

# Durrington War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



**6707 PRIVATE**

**G. A. ADAMS**

**6TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**28TH JANUARY, 1917**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte G. A. Adams is located in Grave Plot # 163  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## George Alfred ADAMS

George Alfred Adams was born in Dunedin, New Zealand in 1888.

George Alfred Adams originally enlisted with Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 in Adelaide, South Australia & was attached to 27<sup>th</sup> Battalion with a service number of 3003. His religion was listed as Salvation Army & his next of kin was listed as his Aunt – Mrs Anne Adams of Simmons St, South Yarra, Victoria. He had previously been rejected for serving due to him being below height – he was 5 feet 1 ¼ inches.

Pte Adams embarked from Adelaide via HMAT *Medic* on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1916. He was admitted to 3<sup>rd</sup> Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis, Egypt on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1916 & invalided to Australia from Suez on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 1916 on *Armadale*. He was discharged on 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1916 as medically unfit (Varicose veins) after serving a total of 339 days, 168 days were served as service abroad.

George Alfred Adams re-enlisted on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 at Warrnambool with the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 22<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). At the time of his re-enlistment, George was a single, 29\*<sub>(age discrepancy see below)</sub> year old Labourer from Fairie Street, Warrnambool, Victoria. His service number was 6707 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs Violet Amelia Softley of 79 O'Shannessy Street, North Melbourne, Victoria. (The Roll of Honour information (completed by relatives) for George Adams - "which Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected - under which his name ought to come on the Memorial") the answer was given as Warracknabeal in Victoria.)

Pte George Alfred Adams embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ulysses (A38)* on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England in December, 1916.

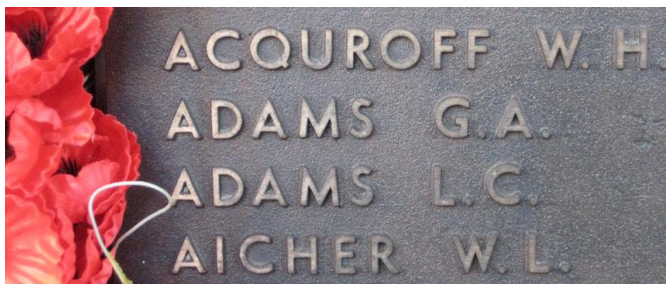
Pte George Adams was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire with bronchitis on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1917 from 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion. He became seriously ill with Broncho-pneumonia on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1917.

Private George Alfred Adams died of Broncho-pneumonia at Fargo Military Hospital at 10 a.m. on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1917. Pte Adams was one of five men to die at Fargo Military Hospital in the space of 12 hours from Broncho-pneumonia / pneumonia. (Pte Hector Fraser, 6145, died 10.30 p.m. 27<sup>th</sup> January, 1917 buried Durrington Cemetery plot 161; Pte Albert Victor James, 2885, died 11.40 p.m. 27<sup>th</sup> January, 1917, buried Durrington Cemetery plot 160; Pte Herbert Chester Canham, 6177, died 1.30 a.m. 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1917, buried Durrington Cemetery plot 162 and Pte Ernest Beddow, 2545, died 5.50 a.m. 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1917, buried Bilston Cemetery, Staffordshire – private grave.)

A death for George A. Adams, aged 30, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Pte George Alfred Adams was buried on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1917 in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Grave number 163.

Private G. A. Adams is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 45.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

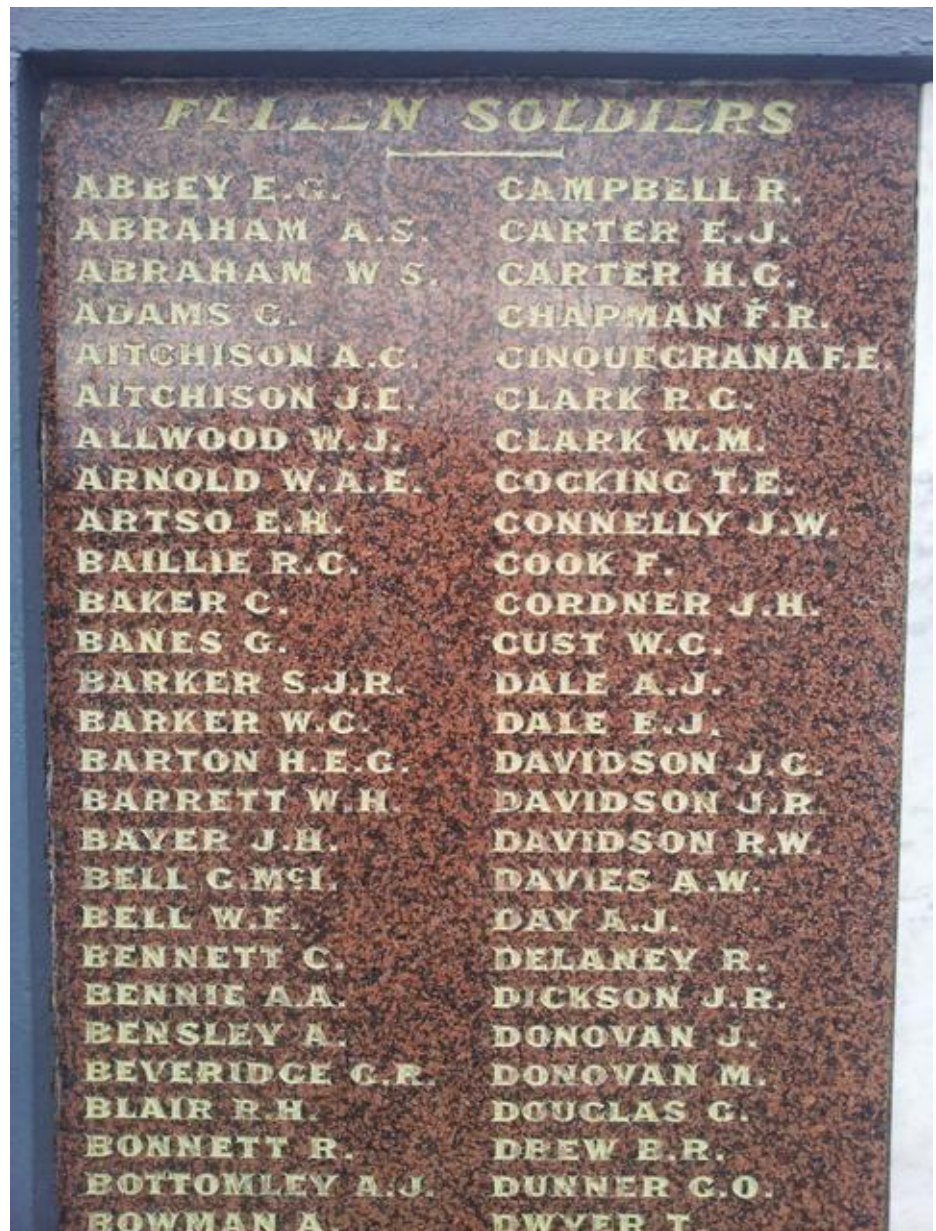


*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

G. Adams is also remembered on the Warrnambool War memorial located at Cannon Hill, Liebig and Merri streets, Warrnambool.



*(Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)*



(Photo courtesy of Alex Gannaway – Secretary Warrnambool RSL)

Pte George Alfred Adams is also mentioned in a book entitled *“For King and Country – Great War Enlistments from Warrnambool and District”* by Ron Blair and James Affleck. The paragraph on Pte Adams reads:

*ADAMS, Private George Alfred, 6707, 6 Battalion (22 Reinforcement Group). Born Dunedin, New Zealand, labourer, single, nok: sister – Mrs VA Softley, North Melbourne. Enlisted in 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signalling Company on 2 August 1915, served Egypt and Gallipoli, returned to Australia and discharged 14 July 1916. Re-enlisted Warracknabeal 27 September 1916, age 23. Embarked with 6 Battalion on HMAT A38 Ulysses 25 October 1916. Died of disease 28 January 1917, Fargo Military Hospital, England. Buried Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire, England – Grave 163.*

Base Records had difficulty in contacting Pte George Adams' next of kin – his sister Mrs Violet Amelia Softley after 1917. Letters were sent to her new address at 77 Wattletree Road, Malvern, Victoria & returned marked "Not Known". Forms to be completed for an Inscription on Pte Adams' Headstone were not answered.

Pte George Alfred Adams was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal but were unable to be sent to the next of kin as they could not contact Pte Adams' sister. The Medals were held in Store. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also unable to be sent to his next of kin & were sent to "Untraceables" (April, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private George Alfred Adams – service number 6707 as being 23\* (age discrepancy see above) years old & served with 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

(119 pages of Pte George Alfred Adams' 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*

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## Newspaper Reports

### OUR LOSSES

#### PTE G. A. ADAMS

Official information was received yesterday that Private G. A. Adams had died at Fargo Military Hospital from broncho-pneumonia. Prior to enlisting Private Adams was employed at the local gasworks, and was a member of the Salvation Army. He resided at the Federal Coffee Palace, and the sad news of his death was received by Mr Stephens yesterday from the deceased's sister, Mrs B. A. Softley, North Melbourne.

*(Warrnambool Standard, Victoria, Saturday 3 February 1917)*

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### THE 271ST CASUALTY LIST

#### DIED OF ILLNESS

Private G. A. Adams, North Melb.

*(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria, Saturday 10 February 1917)*

### 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 G. A. Adams does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte G. A. Adams' Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)