

**Sutton Veny,
Wiltshire, England
War Graves
World War 1**



Lest We Forget



3517 PRIVATE

ALFRED JOHN YEARK

55TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

13TH NOVEMBER, 1918 AGE 23

*CWGC Headstone for Private Alfred John Yeark is located in
Grave Plot # 25. I. 4. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Alfred John YEARK

Alfred John Yeark was born at Clarence Town, New South Wales in mid-1895 to parents Christopher John & Wilhelmina Rosanna (Minnie) Yeark (nee Ruprecht).

Alfred John Yeark was a 21 year old, single, Saw-mill Hand from Taree, NSW when he enlisted at Newcastle, NSW on 18th August, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Minnie Yeark of Taree, NSW.

From NEW SOUTH WALES POLICE GAZETTE - 13 December, 1916

DESERTERS from the MILITARY FORCES of the COMMONWEALTH

From the Military Camp, Liverpool

Yeark, Alfred, 21 years of age, 5 feet 4 inches high, dark complexion, light brown hair, blue eyes; a native of Clarencetown. Deserted 19th November, 1916.

Private Alfred John Yeark, Service number 3517, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Anchises* (A68) on 24th January, 1917 with the 55th Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 27th March, 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 Alfred John Yeark was marched in to 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 27th March, 1917.

Private Alfred John Yeark reported sick on 14th May, 1917 & was admitted to Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire on 15th May, 1917 with Influenza. He was discharged on 29th May, 1915 (according to Hospital admissions form, however his Casualty Form – Active Service has date of discharge as 6th June, 1917).

Private Alfred John Yeark proceeded overseas from 14th Training Battalion via Southampton on 2nd November, 1917. He was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 3rd November, 1917. Private Yeark was marched out to his Unit on 7th November, 1917 & taken on strength of 55th Battalion in the Field on 16th November, 1917 from Reinforcements.

Private Alfred John Yeark was written up for an Offence on 23rd January, 1918 – “*When on Active Service – entering the town of Boulogne without a pass on 6.1.18.*” He was awarded 1 days Field Punishment No. 2.

Private Alfred John Yeark reported sick on 11th August, 1918 & was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance with Bronchitis. He was transferred to 55th Casualty Clearing Station then transferred on 12th August, 1918 to Ambulance Train 27. Private Yeark was admitted to 9th General Hospital on 13th August, 1918. He was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Guildford Castle* on 17th August, 1918.

Private Alfred John Yeark was admitted to Beaufort War Hospital, Bristol, England on 18th August, 1918 suffering from shell gas poison & bronchitis. He was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 26th August, 1918 & discharged to furlo on 2nd September, 1918.

Private Alfred John Yeark was on furlo from 2nd September, 1918 to 16th September, 1918. He was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 16th September, 1916.

Private Alfred John Yeark was marched in to No.1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 4th October, 1918. He was medically classified as B1 A3 (fit for overseas training camp in two to three weeks) on 2nd October, 1918; B1 A4 (fit for overseas training camp when passed dentally fit) on 23rd October, 1918 & B1 A1 (fit for light duty only – 4 weeks) on 25th October, 1918.

Private Alfred John Yeark was written up for an Offence on 27th October, 1918 – “*Being improperly dressed, wearing Officer’s pattern cap*”. He was awarded 1 day Confined to Camp.

Private Alfred John Yeark was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 2nd November, 1918 with seriously ill with Influenza.

Private Alfred John Yeark died at 02.20 hrs on 13th November, 1918 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England from Influenza & Pneumonia.

A death for Alfred Yeark, aged 22, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Alfred John Yeark was buried at 3 pm on 15th November, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England – Grave no. 25.

From the burial report of Private Yeark – Coffin was polished Elm with Brass furnishings – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours, the coffin draped with the Australian flag was conveyed to the graveside on a Gun Carriage preceded by a Firing Party and Band from No. 1 Australian Command Depot. 2 Officers and about 100 N.C.O.'s and Men from deceased's late company followed the remains to the graveside. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.

Private Alfred Yeark requested in his Will dated 10th June, 1917 that all his personal Estate be left to his mother – Mrs Minnie Yeark, Taree, NSW.

Private Alfred John Yeark was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Yeark's father – Mr W. Yeark (Scroll sent December, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred John Yeark, 3517 of 55th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F., as the son of John and Minnie Yeark, of Taree, Manning River, New South Wales.

Private A. J. Yeark is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 161.

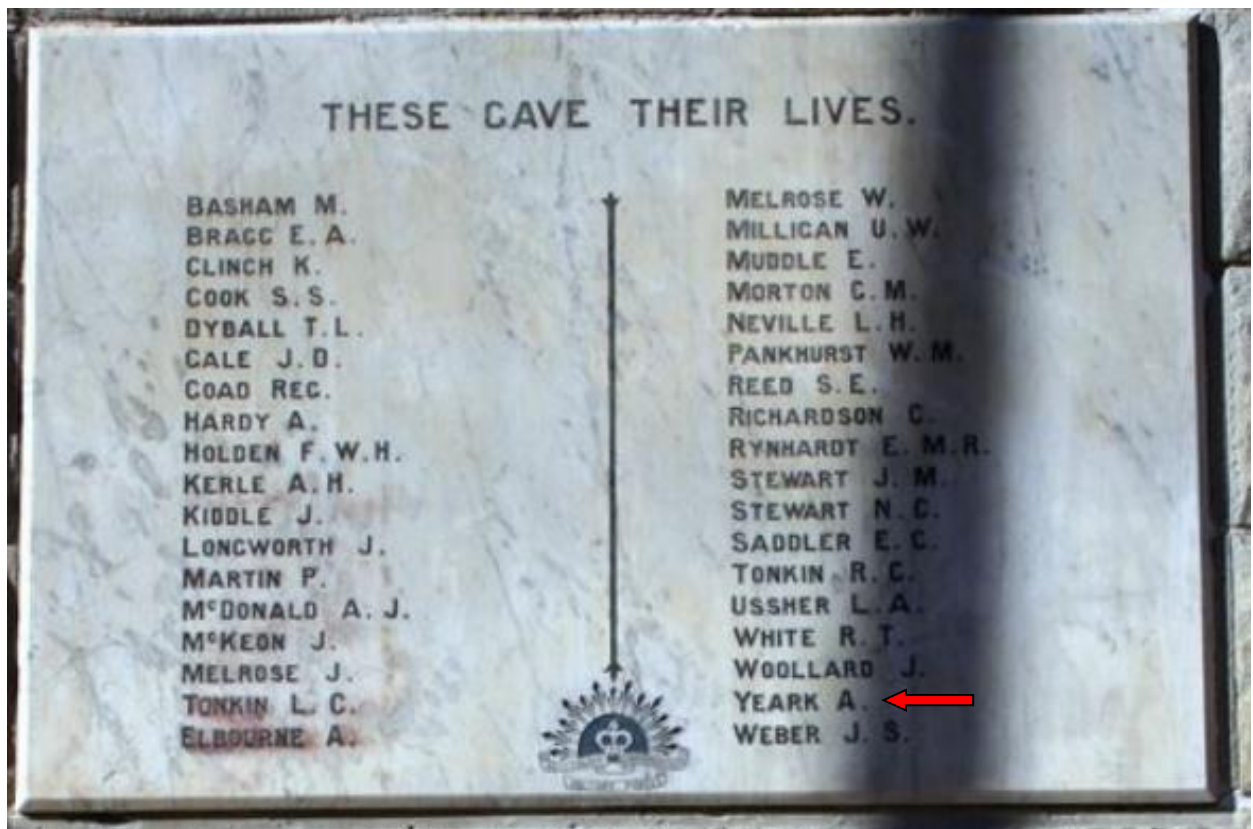


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. Yeark is remembered on the Taree World War 1 Memorial located in Fotheringham Park, Pacific Highway, Taree, NSW.



Taree War Memorial (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Penny Smith)



(58 pages of Private Alfred John Yeark's 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

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

ROLL OF HONOUR

WOUNDED

Pte Alfred Yeark, Taree

(Northern Star, Lismore, NSW – Monday 14 October, 1918)

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

ROLL OF HONOUR

DIED FROM OTHER CAUSES

Pte Alfred Yeark, Taree

(Northern Star, Lismore, NSW – Saturday 7 December, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

YEARK – In loving memory of our dear brother Pte Alfred Yeark, of the 55th Battalion, who died of illness in England, November 13th, 1918.

Farewell our own dear brother,
Sweet thoughts of you will keep.
Although one year has passed away,
Our grief is just as deep.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, May and George Martin.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – Friday 14 November, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

YEARK – In loving memory of our dear brother Pte Alfred Yeark, who died of illness in England, 13th November, 1918.

Gone is our brother we loved so dear,
Silent the voice we loved to hear.
Too far away for sight or speech,
But not too far for our thoughts to reach.

No one knows the parting,
Or what the farewell cost,
But God and His loving angels
Have gained our brother whom we have lost,
He died for us.

Inserted by his ever loving sister and brother-in-law, May and George Martin.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – Friday 12 November, 1920)

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)

Private Alfred John Yeark does have a personal inscription on his headstone but does not have the Christian cross like most.

The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away

St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England

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. The 26th Division was concentrated at Sutton Veny in April 1915 and No 1 Australian Command was there from the end of 1916 to October 1919. There was also a hutted military hospital of more than 1200 beds at Sutton Veny for much of the war and No 1 Australian General Hospital was stationed there after the Armistice. Sutton Veny (St John) Churchyard contains 168 First World War burials, 167 of them in a plot at the north west corner of the church. Of these, 143 are Australian. There is only one Second World War burial in the churchyard.

(Information & colour photos from CWGC)





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00376



Photo of Private Alfred John Yeark's Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)