

Sutton Veny War Graves

World War 1



Lest We Forget



2576 DRIVER

F. WATTS

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

21ST MAY, 1918 AGE 26

Safe In The Arms Of Jesus

Loving Mother

Sister And Brothers

*CWGC Headstone for Driver F. Watts is located in
Grave Plot # 350. E. 2. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Frank WATTS

Frank Watts was born at Mudgee, NSW around 1891 to parents Nathaniel and Jane Ann Watts (nee Plenty). He was a 23 year old, single, Labourer when he enlisted at Sydney, NSW on 1st September, 1914 with the Divisional Ammunition Column – No. 1 Section of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2576 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr N. Watts of Wellington, NSW.

Driver Frank Watts embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Argyllshire (A8)* on 18th September, 1914 & disembarked at Egypt in December, 1914.

Driver Frank Watts embarked to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 21st March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseille, France on 27th March, 1916.

Driver Watts was transferred to 1st D.A.C. (Divisional Ammunition Column) in France on 15th May, 1916 & taken on strength.

Driver Watts was sent to Hospital while in France with VD on 26th January, 1917. He was discharged to duty at Etaples on 9th May, 1917.

Driver Watts joined A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Etaples from Hospital on 9th May, 1917.

Driver Watts was transferred to 1st Division A.F.A. (Australian Field Artillery) at Rouelles on 28th May, 1917 & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 29th May, 1917.

Driver Watts was sent to Hospital sick on 27th August, 1917 & admitted to 37th Casualty Clearing Station with I.C.T. Legs on 31st August, 1917. He was transferred to 38th Ambulance Train on 1st September, 1917 & on 2nd September he was admitted to 5th General Hospital at Rouen. Driver Watts was transferred to England on 8th September, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* with Eczema & admitted to 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, England on 9th September, 1917.

Driver Watts was transferred & admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 1st October, 1917 & discharged on 2nd November, 1917.

Driver Watts was marched in from 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford to No. 2 Command Depot on 2nd November, 1917.

Driver Watts marched out of No. 2 Command Depot on 12th December, 1917 & marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 16th December, 1917.

Driver Watts was marched out from No. 3 Command Depot & marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 16th February, 1918.

Driver Watts was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 9th March, 1918 & discharged on 13th March, 1918 to Convalescent Training Depot at Parkhouse.

Driver Watts was marched out from Parkhouse on 26th April, 1918 & marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 27th April, 1918. He was medically classified as B1 A1 due to a sprained ankle (light duty only – 4 weeks).

Driver Frank Watts was set to Group Clearing Hospital at Sutton Veny on 12th May, 1918 with Influenza then transferred & admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 15th May, 1918 with Measles.

Driver Frank Watts died at 1.10 pm on 21st May, 1918 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Measles, Acute Bronchitis & Oedema of Lung. Case of death was verified by a Post Mortem.

A death for Frank Watts, aged 27, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Driver Frank Watts was buried on 24th May, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 350. From the burial report of Driver Watts - *Coffin was good polished Elm with Brass Mountings – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours. Band, Firing Party, Pall Bearers, Company of N.C.O.'s and Men preceded the funeral procession. Wreaths from Officers and man, Australians in Sutton Veny Hospital, and Nurses at Sutton Veny Hospital were placed on the grave after the "Last Post" was sounded. Deceased was very popular and always proved himself a good soldier and a true comrade.*

Pte Frank Watts requested in his Will, dated 2nd August, 1917, bequeathed all his real & personal Estate to his sister – Gladys Watts of Market Street, Mudgee, NSW.

The personal effects of the late Driver Frank Watts were sent to his sister - Gladys Watts.

Driver F. Watts is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 21.



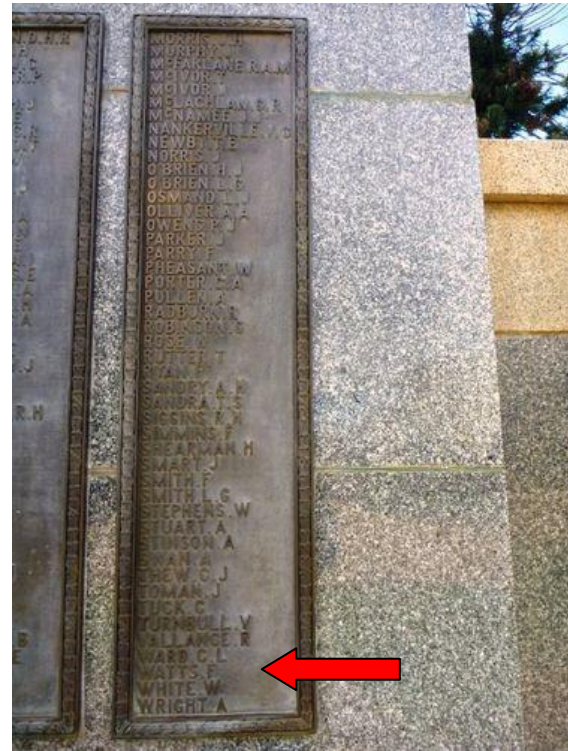
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. Watts is remembered on the Mudgee District Fallen Soldiers Memorial located at Mudgee Park, Mudgee, NSW.



Mudgee District Fallen Soldiers Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia – Peter F. Williams / Sandra Brown)

F. Watts is remembered on the Wellington Cenotaph located at Cameron Park, Wellington, NSW.



Wellington Cenotaph (Photo from Monument Australia –Diane Watson, Kent Watson & Glen Yeomans)

Photographs of the grave where Pte Frank Watts was buried in Sutton Veny Churchyard were sent to his father – Mr N. Watts at Wellington, NSW but they were returned “unknown”. The photos were then forwarded to Pte Frank Watts’ mother at Mudgee, NSW in December, 1918. Mrs Watts advised that she had not known the whereabouts of her husband for the past 12 months.

Driver Frank Watts was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Pte Watts’ next-of-kin. Mrs J. A. Watts, mother of late Pte Frank Watts, was contacted by Base Records in August, 1920 asking for details of any closer blood relations & their name & address. Mrs Watts replied that Nathaniel Watts – father was the closest next of kin but his whereabouts were unknown by her. The War Medals & other Mementoes were sent to Pte Frank Watts’ mother – Mrs J. A. Watts (Scroll sent June, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The CWGC lists Driver Frank Watts, 2576, of 1st Div. Ammunition Col., Australian Field Artillery, A.I.F., as the son of Nathaniel and Jane Ann Watts of Denison St. Mudgee, New South Wales.

(79 pages of Driver Frank Watts’ Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives.



Newspaper Reports

WAR CASUALTIES

Information has been received in Wellington that Driver Frank Watts, the oldest son of Mr Matt. Watts, has died in France. He belonged to the 1st Division Ammunition Column, and was one of the first volunteers to leave Wellington, being one of the original Anzacs. He was 28 years old.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 31 May, 1918)

MORE MUDGEES HEROES

PRIVATE FRANK WATTS

Word has been received by Mrs N. Watts, of West End, that her soldier son, Frank, has died from illness in France. Private Frank Watts enlisted early in the first year of the war, and fought through the Gallipoli campaign. He was afterwards sent to France, and there he went through some of the fiercest battles. Some twelve months ago he got trench feet, and was for a time under treatment in England. Recovering he was again sent to the front. He subsequently seized with illness, to which he succumbed, thus laying down his life for his country. The deceased soldier was related to the Plenty family at Spring Flat, being a grandson of Mrs Plenty, sen. The parents and also the relatives have the deepest sympathy of a wide circle of friends in their sad bereavement.

(Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative, NSW – Thursday 6 June, 1918)

408th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

Died, Cause Not Stated

Dvr Frank Watts, Wellington

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Thursday 13 June, 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 at St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny. 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)

Driver Frank Watts does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Safe In The Arms Of Jesus Loving Mother Sister And Brothers

Photo of Driver F. Watts's CWGC headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



War Graves at Sutton Veny *(Photos from CWGC)*

