

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



6159 PRIVATE

R. SWAN

26TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

27TH APRIL, 1917* Age 20

Greater Love No Man Hath

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte R. Swan is located in Grave Plot # 238
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

(*Headstone & CWGC details have incorrect date of death as 24th April, 1917)

Robert SWAN

Robert Swan was born on 16th January, 1898 to parents Robert Gillon Swan & Esther Swan (nee Meiklejohn). He was an 18 year old, single, Engine Cleaner from Wallumbilla, Queensland when he enlisted on 2nd August, 1916 with the 7th Infantry Brigade, 26th Infantry Battalion, 17th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 6159 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Robert Swan of Wallumbilla, Queensland.

Pte Robert Swan embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Marathon (A74)* on 27th October, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 9th January, 1917. Pte Swan had been admitted with Influenza to Ship's Hospital on the voyage to England on 27th November & discharged on 30th November, 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 Robert Swan was marched in from Australia to 7th Training Battalion, Rollestone, Wiltshire on 9th January, 1917.

Pte Robert Swan was sent to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 25th January, 1917 with Influenza & later admitted with Laryngitis. He was discharged to duty on 10th February, 1917 & resumed duties at 7th Training Battalion on 11th February, 1917.

Pte Robert Swan was sent sick to Parkhouse Hospital on 3rd March, 1917 with Mumps. He was discharged on 21st March, 1917

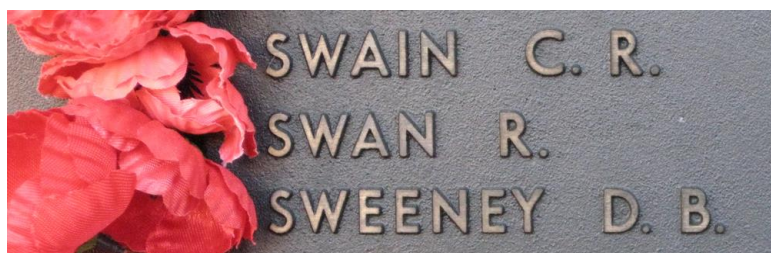
Pte Robert Swan was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 21st April, 1917 & was reported seriously ill with Pneumonia on 23rd April, 1917.

Private Robert Swan died on 27th April, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pneumonia.

A death for Robert Swan, aged 19, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private Robert Swan was buried on 1st May, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 238 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private R. Swan is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 109.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

R. Swan is also remembered on the Roma War Memorial located at Queens Park, Bungil Street, Roma, Queensland.



Roma War Memorial (Photo from *Qld War Memorials – Shirley & Trevor McIvor*)

Pte Robert Swan 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 Swan's father – Mr Robert Swan (sent December, 1921 & July, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Robert Swan – service number 6159 as being 20 years old & served with 26th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Robert & Esther Swan, of Ellesdee, Wallumbilla, Queensland.

Private Robert Swan is also remembered on a plaque on his parents' headstone – Robert & Esther Swan, which is located in Lutwyche Cemetery, Kitchener Road, Brisbane, Queensland.



Plaque reads:

6159 Pte Robert Swan

Late 26th Batt. A.I.F.

Who Gave His Life 27th April, 1917

Aged 19 Years



(Photos courtesy of [The Lutwyche Cemetery Project](#) – Bradley Scott)

(45 pages of Pte Robert Swan's 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

ROLL OF HONOUR

QUEENSLAND - DIED OF ILLNESS

Private R. Swan, Wallumbilla

(The Northern Miner, Queensland – Wednesday 23 May, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOUR

SWAN – In loving memory of Robert Swan, A.I.F., died April, 27th, 1917 – R. and E. Swan.
“For King and Country”

(Western Star and Roma Advertiser, Toowoomba, Queensland – Saturday 27 April, 1918)

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 R. Swan does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Greater Love No Man Hath

Photo of Pte R. Swan's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)