

**Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire,
England - War Graves
World War 1**



Lest We Forget



3216 PRIVATE

E. J. WRIGHT

2ND AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS.

13TH MARCH, 1917*

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte E. J. Wright is located in Grave Plot # 220
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Edwin James WRIGHT

Edwin James Wright was born at Ballarat, Victoria on 18th May, 1877 to parents Thomas & Emma Wright (nee Eaves).

Edwin James Wright served 3 years with Vic. Rangers – 1898.

Edwin James Wright married Jane Henrietta Augusta Hesse in 1908 at Phillips River, Western Australia.

Edwin James Wright was a 40 year old, married, Blacksmith from Middle Park, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 2nd October, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Henrietta A. Wright of 69 Canterbury Rd, Middle Park, Victoria.

Private Edwin James Wright was posted to 7th Reinforcements of 2nd Pioneers on 17th October, 1916.

2nd Pioneer Battalion

The 2nd Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 2nd Division. 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. 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.

(Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)

Private Edwin James Wright, Service number 3216, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 23rd November, 1916 with the 2nd Pioneer Battalion, 7th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 29th January, 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 Edwin James Wright was sent sick to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pioneer Training Battalion at Larkhill, Wiltshire on 5th March, 1917. He was reported to be suffering from Pneumonia – severe on 7th March, 1917.

Private Edwin James Wright died at 8.30 p.m. on 13th March, 1917* at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pneumonia. (* Note: Date of 14th March, 1917 inscribed on the CWGC headstone is incorrect).

A death for Edwin J. Wright, aged 42, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Base Records advised Mrs J. H. A. Wright, 69 Canterbury Road, Middle Park, Victoria, wife of Private Edwin James Wright, on 14th March, 1917 that No. 3216 Private E. J. Wright had been admitted to Military Hospital, Fargo on 7th March, 1917 suffering from pneumonia- severe.

Private Edwin James Wright was buried on 16th March, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 220 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private Wright - *The deceased soldier was buried with full military honours, and prior to proceeding to the cemetery, a service, conducted by the Rev. H. D. Peel, was held in the Durrington Church.*

A War Pension was granted to Jane Henrietta Augusta Wright, widow of late Private Edwin James Wright, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 17th May, 1917.

Private Edwin James Wright was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were usually sent to the next of kin, however the widow of Private Wright had remarried (23rd July, 1918) – Mrs J. H. A. Morgan of Bendigo, Victoria & her address details were not up to date. (Plaque sent September, 1922 but it appears the communications to the address had previously been returned – Base Records made enquiries as to the whereabouts of the Plaque. A Notice for the Press was prepared on 22nd September, 1922 requesting the whereabouts of the next of kin of the late Private E. J. Wright. The Scroll was marked as “Held – address not known – December, 1921”.)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Edwin James Wright – service number 3216, aged 40, 2nd Australian Pioneers. No family details are listed.

Private E. J. Wright is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 173.



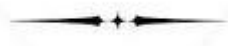
(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(69 pages of Private Edwin James 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

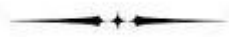




AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P08893.001

Private Edwin James Wright



Newspaper Reports

282ND CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private E. J. Wright, Middle Park

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – Wednesday 28 March, 1917)

CASUALTIES ABROAD

The name E. J. Wright of Middle Park appeared in the casualty list, published on March 27, as one of those who died from natural causes. By a coincidence there were two of the same name enlisted from Middle Park. The one whose death was announced as above was not the son of Mrs Wright, Nimmo street, Middle Park (commonly known as Dick), who is in the Light Horse, and is in Egypt.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – Tuesday 3 April, 1917)

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 Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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 E. J. Wright does not have a personal inscription on his headstone. His headstone has the incorrect date of death – should be 13th March, 1917.

Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire, England

Durrington Cemetery contains burials of both wars. The 204 First World War burials were mostly from nearby Larkhill Camp. Many of the graves are of Australian servicemen and there is a separate Australian memorial in the cemetery. The Second World War burials number 22. In addition to the war graves, there are a number of post-war service graves in the cemetery, mostly of the Royal Air Force.

(Information from CWGC)



Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire (Photo above by Dave Healing 2013; below CWGC)



Photo of Private E. J. Wright 's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)