



## WWI Casualty

### Private 27966 - Alexander Davidson Shaw - Codford St. Mary

Surname	Given Names	Rank	Number	Regiment	Attachment	Date of Death		Age at Death	
						Year	Date		
Shaw	Alexander Davidson	Private/Rifleman	27966	New Zealand Rifle Brigade	12th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion, F Company	1917	15-Jan	32 (Recorded as 36 by the CWGC)	
Date of Birth		Place of Birth	Father		Mother		Baptised		
Year	Date		Surname	Given Names	Maiden Name	Given Names	Year	Date	Place
1884	10-Feb	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia	Shaw	Thomas		Elizabeth			
Census Information									
Year	Surname	Given Names	Status	Age	Occupation	Place of Birth	Relationship to Head		

Military Service Record											
Enlistment Details											
Year	Date	Place	Age			Trade	Religion				
			Years	Months	Days						
1916	27-Jun	Wellington, New Zealand	32			Labourer	Presbyterian				
Physical Description											
Height		Complexion	Eye Colour	Hair Colour	Distinguishing Marks						
Feet	Inches										
Service Records show that Alexander was sentenced to 3 days confined to barracks at Trentham Camp, near Wellington on 21st July 1916 for failing to obey orders.											
He set sail from Wellington aboard HMNZT (66) Willochra on 16th October 1916, for England. While on route he was reported for an offence to do with clothing issued which resulted in a stoppage of pay. He arrived at Devonport, England on 29th December 1916											
Alexander was admitted to Military Hospital at Devonport on 29th December 1916											
From Devonport he was transferred to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire on 10th January 1917 suffering from influenza.											
He was placed on the seriously ill list on 11th January 1917 suffering from pneumonia, he died 4 days later.											
Next of Kin											
Surname	Given Names	Status	Relationship	Abode							
Shaw	A.	Mrs.	Mother	Woolsthorpe, Victoria, Australia							
Details of Death											
Date of Death		Cause of Death	Theatre of War	Ships Name	War Gratuity Paid						
Year	Date				Year	Date	£	s.	d.	Recipient	
1917	15-Jan	Pneumonia									
Grave Location											
Cemetery							Plot Number				
St. Mary New Churchyard, Codford St. Mary							30				
War Memorials and Commemorations											
Memorial Name and Location							Panel Number				
A Memorial Scroll and Memorial Plaque were sent to Rifleman Shaw's sisters - Misses Wilhelmina and Louisa Shaw of 170 Coventry Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia in 1921											

Other Significant Information
Alexander was buried at St. Mary New Churchyard, Codford St. Mary on 19th January 1917
He was entitled to be awarded the British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War.
The Commonwealth War Graves details show that Alexander's father was deceased by the time the recruit died.

## Newspaper Reports

### SICK AND WOUNDED DANGEROUSLY ILL

Shaw, A., 27966, Victoria

**Evening Post, Volume XCIII, Issue 14, 16 January 1917**

### ROLL OF HONOUR DIED OF DISEASE

CANTERBURY INFANTRY BATT

Shaw, A., 27966 (Mrs A. Shaw, Victoria, m) 15th January.

**Evening Post, Volume XCIII, Issue 16, 18 January 1917**

### DIED ON SERVICE

SHAW – Died from pneumonia, in New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on 15th January, Alexander Davidson Shaw, only son of Elizabeth Shaw and dearly loved brother of Mrs. M. Tobin, Louie and Minnie Shaw; also eldest grandson of W. Davidson, Woolsthorpe, aged 32 years.

We lost the sunshine of roses;

We lost the morning dew;

We lost the gladness that turned into sadness;

When we lost you.

**Warnambool Standard, Victoria, Australia, Tuesday, 23 January 1917**

### A WOOLSTHORPE HERO DEATH AND BURIAL

Two very comforting letters have been received by Mrs. Shaw, of Woolsthorpe, relative to the death of her son, Alexander, who died in January in the No. 3 New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, from pneumonia and bronchitis.

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One of the letters was written by Sister Blanche Huddleston, who was in attendance on the patient. She says he asked to have his home letters read to him on the morning of the day he died – they had arrived the day before – and the chaplain (Rev. Cruickshank) read them to him. “He was such a nice patient,” adds the writer, “and went quite peacefully. We had every hope at first of his recovery, and were so sorry to lose him. I always think that one cannot do enough for our brave soldier boys – they give up everything for their country. We send our most sincere sympathy, and I am ever so sorry to be the bearer of such sad news.”

The other letter was from the wife of Chaplain-Captain Burridge, who gives details of the funeral. She was present and her husband officiated at the grave. With true motherly instinct Mrs. Burridge says, “I thought that anything that I could tell you about your son would be of some comfort to you, as you are so far away from this land where he was laid to rest.” She then proceeds to explain that the body was placed in the military cemetery at Codford – a small plot of ground just over the road from St. Mary’s Anglican Church. The hero was buried with full military honours and it was a most impressive service, the band being in attendance playing the “Dead March”, a firing party fired three volleys and the Last Post was sounded. Two beautiful wreaths lay on the flag that covered the coffin and to the inscription on the plate were added to lines from the hymn, “Rock of Ages” – Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy Cross I cling.

The wreaths were composed of lovely Easter lilies, carnations and chrysanthemums. Mrs. Burridge adds:- “The doctor who attended your boy through his illness was Dr. Evans, who is an elder of Knox Church, Dunedin. I thought you might like to hear these details of your boy’s burial, for it is hard to be so far away and to hear nothing but the bare facts. I have just arrived from Australia, and feel glad that I can be of some help here. The work is great, and the boys need all the help and encouragement we can give them. They are brave lads, and very young – most of them. Accept my deepest sympathy, and may God comfort you in your loss.”

**Warnambool Standard, Victoria, Australia, Saturday, 24 March 1917**

SHAW – In sad and loving memory of my dear son, Private Alexander Shaw, who died of illness at New Zealand Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire (England), January 15, 1917.

My thought they often wonder,  
To a soldier’s mourned grave.  
Your name is often spoken,  
A Mother’s hero died.  
- (Inserted by his loving mother, E. Shaw)

**The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria Thursday, 15 January 1920**



Photo by Jim Parsons

**Source Material Used**

Archives New Zealand  
Auckland War Memorial Museum  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
Papers Past, National Library of New Zealand