

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War 1



2174 GUNNER

E. A. PATERSON

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

8TH MAY, 1918 AGE 25

He Died That We May Live

*CWGC Headstone for Gunner E. A. Paterson is located in
Grave Plot # 292A. C. 19. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Ernest Alexander PATERSON

Ernest Alexander Paterson was born at Numurkah, Victoria in 1893 to parents James & Elizabeth Paterson (nee Martin). His birth was registered as "Alex Ernest Paterson". He was a 21 year old, single, Miner from Egmont House, Dandenong, Victoria when he enlisted at Wonthaggi, Victoria on 5th March, 1915 with the 7th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2174 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Elizabeth Paterson of Egmont House, Dandenong, Victoria.

Private Ernest Alexander Paterson embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Wandilla* (A62) on 17th June, 1915.

Pte Paterson was admitted to Government Hospital at Alexandria, Egypt on 11th August, 1915 – cause not yet determined. He was transferred to Convalescent Camp at Alexandria on 3rd September, 1915, recovering from Ptomaine Poisoning (food poisoning). Mrs E. Paterson was advised that her son was in the Egyptian Government Hospital suffering from ptomaine poisoning and was doing well, having gone to Raseltin Convalescent Hospital.

Pte Paterson was taken on strength to Overseas Base at Mustapha on 20th September, 1915.

Pte Paterson was transferred to HMT *Maniton* at Alexandria on 2nd October, 1915 & taken on strength with 7th Battalion A.I.F. at Sarhi Camp, Lemnos on 11th October, 1915.

Pte Paterson embarked on HMT *Empress of Britain* at disembarked at Alexandria on 7th January, 1916.

Pte Paterson was transferred to 59th Battalion, A.I.F. at Serapeum on 24th February, 1916 & taken on strength with 59th Battalion on the same day at Tel-el-Kebir.

Pte Paterson was transferred to 5th Division Artillery at Tel-el-Kebir on 17th March, 1916. His rank was changed to Gunner & he was posted to 58th Battery.

Gunner Paterson was transferred to 60th Battery at Ferry Post on 2nd May, 1916.

Gunner Paterson proceeded to join the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 17th June, 1916. He disembarked at Marseille, France on 24th June, 1916. Gunner Paterson was transferred to 25th Field Artillery Brigade in the field on 9th July, 1916.

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Gunner Paterson was transferred to 14th Field Artillery Brigade in the field on 24th January, 1917 & posted to 54th Battery.

Gunner Paterson proceeded on leave on 14th April, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 1st May, 1917.

Gunner Paterson was sent sick to 8th Australian Field Ambulance on 5th June, 1917 with Adenitis. He was transferred to 29th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Gunner Paterson was transferred to 29 A. T. on 15th June, 1917 & then transferred to 6th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 16th June, 1917 with I.C.T. of groin. Gunner Paterson was marked for transfer to England on 24th June, 1917 & embarked on Hospital Ship *Warilda* for England on 25th June, 1917. He was admitted to Tooting Military Hospital, London on 26th June, 1917 suffering from inflammation of connective tissues of left groin, severe. Gunner Paterson was transferred to Holborn Military Hospital, Mitcham on 20th July, 1917 with a left groin abscess. He was transferred to 1st A.A.H. (Australian Auxiliary Hospital) at Harefield on 24th August, 1917 where he was on furlough until 7th September, 1917.

Gunner Paterson reported to Australian Headquarters on 7th September, 1917 & was taken on strength with No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 16th September, 1917.

Gunner Paterson was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 12th December, 1917.

Gunner Paterson was marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Weymouth on 1st March, 1918.

Gunner Paterson was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill on 5th April, 1918.

Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson was sent sick to Group Clearing Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 18th April, 1918 with Influenza.

Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson died at 7.30 a.m. on 8th May, 1918 at No. 1 Command Depot, Number 4 Camp, Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire by shooting himself through the head with a rifle (Gunshot wound to head – self-inflicted).

A Coroner's Inquest was held on 9th May, 1918 at the Military Hospital Sutton Veny before Mr F. A. P. Sylvester, Coroner for Wilts.

Depositions taken from Witnesses:

● William Ford Andrews, Pt. 21st M.G. Corps. A.I. F. - I knew the deceased as a member of my hut, his name was Patterson. He was a very quiet chap and seemed quite well in health. We have been a very friendly lot in the hut and there have been no rows. I have noticed nothing peculiar about deceased. On Tuesday night thirty slept in the hut, everything was quiet. Before breakfast I noticed deceased putting his leggings on. I returned from breakfast at 7.40, the door of the hut was closed, I went in and it was empty, except deceased who was lying at the end of the hut, quite dead. Part of his head was blown away and a rifle was lying at his side, the muzzle facing away from body and on the right side. I met Pte Hancock entering the door and both went to Sergt Major to report. Everything in the hut was in order.

(Sgd) William Ford Andrews.

● Victor Hancock, Pte 21st M. G. Corps - I corroborate the evidence of last witness as to the position of the body. Deceased was a very quiet man.

(Sgd) Victor Hancock.

● Francis Bernard Conway, Lieut & Adjt, 5th Bn. O.T.B. A.I.F. - I was called by last witness. Deceased's name is Ernest Alexander Paterson, Gunner 53rd Baty. A.I.F. I found near deceased's bed his tunic, and found a pocket book containing a letter (produced). The writing in the letter corresponds with that in the pocket book. Deceased had been suffering from gonorrhoea, and had been discharged cured a few days ago. A certain number of rounds are issued on the range and a few may be mislaid.

(Sgd) F. B. Conway. Lieut.

● Stanley Meredith, Cpl. 20th Battn. A.I.F. – The rifle found near deceased was mine. I last saw it on Friday morning when I went on leave till Tuesday night. There were no cartridges whatever in the rifle. Deceased was found near my bed. The other rifle in the hut was a dud. I went to breakfast with the rest.

(Sgd) 4200 Stanley Meredith

● A. H. Macdonald, a Regd Medical Practitioner at Warminster - I examined the body on Wednesday, and apparently it had not been touched. The rifle must have been discharged within a very short distance of the place above the right eye which was the point of entry. Death due to injury to head caused by bullet wound. The wound was probably self inflicted.

(Sgd) A. H. Macdonald.

The verdict handed down by F. A. P. Sylvester, Coroner – “Death from a gunshot wound in the head and that he took his own life by shooting himself, and that there is insufficient evidence of his state of mind at the time”.

A death for Ernest A. Paterson, aged 24, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson was buried on 11th May, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 292A. From the burial report of Gunner Paterson - *Coffin was good polished Elm with Brass Mounts – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours. The Band of the Australian Overseas Training Brigade preceded the funeral, which was attended by three officers and a company of men from deceased's Unit. A large wreath sent from the Officers, N.C.O.'s and Men of the Unit was placed on the grave. The late Gnr Paterson was most popular with both officers and men of his Battery and his loss is very keenly felt.*

Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson requested in his Will dated 3rd March, 1917 that all his real & personal Estate be left to his mother – Mrs E. Paterson of Dandenong, Victoria.

Gunner E. A. Paterson is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 18.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

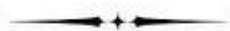
Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner Paterson's father as the closest next-of-kin – Mr J. Paterson (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent February, 1923).

Mrs E. Paterson, mother of late Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson, wrote a letter to Base Records in April, 1919 after having received photos of her son's grave in the Churchyard at Sutton Veny. She writes: *"I received the photos safely of my dear son's grave though so sad & heart breaking it is very nice to have them & I am truly thankful to those people who are trying to gratify the longings of every mother's hearts who have lost their best & dearest as I have. Thanking you again."*

The CWGC lists Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson, 2174, of 4th Bde, Australian Field Artillery, A.I.F., as the son of James & Elizabeth Paterson of Wilson St, Dandenong, Victoria.

(87 pages of Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson'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) & National Archives.



Newspaper Reports

DANDENONG PATRIOTIC LEAGUE

A meeting of the above was held in Council Chambers on Monday evening, when there was a good attendance of members. Mr W. H. A. Rodd, J.P., president, occupied the chair.

The secretary, Mr W. Russell, reported having received letters of appreciation of the efforts of the League from the following soldiers at the Front:-E. A. Paterson.....45 cards were also received from soldiers acknowledging the receipt of Christmas box's

(Dandenong Advertiser and Cranbourne, Berwick and Oakleigh Advocate, Vic – Thursday 18 April, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

VICTORIAN LIST

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

Gnr. E. A. PATERSON, Dandenong, 8/5/18 (prev. rep. ill. ser. 14th)

(Weekly Times, Vic – Saturday 8 June, 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 St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny. 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)

Gunner Ernest Alexander Paterson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Died That We Might Live



Photo of Gunner E. A. Paterson's CWGC headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



War Graves at Sutton Veny *(Photos from CWGC)*