

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



1995 PRIVATE

W. C. CERINI

58TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND DECEMBER, 1916 Age 21

Immaculate Heart Of Mary

Your Prayers For Him Extol

R.I.P.

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte W. C. Cerini is located in
Grave Plot # 279. C.4. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

William Charles CERINI

William Charles Cerini was born in 1894 at Irrewillipi, Victoria to parents William & Kathleen Agatha Cerini (nee Grist). He was a 21 year old, single, Labourer from Colac, Victoria when he enlisted at Geelong, Victoria on 21st February, 1916 with the 15th Infantry Brigade, 58th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 1995 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – William Cerini of Pirron Yallock, Colac, Victoria.

Pte William Charles Cerini embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ajana* (A31) on 8th July, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 31st August, 1916.

Private William Charles Cerini was admitted to Devonport Hospital on 1st September, 1916 & discharged to Perham Downs on 13th September, 1916. Pte Cerini was marched out to 15th Training Battalion on 14th September, 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.

Private Cerini rejoined 15th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire. He was admitted to Group Clearing Hospital at Codford on 11th October, 1916.

Private William Charles Cerini was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 16th November, 1916 dangerously ill.

Private William Charles Cerini died at 5.50 a.m. on 2nd December, 1916 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Anaemia Pernicious.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Pte Cerini contains a request from the Red Cross to find out further details on his death. A reply from Sister D. Deacon of Ward 3 Sutton Veny Military Hospital reads:
“Am writing a letter to Mrs Cerini, which I will enclose in this if you would kindly forward it on to her. The address was sent away & I was waiting to get it to write, as we realize what it means to the relatives to know all about their boys & how they meet with their death. I nursed him most of the time, so understand exactly how he died. Will leave the letter opened, if you care to see it. Am sorry to say the Australians stationed round here feel the cold & damp very much, consequently seem to be very much more affected than the English troops.”

A death for William C. Cerini, aged 22, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private William Charles Cerini was buried on 3rd December, 1916 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny – Grave no.279. From the burial report of Pte Cerini was buried West End of Sutton Veny Cemetery.

Private W. C. Cerini is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 165.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. Cerini is also remembered on the Colac War Memorial located at Memorial Square, Murray Street, Colac, Victoria.



Colac War Memorial (Photos courtesy of [Carol's Headstone Photograph's](#))



Pte William Charles Cerini 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 Cerini's father – Mr W. Cerini (sent May, 1922 & July, 1922)

The CWGC lists Private William Charles Cerini, 1995, of 58th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F., as the son of William and Kathleen A. Cerini of Gillebrand St. Colac, Victoria. Born at Irrewillipe, Victoria.

(50 pages of Pte William Charles Cerini'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



Private W. C. CERINI, of Pirron Yallock. Died in Hospital.

(Colac Reformer, Victoria – Thursday 21 December, 1916)

COLAC

Mr and Mrs Cerini, of Colac, last week were informed by the Defence Department that their son, Private W. C. Cerini, was seriously ill in London.

(Advocate, Melbourne, Victoria – Saturday 9 December, 1916)

DIED IN HOSPITAL

Mr W. Cerini, of Gillibrand street, last night received the sad news that his son, Private W. C. Cerini, formerly of Pirron Yallock, had succumbed to a serious illness in a hospital in England. Private Cerini was 22 years of age, and his last letter home was written on the eve of his departure for the front in France. The particulars received are vague, it not being clear as to what was the cause of Private Cerini's fatal illness.

(*Colac Reformer*, Victoria – Saturday 9 December, 1916)

251st CASUALTY LIST

VICTORIA

DIED FROM ILLNESS

Pte W. C. CERINI, Colac, 2/12/16

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – Saturday 16 December, 1916)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

CERINI.—A tribute of love to the memory of my dear friend, Private W. Cerini, who died on active service abroad on December 2, 1916. (Inserted by a loving friend.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – Saturday 1 December, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

CERINI—In loving memory of Private William Charles Cerini, who died in England on December 2, 1916.
R.I.P.

He sleeps not in his native land,
 But under far off skies.
Far from them that loved him,
 In a church yard grave he lies.
And a shadow o'er our home is cast.
 Immaculate heart of Mary,
 Your prayers for him extol.
O, sacred heart of Jesus,
 Have mercy on his soul

—Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sisters.

(*The Colac Herald*, Victoria – Monday 3 December, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

CERINI—In loving memory of my dear nephew, Private Willie Cerini, who died in England on December 2nd, 1916.

R.I.P.

No loved ones stood around him,
To bid a fond farewell
No word of comfort could we give
To him we loved so well.

—Inserted by his loving aunties, Mrs A. McDonald.

(The Colac Herald, Victoria – Wednesday 5 December, 1917)

BEREAVEMENT NOTICE

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Cerini and Family desire to tender their Thanks to their many Friends for telegrams, letters, cards, and visits, and kindness shown in their recent sad bereavement in the death of their son, Private W. C. Cerini.

Gellibrand Street, Colac.

(The Colac Herald, Victoria – Friday 12 January, 1917 & Colac Reformer, Victoria – Saturday 13 January, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

CERINI—In loving memory of Private William Cerini, who died in England 2nd December, 1916.

R.I.P.

Over the sea my thoughts often roam
To where our dear brother sleeps
Far from home.
Although his face we cannot see,
We hold him deep in memory.
Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord.

—Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Martin Ryan.

CERINI—In loving memory of Private W. Cerini, who died in England, 2nd December, 1916.

R.I.P.

Mother of sorrow to thee we pray,
Comfort the many sad hearts to-day,
And ask your dear Son, at our request
To grant to our dear one eternal rest.
And let perpetual light shine upon him.

—Inserted by his loving father, mother, brothers and sisters.

(The Colac Herald, Victoria – Monday 2 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 William Charles Cerini does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Your Prayers For Him Extol R.I.P.



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



Photo of Pte W. C. Cerini's Headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)