

# Durrington War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



**1711 PRIVATE**

**L. T. STEVENS**

**39TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**31ST JULY, 1916 Age 23**

*In Loving Memory Of  
Our Dear Son & Brother Les.  
Thy Will Be Done*

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte L. T. Stevens is located in Grave Plot # 96  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## Leslie Thomas STEVENS

Leslie Thomas Stevens was born at Waterloo, Victoria in 1893 to parents Thomas & Mary Jane Stevens. He was a 23 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Beaufort, Victoria when he enlisted on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1916 with the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 1711 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Thomas Stevens, Waterloo P.O., Beaufort, Victoria.

Pte Leslie Thomas Stevens embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ascanius* (A11) on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 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.

Pte Leslie Thomas Stevens was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 1916 suffering from Influenza.

Private Leslie Thomas Stevens died at 10.20 a.m. on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1916 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pneumonia.

A death for Male Stevens, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private Leslie Thomas Stevens was buried on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1916 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 96 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private L. T. Stevens is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 131.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

L. T. Stevens is also remembered on the Beaufort War Memorial located at Ripon Beaufort RSL Memorial Garden in Havelock St, Beaufort, Victoria.



**Beaufort War Memorial** (Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

L. Stevens is also remembered on the Beaufort-Ripon Shire Honour Roll (First World War), last known to be located in Beaufort Hall.

Pte Leslie Thomas Stevens 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 Steven's father – Mr T. Stevens (sent April, 1922 & July, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Leslie Thomas Stevens – service number 1711 as being 23 years old & served with 39th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas & Mary Jane Stevens of Waterloo, Beaufort, Victoria.

(29 pages of Pte Leslie Thomas Stevens' 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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## Newspaper Reports

### FALLEN AND WOUNDED

#### BALLARAT AND DISTRICT MEN

##### PRIVATE LES STEVENS

The sad news reached Mr and Mrs T. Stevens, of Waterloo, on Thursday, from the Defence Department, that their son, Pte Les Stevens, a member of Beaufort's second unit, had died of pneumonia in England.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1916)*

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##### FOR THE EMPIRE

The sad news was communicated to Mr and Mrs T. Stevens, of Waterloo, by the Defence Department on Thursday, that their son, Pte Leslie Stevens, had died of pneumonia in England. Private Stevens was an estimable, upright young man being 21 years of age and a member of Beaufort's second unit. He lived at Waterloo for the greater part of his life, and was respected by all who knew him. Private Stevens was a member of a large family, and great sympathy is felt for the bereaved relatives.

*(Riponshire Advocate, Victoria – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1916)*

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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 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 L. T. Stevens does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Loving Memory Of Our Dear Son & Brother Les. Thy Will Be Done*

Photo of Pte L. T/ Stevens's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)