

**St. John the Baptist Churchyard,
Bollington, Cheshire
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2868 PRIVATE

A. WRIGHT

4TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

3RD NOVEMBER, 1918 Age 27

Eternal Rest

Give Unto Him O Lord

Alfred WRIGHT

Alfred Wright was born at Bollington, near Macclesfield, Cheshire, England in 1890 to parents George & Martha Wright (nee Unwin).

The 1891 England Census recorded Alfred Wright as a 10 month old, living with his family at Wellington Road, Bollington, Cheshire, England in a 4 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as George Wright (General Labourer, aged 40, born Bollington, Cheshire) & Martha Wright (aged 39, born Bollington, Cheshire). Alfred was the youngest of three children listed on this Census (all born Bollington, Cheshire) – Edith Wright (aged 6), Minnie Wright (aged 3) then Alfred.

The 1901 England Census recorded Alfred Wright as a 10 year old, living with his family at Off Wellington Road, Bollington, Cheshire, England. His parents were listed as George Wright (Stone Labourer, aged 50) & Martha Wright (aged 50). Alfred was one of four children listed on this Census – Edith Wright (Cotton Winder, aged 16), Minnie Wright (Cotton Doffer, aged 13) then Alfred & Ethel Wright (aged 6, born Bollington, Cheshire).

Alfred Wright attended School at Bollington Cross National.

The 1911 England Census recorded Alfred Wright as a 20 year old Cotton Operative Calico Weaver, living with his family at 9 Courier Road, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, England in a 4 roomed dwelling. His widower father was listed as George Wright (General Labourer, Property Builder, aged 60). George & his deceased wife had been married for 28 years & had 5 children, with 1 being deceased. Alfred was one of four siblings listed on this Census - Edith Wright (House Keeper, aged 26), Minnie Wright (Cotton Operative Calico Weaver, aged 23) then Alfred & Ethel Wright (Cotton Operative Winder, aged 16)

According to information provide by his father for the Roll of Honour, Alfred came to Australia when he was 22 years old.

Alfred Wright was a 22 year old, single, Miner from 9 off Wellington Road, Bollington, near Macclesfield, England when he enlisted at Newcastle, NSW on 31st July, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2868 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr G. Wright, 9 off Wellington Road, Bollington, near Macclesfield, England. Alfred Wright listed his postal address as Seaham No. 2, West Wallsend, near Newcastle, NSW.

Private Alfred Wright was posted to 6th Reinforcements of 19th Battalion on 31st July, 1915 for recruit training.

Private Alfred Wright embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 2nd November, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Brigade, 19th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements.

Private Alfred Wright was transferred to 4th Battalion on 14th February, 1916 & was taken on strength of 4th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir the same day.

Private Alfred Wright embarked for overseas from Alexandria on 23rd March, 1916 on H.T. *Simla*. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th March, 1916.

Private Alfred Wright reported sick on 29th April, 1916. He was admitted to 1st Australian Field Ambulance on 30th April, 1916 then transferred to 7th Casualty Clearing Station at Merville, France on 1st May, 1916. Private Wright was transferred to No. 1 Hospital Train on 4th May, 1916 & admitted to No. 1 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 5th May, 1916. He was transferred to Havre on 5th May, 1916 & admitted to No. 9 Stationary Hospital at Havre, France on 6th May, 1916 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). Private Wright was admitted for a period of 25 days with V.D. then discharged to Etaples on 31st May, 1916.

Private Alfred Wright was marched in to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples on 1st June, 1916. He was marched out to Entrenching Battalion on 13th June, 1916 then marched out to join his Unit on 27th July, 1916. Private Wright rejoined 4th Battalion in France on 31st July, 1916.

Private Alfred Wright was wounded in action in France on 16th August, 1916. He was admitted to 4th Australian Field Ambulance on 17th August, 1916 with GSW (gunshot wound/s) to shoulder & cheek. Private Wright was transferred & admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station on 17th August, 1916 then transferred the same day to No. 29 Ambulance Train. He was admitted to 1st Canadian General Hospital at Etaples, France on 17th August, 1916. Private Wright was invalided to England from Calais, France on 29th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen*.

War Diary – 4th Battalion

16th August, 1916 – Pozieres – Mouquet Farm

Remainder of Bn. under Major Stacy marched in early morning from Sausage Valley & relieved 51st Bn. Relief completed at 0600. Dispositions now from right to left D, C, A & B (as before). Each company has 2 Lewis guns & 1 was found by B Co evidently left by 50th Bn & 1 other is at H.Q. & was taken over from 50th Bn. Bn. H.Q. in old German dugout just W of Pozieres Cemetery & about 800 yds in rear of firing line. No British troops in trenches on our left for 500 yds. This is a very vulnerable point & an enemy advance on a wide front would walk through unmolested to Pozieres. On our right 3rd Bn. (A.I.F.) are in direct contact with us.

Before we took over from 51st Bn. their front was patrolled by 2/Lt. McMahon & 6 men. During today casualties were fairly heavy particularly amongst Officers – Capt. McDonald killed; Capt. Osborne, Lt. Lane & 2/Lts McMahon, Hart & Bennett wounded. Orders received to make advance N by bombing attacks at 1900. Heavy enemy bombardment of front line & rear communication trenches commenced at 1800 & delayed our preparations. At C.O.'s conference with Company Commanders in front line Capt. Osborne & Lt. Lane were wounded by a shell & rest of party scratched & covered with dust. At 1900 small parties of enemy seen advancing over open & attack appeared likely. Conference abandoned & Coy Commanders sent immediately to their companies. At 2100 enemy attacked on front of 50 yds in about 8 successive waves against No 13 platoon. Driven off by Bomb Platoon with bombs also rapid fire & Lewis gun. He came within 20 yds of trench. For rest of night enemy seen moving on front but no further attack.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Alfred Wright was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital in England on 29th August, 1916 with GSW to right shoulder. He was discharged on 9th October, 1916 & was to report to Perham Downs.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training & convalescing was completed in training & convalescing 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 Alfred Wright reported to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire from furlough on 30th October, 1916. He was medically classified as B1A.

Private Alfred Wright proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 14th December, 1916 on *Princess Henrietta* & was marched in to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples on 15th December, 1916. He was medically classed as "A" (ready for active service) on 2nd January, 1917. Private Wright was marched out from 1st A.D.B.D. on 5th January, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion in the Field on 9th January, 1917.

Private Alfred Wright was transferred to ANZAC Corps School in France on 20th July, 1917 & was on command at Corps Signal School on 20th July, 1917.

Private Alfred Wright reported sick on 25th October, 1917. He was admitted to 9th Casualty Clearing Station on 25th October, 1917 with Scabies & was discharged to duty on 30th October, 1917. Private Wright rejoined 1st Anzac Corps School on 30th October, 1917.

Private Alfred Wright was on leave to England from 1st November, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 22nd November, 1917.

Private Alfred Wright was transferred from 1st Anzac Corps School to 4th Battalion on 20th December, 1917. He was taken on strength of 4th Battalion in France on 23rd December, 1917.

Private Alfred Wright was reported to be still with his Unit on 12th July, 1918. (This usually was recorded when there had been no activity eg. Sickness, wounding or transfers on Casualty Form – Active Service for a period of time).

4th Battalion

The 4th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these other battalions, formed the 1st Brigade.

....

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. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. Later the battalion fought at Ypres, in Flanders, before returning to the Somme for winter.

The battalion participated in a short period of mobile operations following the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in early 1917, but spent much of that year fighting in increasingly difficult conditions around Ypres. In 1918 the battalion returned to the Somme valley and helped to stop the German spring offensive in March and April. The battalion subsequently participated in the Allies' great offensive of that year, launched east of Amiens on 8 August 1918. The advance on this day by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war".

The battalion continued operations until late September 1918. At 11 am on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Alfred Wright was on leave to UK from 24th October, 1918.

Private Alfred Wright was admitted to 2nd Western General Hospital, at Alexandria Park, Stockport, England on 2nd November, 1918.

Private Alfred Wright died on 3rd November, 1918 at 2nd Western General Hospital, at Alexandria Park, Stockport, England from Pneumonia.

A death for Alfred Wright, aged 25, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Stockport, Cheshire, England.

The body of the late Private Alfred Wright was sent, at the request of his father, to Macclesfield for interment. Private Alfred Wright was buried on 7th November, 1918 in St. John the Baptist Churchyard, Bollington, Cheshire, England – Grave reference - Extension (beside grave of E. Kean & at foot of grave of Stringer) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Alfred Wright - *Coffin was good quality. The deceased soldier was interred privately by relatives residing in Macclesfield. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Relatives and friends present at the Funeral – Father – Mr G. Wright, 3 Sisters – Miss Minnie and Ethel Wright & Mrs E. Clark, Brother-in-law. Mr & Mrs Dawson, Cousins. Mrs Suttin, Mrs Wright, Friend.

Private Alfred Wright requested in his Will dated 1st June, 1917 that all of his personal estate he bequeathed to his father – Mr George Wright, 9 off Wellington Rd., Bollington near Macclesfield, Cheshire, England.

Private Alfred Wright was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Wright's father in England – Mr G. Wright, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred Wright – service number 2868, aged 27, of 4th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George and Martha Wright, of 9 Courier's Row, Bollington, England.

Private A. Wright is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 42.



Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. Wright is remembered on the West Wallsend Soldiers Memorial, located in Soldiers Memorial Park, Carrington & Hyndes Streets, West Wallsend, NSW, Australia.

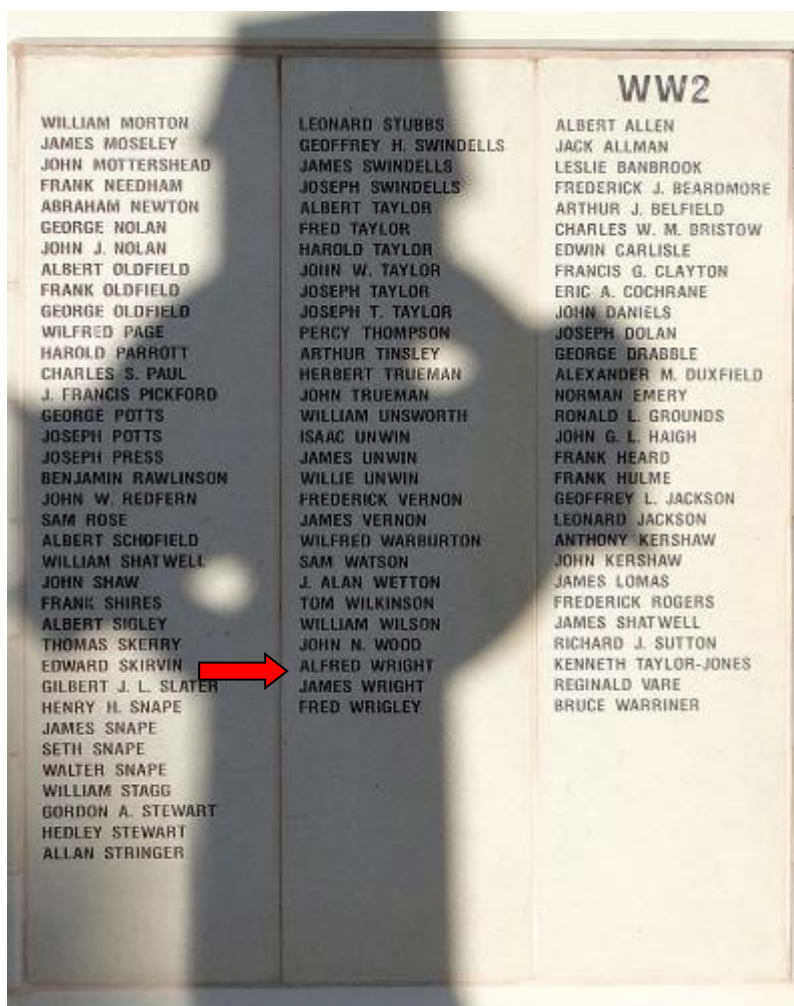


West Wallsend Soldiers Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)

Alfred Wright is remembered on the Bollington War Memorial, located in Memorial Gardens, Palmerston Street, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, England.



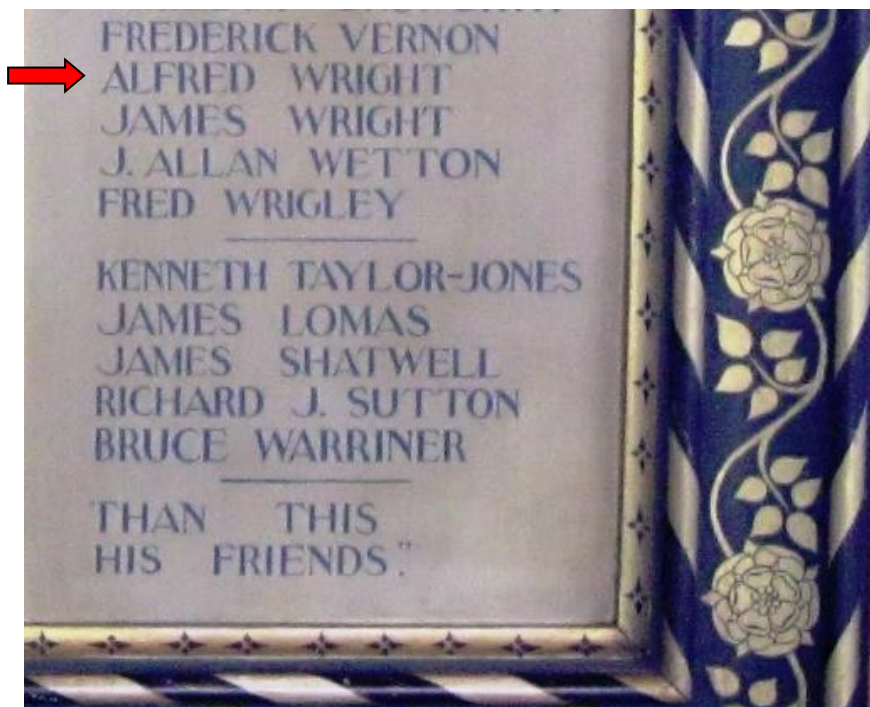
Bollington War Memorial (Photo from War Memorials Online)



Alfred Wright is remembered on the St. John's Roll of Honour which is now located in St. Oswald's Church, Bollington Road, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, England as St. John's Church is now closed.

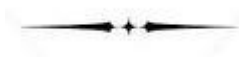


St. John's Roll of Honour, Bollington (Photo from War Memorials Online)



(59 pages of Private Alfred Wright'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

450th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte ALF. WRIGHT, England

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 7 December, 1918)

DISTRICT CASUALTIES

PRIVATE WRIGHT – Mr E. James, of West Wallsend, has been notified that Private Alfred Wright has been killed in action. Previous to enlistment he made his home at Mr J. Fullick's, of Seaham No. 2, West Wallsend.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 20 December, 1918)

100 Year Anniversary of the death of Alfred Wright 3rd November

Date: 2nd October 2018

Published by: David Naylor

It is 100 Years since Alfred Wright, a soldier serving in the First World War died in England. Private Alfred Wright 2868. 4th Btn Australian Infantry Australian Imperial Force died 3rd November 1918, 27 years old from wounds gained in battle.

Born in England, Alfred emigrated to Australia as a young boy and lived just north of Sydney, New South Wales. When war broke out, like thousands of other Australians and New Zealanders he immediately signed up with the Australian Imperial Force and joined the Australian Army to do his part for King and Empire. He boarded a ship in Circular Quay, Sydney, but sadly, never returned. He's buried in St John's churchyard, with a white Commonwealth war headstone.





The Heathcote family found out about Alfred when Chris Heathcote was helping his father Edward maintain the overgrown churchyard. Chris' son, Adam, lives in Sydney Australia, and so a connection was formed. Last year, Chris placed an RBL poppy cross with Alfred's details on Sydney's Martin Place War Memorial on ANZAC Day (Australia and New Zealand Army Corps) which is a day of remembrance down under.

Each ANZAC Day, Bollington Town Council now fly the Australian flag in honour of Alfred and the thousands of young Australian men that gave their lives, many of them, like Alfred, never returned.

Earlier this year, The Governor General of Australia, representative of the Queen of Australia, sent a letter of gratitude to Chris Heathcote to thank him for remembering Alfred on behalf of all Australians.

(Bollington Town Council website)

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 A. Wright does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Eternal Rest Give Unto Him O Lord

St. John the Baptist Churchyard, Bollington, Cheshire, England

St. John the Baptist Churchyard, Bollington has 15 Commonwealth War Graves – 13 from World War 1 & 2 from World War 2.



St. John the Baptist Church *(Photo by buttershap – Find a Grave)*

Photo of Private A. Wright's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. John the Baptist Churchyard, Bollington, Cheshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Blue - Twitter)



St. John the Baptist Churchyard (Photo by *buttershap* – Find a Grave)