

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War 1



6778 PRIVATE

H. A. MEACHAM

2ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

11TH DECEMBER, 1918 AGE 26

Thy Will Be Done

*CWGC Headstone for Pte H. A. Meacham is located in
Grave Plot # 35. H. 10. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Herbert Alfred MEACHAM

Herbert Alfred Meacham was born at Rushworth, Victoria in 1892 to parents William Frederick & Mary Meacham (nee Perry). He was a 23 year old, single, Farmer from Trigalong, Temora, NSW when he enlisted at Cootamundra, NSW on 9th May, 1916 with the 2nd Infantry Battalion, 22nd Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 6778 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs M. Meacham of Trigalong, Temora, NSW (father deceased 1895). Herbert Meacham had served six months with Legion of Frontiersmen Temora Unit.

Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham was promoted to Acting Corporal on 6th October, 1916.

Acting Corporal Herbert Alfred Meacham & his brother Albert Edward Meacham, 6876, 2nd Battalion, both embarked from Sydney on SS *Port Nicholson* on 8th November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 10th 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 Meacham was marched in to 1st Training Battalion at Larkhill, Wiltshire on 10th January, 1917 & his rank reverted to Private.

Private Meacham proceeded Overseas to France from Larkhill via Folkestone on 28th March, 1917. He was marched in at Etaples, France on 29th March, 1917. Private Meacham was taken on strength with 2nd Battalion in France on 20th April, 1917.

Private Herbert Alfred Meacham was wounded in action in France on 20th September, 1917. He was sent to 6th Australian Field Ambulance with shrapnel wounds to left arm then transferred to 10th Casualty Clearing Station. Private Meacham was transferred to 57th General Hospital at Boulogne on 21st September, 1917 then transferred to No. 7 Con. Depot on 24th September, 1917. Private Meacham was transferred again to No. 10 Con. Depot at Ecault on 4th October, 1917 then transferred on 27th November, 1917 to Base Depot. He was marched in to 1st Aust. D.B.D. at Havre on 29th November, 1917. The Army had advised Pte Meacham's mother on 8th December, 1917 that her son was admitted to Hospital with Trench Fever. This was corrected in a letter on 20th March, 1918 advising that the report of Trench Fever did not refer to her son but to another soldier with the same name belonging to the same battalion.

Private Meacham proceeded to join his Unit on 6th December, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion in the field on 9th December, 1917.

Private Meacham was on leave to Paris on 4th February, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion from leave on 13th February, 1918. Private Meacham was on Furlough to UK from 26th February, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion from furlough on 14th March, 1918.

Private Meacham was reported "Classified Injured (accidentally)" on 31st August, 1918. A report was made on Pte Meacham's injury – sprained ankle (R) moderately severe. The injury occurred during Recreational Training (Football). The injury was accidental & in the performance of military duty. No other person was to blame. The report was signed by I. C. Mackay, Brig. General, 1st Aust. Brigade Infantry. A statement of Evidence was made by Sergt H. Austin Jones, 179, A Coy. 2nd Aus. Bn who stated that at 2 pm. on 31st August, 1918 he was present at Recreational Training in Morcourt area when Pte Meacham sprained his ankle while playing football. Pte Meacham was sent to No. 5 Casualty Clearing Station on 6th September, 1918 with a sprained right ankle, then transferred on 8th September, 1918 to No. 6 General Hospital at Rouen, France.

Private Meacham was invalided to England on 9th September, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle*. He was admitted to War Hospital at Exeter with a sprained right ankle on 10th September, 1918.

Private Meacham was on furlo from 15th to 29th October, 1918.

Private Meacham was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 31st October, 1918 & medically classed as B1 A2 (fit for overseas training camp in three to four weeks).

Private Meacham was marched out to APM Warminster on 14th November, 1918 for Escort Duty.

Private Herbert Alfred Meacham was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 28th November, 1918. He was reported dangerously and seriously ill with Pneumonia on 6th December, 1918.

Private Herbert Alfred Meacham died at 3.20 hrs on 11th December, 1918 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Influenza & Broncho- Pneumonia.

A death for Herbert A. Meacham, aged 26, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Herbert Alfred Meacham was buried at 3.30 p.m. on 14th December, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 35. From the burial report of Pte Meacham - *Coffin was Elm with Brass Mounts – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours, the body being conveyed to the graveside on a Gun Carriage, preceded by a Firing Party from No. 1 Australian Command Depot. Six of deceased's late comrades acted as Pall Bearers. Two Officers and about 50 N.C.O.'s and Men from the A.I.F. followed the remains and were present at the graveside ceremony. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham requested in his Will dated 4th June, 1917 that all his real & personal Estate be left to his mother – Mary Meacham of Temora, NSW.

Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal as he had entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Meacham's mother – Mrs M. Meacham (sent December, 1921 & November, 1922).

Private H. A. Meacham is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 33.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

H. A. Meacham is also remembered on the Temora and District War Memorial located at Loftus Street (opposite Aurora Street), Temora, NSW, along with his brother A. E. Meacham, who survived the War. The World War 1 Memorial is the centre column.



Temora & District War Memorial

(Photos from War Memorials Register NSW – David Roden, Peter Levarre-Waters & Roger Johnson)



The CWGC lists Private Herbert Alfred Meacham, 6778, of 2nd Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F. He was the son of William Frederick and Mary Meacham of Trigalong, Temora, New South Wales. Born at Rushworth, Victoria.

(60 pages of Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham'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.



[Connected to Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham:](#)

Older Brother – Temporary Lance Corporal Albert Edward Meacham, 6876, 2nd Battalion. From Cootamundra. Married. Mentioned in Despatches – Australian Commonwealth Gazette 30th October, 1919. Survived the War & was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. Returned to Australia 5 April, 1919.



Newspaper Reports

TEMORA

In the latest casualty list the name of Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham, of Temora, appears as having been wounded.

(*Cootamundra Herald*, NSW – Wednesday 7 November, 1917)

DEATH FROM PNEUMONIA A SOLDIER HERO

PRIVATE H.A. MEACHAM

The sad news was conveyed to Mrs Meacham, of Temora, on Wednesday that one of her soldier sons, Private Herbert Alfred Meacham, had died from pneumonia in England. The deceased soldier hero, who was about 25 years of age, enlisted from Temora early in 1916; and after a term in an officers' school sailed with his brother Corporal Albert Meacham, in November, 1916. He was thus on active service for over two years, during which he participated in some very strenuous fighting in France. He was wounded once by a shell, and on another occasion was in hospital with a sprained ankle. It is particularly sad to contemplate his death from pneumonia after surviving the dangers and hardships of two long years at the front. Deceased was known and very highly esteemed by a good many in this district, having played in several football matches with the Blow Clear team.

A widowed mother, five brothers and six sisters are left to mourn their sad and overwhelming loss, and to them we extend our deepest sympathy. The brothers are Messrs F. W. and J.G., of West Wyalong; Harry of Parkes; Robert, of Temora, and Alberton active service). The sisters are Mrs. P. H. Chalmers, of Blow Clear; Mrs. H. E. Wyse, of "Marbunga," West Wyalong, Mrs. A. J. Donaldson, Mrs. J. Ferguson, Mrs. G. Chalmers, and Miss E. Meacham, all of Temora.

(*The Wyalong Advocate and Mining, Agricultural and Pastoral Gazette*, NSW – Friday 20 December, 1918)

TEMORA

We have to chronicle the death of one of our young soldier heroes, Pte Herbert A. Meacham, of "Trigalong" Trungley road, in the St. Venni Hospital, London, on the 11th inst.

.....Pte H. A. Meahcam, son of Mrs M. Meacham, of Trungley Road, died on December 11, in hospital in England from influenza, bronchitis and pneumonia.

(*Cootamundra Herald*, NSW – Tuesday 24 December, 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)

Pte Herbert Alfred Meacham does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Thy Will Be Done



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



Photo of Pte H. A. Meacham's CWGC headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)