

Compton Chamberlayne War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



3502 PRIVATE

T. H. W. WHITE

59th BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

25th MARCH, 1917 Age 21

MOTHER LOVED YOU DEAR TOM

A HEART

THAT NEVER SHALL FORGET YOU

MOTHER

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte T H W White is located in Middle Row

Grave Plot # 8 of Compton Chamberlayne Cemetery

Thomas Henry William White was born at Balaclava, Victoria in 1894 to parents Thomas & Sophia White. He was a Brassmoulder but working as a Tram Conductor, single & aged 21 from St Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria when he enlisted on 7th July, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Army. His service number was 3502 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Thomas White of 70 Inkerman Street, St Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria.

Pte White embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Nestor* (A71) on 11th October, 1915 & disembarked in Egypt.

Pte White was admitted to 1st Auxiliary Hospital with a hernia on 21st December, 1915.

Pte White was discharged on 20th January, 1916 from the Suez to return to Australia – not fit for duty due to a hernia. His medical report states that the Hernia developed about 3 weeks after enlisting, from playing football – nothing to do with Military duty. An operation was advised but was declined. Pte White disembarked at Melbourne on the 21st February, 1916.

Pte White returned to duty on 6th June, 1916 as he had been certified fit for duty.

Pte White embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic* (A7) on 16th December, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 18th February, 1917.

Pte White was marched into 15th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 4th March, 1917 & was admitted to the Military Hospital at Fovant with Bronchitis on 14th March, 1917.

Pte Thomas Henry William White died at 12.10 p.m. on 25th March, 1917 at the Military Hospital at Fovant from Broncho-pneumonia. A death for Thomas H W White, aged 22, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire. (Fovant was a parish in the district of Wilton).

Pte White was buried on 28th March, 1917 at Compton Chamberlayne Cemetery. From the burial report of Pte White –he was buried with full military honours and the coffin provided was of oak with metal mounts and name plate.

A letter, dated 19th September, 1916 from the Matron of the Military Hospital at Fovant explaining the details of Pte T H W White's death from enquiries from his family reads –
Pte T. H. White was admitted into hospital on the 14th March suffering from Broncho-pneumonia. His progress was very slow and everything that could be done for him was done, but he died on the 25th March at 12.10 p.m. He was buried with military honours at Compton Chamberlain.

Another letter to the family, dated 12th October, 1918 includes a photo of Pte T H W White's grave. The letter reads –
Photo taken by Pte T Berry 6127 – 60th Battn at Compton Chamberlain Cemetery, Hurdcott, about 12 months ago. On the Cross is the name Pte T. H. White – 59th Battn. Berry knew White in Melbourne, but not his people. White's father was a senior constable at St Kilda. Berry live at Brighton, but his Australia address is – The Hill, Birregurra, Victoria. Berry knew nothing of the soldier shown on photo.

Private T H W White is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 169.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Pte T H W White was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll (October, 1921) & Memorial Plaque (September, 1922) were sent to Pte White's father – Mr Thomas White, Police Station Oakleigh.

(119 pages of Pte T H W White'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives

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****Stanley White**, younger brother of Pte Thomas Henry William White, enlisted with the A.I.F. on 19th February, 1917 at the age of 18 ½ years. He had his mother's consent to be sent abroad before his 19th birthday – this was later withdrawn (April, 1917) as his mother was seriously ill & his older brother had died. Stanley White was discharged on Family Reasons on 18th September, 1917.

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*****Pte Thomas Henry William White embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic (A7)* on 16th December, 1916 & died 25th March, 1917**

Pte Charles Tull (3245) embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic (A7)* on 16th December, 1916 & died 16th March, 1917.

Pte James Howard (3164) also embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Medic (A7)* on 16th December, 1916 & died 18th March, 1917.

Pte Howard & Pte Tull & Pte White are buried next to each other in Middle Row – plots 8, 9 & 10.

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ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR

286th Official List

DIED OF ILLNESS – VICTORIA

Pte White, T. H. W., St Kilda

(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – Tuesday 10th April, 1917)

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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)

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Pte White does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte T H W White's Headstone at Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery



Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey