

# Sutton Veny War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



**6718 PRIVATE**

**F. A. A. BONNEFIN**

**15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**4TH AUGUST, 1917**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte F. A. A. Bonnefin is located in  
Grave Plot # 290. C. 15. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

## Francis Alcide Adrian BONNEFIN

Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin was born in London, England in 1878 to parents Francis Alcide Bonnefin & Annie Bonnefin. His birth was registered in the December quarter, 1878 in the district of Hackney, London.

The 1891 England Census recorded Frank Bonnefin as a 12 year old Errand boy (Frame Maker) living with his mother & 2 younger siblings as visitors with the Cornelius family at 23 Rodney Place, Palalinate, Newington, London. Frank's mother was listed as Annie Bonnefin (married, aged 33) & her 2 other children – Edgar (aged 10) & Lilian (aged 4).

Francis Bonnefin (Picture frame maker, aged 20, of 38 Haggerston Rd) married Edith Sheers (aged 18, of 89 Treadway Street) on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1899 in St. Jude's, Bethnal Green, London. Francis's father was listed as Francis Alcide Bonnefin, Civil Engineer & Edith's father was listed as Henry Thomas Sheers, Gas fitter.

Edgar Francis Bonnefin was born on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1899 in Bethnal Green, London. A birth was registered in the district of Greenwich, London in the June quarter, 1903 for Francis Henry Bonnefin & in the June quarter, 1908 for Edith A. L. Bonnefin (born 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1908).

Francis Bonnefin, aged 32, was listed as a passenger on board the *Oswestry Grange* that departed from London & arrived at the port of Brisbane, Australia on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1911. Also listed as passengers were Edith (wife, aged 29), Edgar (son, aged 10), Frank (son, aged 7) & Edith (daughter, aged 2).

A birth was registered in 1913 in Brisbane, Queensland for Elsie Bonnefin.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Oxley, subdivision of Balmoral, lists Francis Alcide Bonnefin, Carpenter, & Edith Bonnefin, Home duties living at Carlton Hill, Bulimba, Queensland.

Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin was a 38 year old, married, Carpenter from Carlton Hill, Bulimba, Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted at Brisbane, Queensland on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1916 with the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 22<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 6718 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Edith Bonnefin of Carlton Hill, Bulimba, Brisbane, Queensland.

Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Kyarra* (A55) on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

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 Bonnefin was marched in to 4<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire from Australia on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

Private Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin was sent sick to Group Hospital at Codford on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1917 & discharged on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1917.

Private Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin was sent sick to Group Hospital at Codford on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1917 with an inflamed rectum & was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1917 – cause not yet determined.

Private Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin died at 12.10 a.m. on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Ulcerative colitis with perforation of transverse colon (cause of death notified after a Post mortem was held).

A death for Francis A. A. Bonnefin, aged 38, was registered in the September quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Pte F. A. A. Bonnefin contains a letter from The Matron of The Military Hospital, Sutton Veny which reads:

*“ No. 6788 Pte Bonnefin was admitted into this hospital on 11<sup>th</sup> of July complaining of Diarrhoea and slight vomiting. He was on fluid diet for some time and did not improve. He was seen by a specialist who advised an operation, which was performed on Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>. He was found to have a perforated gastric ulcer. He lived two days after operation and died at midnight on August 4<sup>th</sup>. He was conscious up to a very short time before he died and did not seem to have any acute pain. His brother in London was wired for when he was considered seriously ill, and again after operation but unfortunately was unable to come. He received a military funeral and was buried in Sutton Veny churchyard.”*

Private Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin was buried on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 290. From the burial report of Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin - *Coffin was first class. Military Funeral. The last words spoken by deceased were to the Sister of his Ward as follow:- “Thanks for all your kindness and attention.”*

Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin requested in his Will, dated 19<sup>th</sup> April, 1917, that all his property be given to his wife – Mrs Edith Bonnefin.

Private F. A. A. Bonnefin is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 75.



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

Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin 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 Bonnefin's widow – Mrs E. Bonnefin in England (sent December, 1921 & October, 1922). Mrs Edith Bonnefin & her children returned to England on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1919.

The CWGC lists Private Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin, 6718, of 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F. No family details are listed.

(39 pages of Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives.*



## **Newspaper Reports**

### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

**BONNEFIN**— Private Francis Bonnefin, died of illness (ulcerative colitis), August 4th, 1917. Thanking all our kind, sympathetic friends in our sad bereavement.

God knows best,  
When, and how.  
To call our loved ones,  
Tho' far away  
To peaceful rest.

Inserted by his loving wife and children.

*(The Queenslander, Brisbane – Saturday 25 August, 1917)*

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## **THE ROLL OF HONOUR**

### **CASUALTY LIST NO. 333**

#### **DIED OF ILLNESS**

Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin, Bulimba 4/8/17 (Prev. rep. ser. ill)

*(The Brisbane Courier, Qld – Tuesday 28 August, 1917)*

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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 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)*

Pte Francis Alcide Adrian Bonnefin does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte F. A. A. Bonnefin's Headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



*(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)*



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

