments had sapped the strength of the AIF. On 10 October 1918 the 19th Battalion was disbanded to reinforce other battalions in the brigade.

(Information from The Australian War Memorial)

Pte Alfred Edmund Ward requested in his Will, dated 12th July, 1917, that all his real & personal estate be bequeathed to Mrs Evelyn McCullough of 130 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW, Australia.

Mrs Evelyn McCullough signed for the receipt of 1 package (obtained from a Kit Bag held in Store) containing the personal effects of the late Pte A. E. Ward on 15th July, 1919. Another package was sent to Mrs E. McCullough from Queen Mary's Military Hospital, Whalley which included 1 South African Ribbon on 16th August, 1919.

Base Records contacted Mrs Evelyn McCullough being the registered next-of kin, on 12th December, 1921, enquiring if there were any blood relatives of the late Pte A. E. Ward 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 Evelyn McCullough replied on 1st February, 1922 that there was only one brother living – Mr R. Ward, C/o Mr C. Williams, Marada, Stonehenge, Queensland, Australia.

Base Records wrote to Mr R. Ward, Corella Station, via Stonehenge, Queensland on 25th May, 1923 to advise that the records had been amended to show that he was now the next-of-kin of the late No. 4547 Private A. E. Ward. Mr R. Ward was advised that the personal effects of Pte A. E. Ward had been forwarded to Mrs E. McCullough of Surry Hills as she was the sole beneficiary under the will of the late soldier.

Pte Alfred Edmund Ward was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Alfred Ward's brother - Mr R. Ward, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent April, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred Edmund Ward – service number 4547, aged 33, of 19th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of the late John and Henrietta Ward. Born at Warialda, New South Wales.

Private A. E. Ward is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 90.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(73 pages of Pte Alfred Edmund Ward'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



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTIES

453rd LIST

DIED OTHER CAUSES

A. E. Ward, Surry Hills, NSW, 1/12/18 (C.N. std.)

(Daily Standard, Brisbane Queensland – 26 December, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 7th September, 1921, to Mrs E. McCullough, of 130 Devonshire Street, Sydney, NSW, advised that the Star of David which she had requested for the headstone of the late Pte A. E. Ward was a symbol of the Jewish faith & that Pte Ward had, on enlistment, stated that he was a member of the Church of England. The letter gave her the option to instead choose the Cross, being the emblem of Christianity. Mrs McCullough replied on 9th September, 1921 stating that she would now request the Cross for the headstone of the late Pte A. E. Ward.

Pte A. E. Ward does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of The Dearly Loved Friend Of Mrs E. McCullough Of N.S.W.

Photo of Pte A. E. Ward's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Darwen Cemetery, Darwen, Lancashire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Lucas)

Darwen Cemetery, Darwen, Lancashire, England

Darwen Cemetery, Darwen contains 98 Commonwealth War Graves – 70 are related to World War 1 & 28 are related to World War 2.



Cross of Sacrifice (Photos by David Dixon)

