

Compton Chamberlayne War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



3712 PRIVATE

T. CASS

10th BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

17th AUGUST, 1918 AGE 23

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte T Cass is located in Back Row
Grave Plot # 6 of Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery*

Thomas Cass was born in Leichardt, Sydney, New South Wales in 1894 to parents Thomas & Harriet Maria Cass. He was a Storeman, single & aged 20 years & 9 months, from 111 Carr Street, West Perth, Western Australia when he enlisted in Adelaide, South Australia on 10th August, 1915 with the 10th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements of the Australian Army. His Service Number was 3712 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father, T Cass of 111 Carr Street, West Perth, Western Australia.

Pte Cass embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on RMS *Malwa* on 2nd December, 1915 & disembarked on 14th February, 1916 at Aerodrome in Cairo with influenza.

On 29th March, 1916 Pte Cass embarked from Alexandria & disembarked at Marseilles on 6th April, 1916. He was admitted to hospital several times between June, 1916 & December, 1916.

On 22nd September, 1917, Pte Cass was wounded in action in Belgium with a gunshot wound to his right shoulder & was transferred back to England a few days later. He was transferred to the Southern General Hospital, Birmingham & later to No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park, Middlesex then to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Pte Cass was again returned to overseas duty in January, 1918 in France after returning from 7 days Absent Without Leave.

On 1st June, 1918 Pte Cass was again wounded in action with a gunshot wound to the back & was transferred back to England.

Information from the Matron of Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire shows that Pte Cass was admitted to Military Hospital at Fovant on 6th August, 1918. He was operated upon suffering from a gunshot wound to his spine. No improvement followed & he gradually became worse until his death. His brother – Lieutenant Cass was with him sometime before he died.

Private Thomas Cass died at 11 p.m. on 17th August, 1918, from wounds received in action & cerebro-spinal meningitis at the Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire. A death for Thomas Cass, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter of 1918, in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire. (Fovant was a parish in the district of Wilton).

Pte Cass was buried at Compton Chamberlayne Cemetery on 19th August, 1918.

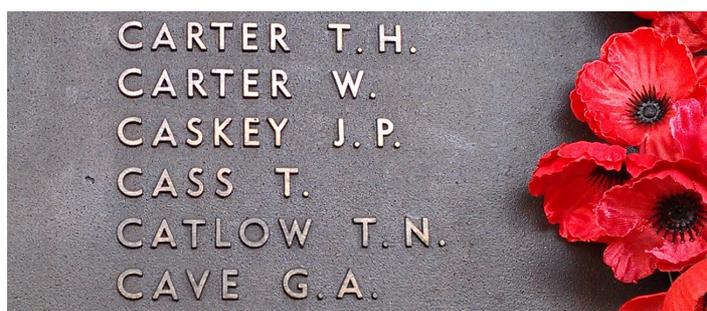
From the burial report of Pte Cass – Coffin was good, Polished Elm with Brass Mountings – *Deceased was buried with full Military Honours, the body being conveyed to the graveside on a Gun Carriage, preceded by a Firing Party And Band. Six men of deceased's company acted as Pallbearers and a number of Officers, N.C.O.'s and men attended as mourners. Deceased's brother, Captain F Cass, Administrative Hqrs, attended as chief mourner. A beautiful wreath from deceased's brother was placed on the grave. Headquarters, A.I.F. Depots in U.K. were represented at the funeral.*

Pte Cass was described by his family as being of “a humorous vein, highly musical (clarinet) & exceptionally kind in his disposition.”

Pte Cass had a brother – Capt F Cass who was twice mentioned in despatches & afterwards attached to H.Q. Staff London (Records).

Pte Cass' 1914/15 Star, Victory Medal & Memorial plaque were distributed to his sister - Mrs E Sell, 75 Carr St, Perth, WA. His British War Medal & clasp & Memorial Scroll were distributed to his brother- Mr W Cass of 7 Wright St, Adelaide, Sth Aust, as per agreement between brother & sister.

Private T Cass is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 58.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(85 pages of Pte Thomas Cass' 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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives

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W.A. CASUALTIES

At The Fighting Fronts

WOUNDED

Thomas Cass, Perth, joined in South Australia;

(The Daily News Perth, WA – Saturday 27th October, 1917)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

CASS – A tribute to the memory of Thomas Cass, who died of wounds received in action on August 17, 1918, after nearly three year' active service.

Never the lotus closes,

Never the wild fowl wakes,

But a soul goes out on the east wind

That died for Australia's sake.

-Inserted by his friends at "Lyndholme," Clarence Park.

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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 Compton Chamberlayne 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)

Pte Cass does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte Cass's headstone at Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery



Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey