

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



3051 PRIVATE

B. WATTS

30TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

26TH JUNE, 1916 Age 24

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte B. Watts is located in Grave Plot # 95
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Bertie WATTS

Bertie Watts was born near Tamworth, NSW on 10th February, 1892 to parents William & Phoebe Watts (nee Mabbott). He was a 24 year old, single, Farmer from Wanga Creek, Manilla, NSW when he enlisted on 8th February, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 30th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 3051 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr William Watts of Wanga Creek, Manilla, NSW. Bertie's younger brother – William Leslie Watts, aged 21 years, also enlisted the same day & was given the service number of 3052.

Pte Bertie Watts embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Nestor* (A71) on 9th April, 1916 & disembarked at Egypt (date not recorded). Pte Bertie Watts embarked from Alexandria, Egypt on H.M.T. *Franconia* on 6th June, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 16th June, 1916.

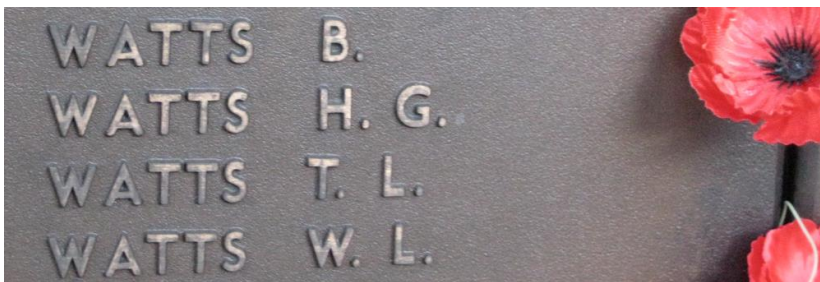
Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Bertie Watts died on 26th June, 1916 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pneumonia.

A death for Male Watts, aged 20, was registered in the June quarter, 1916 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private Bertie Watts was buried on 29th June, 1916 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 95 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private B. Watts is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 117. His younger brother is also commemorated on the same Panel – Pte W. L. Watts.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

B. Watts is also remembered on the Manilla & District Soldiers Honour Roll, at Memorial Hall, for those who served. Located at 193 Manilla Street, Manilla, NSW. Also remembered are Bertie's two brothers – R. Watts (wounded but survived) & W. L. Watts died of Measles in London.



Manilla & District Soldiers Honour Roll (Photos from Register of War Memorials in NSW – Des Stark)



Pte Bertie Watts was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Watts' father – Mr W. Watts (sent January, 1921 & July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Bertie Watts – service number 3051 as being 24 years old & served with 30th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of William and Phoebe Watts, of Corella School, Wongo Creek, Manilla, New South Wales.

(38 pages of Pte Bertie Watts' 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

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Connected to Pte Bertie Watts:

* Brother – Pte Reginald Watts – 336, 13th Battalion was wounded at Gallipoli Landing on 1st May, 1915 – Gunshot wound with Fracture to Right Forearm (serious). He was returned to Australia in 1915 & discharged from Service on 27th April, 1916. He received the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

* Brother – Pte William Leslie Watts – 3052, 30th Battalion died of Measles on 5th July, 1916 at Western Hospital, Seagrave Road, Fulham, London & was buried in Kensal Green All Souls Cemetery, Greater London, England. He received the British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War.



Headstone of Pte Bertie Watt's brother – Pte William Leslie Watts

(Photo by Cornelia Van Rooyen)

Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

NEW SOUTH WALES – DIED OF ILLNESS

B. Watts (Mango Creek)

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – Friday 14 July 1916)

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*)

Pte B. Watts does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte B. Watts's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)