

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War 1



63788 GUNNER

W. E. SAGER

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

26TH OCTOBER, 1918 AGE 22

Our Only Darling Son

So Brave, So True

So Sadly Missed

*CWGC Headstone for Gunner W. E. Sager is located in
Grave Plot # 8. G. 1 of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

William Edmund SAGER

William Edmund Sager was born at Leichhardt, Sydney, NSW on 5th July, 1896 to parents William & Clara Maria Stroude Sager (nee Haddow). He was a 21 year old, single, Plumber from Haberfield, NSW when he enlisted at Glebe, Sydney, NSW on 18th February, 1918 with the Field Artillery, 35th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 63788 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs C. M. S. Sager of “Glenelg” Cranes Avenue, Haberfield, NSW.

Gunner William Edmund Sager embarked from Sydney on RMS *Orontes* on 5th June, 1918 & disembarked at Liverpool, England on 11th August, 1918.

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.

Gunner William Edmund Sager was marched in from Australia to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Heytesbury, Wiltshire on 12th August, 1918.

Gunner William Edmund Sager was sent sick to Sutton Veny Hospital on 12th October, 1918 with Influenza & admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 16th October, 1918 seriously ill with pneumonia.

Gunner William Edmund Sager died at 06.15 am on 26th October, 1918 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Influenza & Pneumonia.

A death for William E. Sager, aged 22, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Gunner William Edmund Sager contains a request from the Red Cross of behalf of his relatives to find the fullest details possible into his death and burial. A letter from O.C. Military Hospital, Sutton Veny reads: “63788 Gnr W. E. Sager was admitted to this Hospital in 16.10.18 suffering from Influenza. He developed Pneumonia and died at 6.15 am on the 26.10.18. He was buried in the Churchyard of St. John the Evangelist, Sutton Veny, on the 1st November, 1918. Please see note by Sister in charge of Ward.” A letter from Sister A. H. Brown, Sister in Charge, B Ward, Military Hospital, Sutton Veny reads: “ Full particulars of the above patient’s illness and death, has been sent in letters by me to his mother. He was nursed and died in my Ward.”

Gunner William Edmund Sager was buried at 11 am on 31st October, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 10 (according to Service record file, however CWGC has grave number as 8). From the burial report of Pte Sager - *Coffin was polished Elm with Brass Mounts – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours. The funeral was preceded by a Firing Party and Band from the Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery. Six of deceased’s Unit comrades supported the Pall. 3 Officers and about 80 N.C.O.’s and Men from deceased’s late Unit followed the remains and were present at the graveside ceremony. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

Mr W. Sager wrote to Base Records Melbourne on 6th November, 1918 requesting full & complete particulars regarding the death of his son – Gunner William Edmund Sager, including which Hospital he was in, length of sickness & where he was buried. Mr W. Sager also wrote that he would like to know if it is permissible to have his son’s body returned to Australia & if so, what procedures were necessary. Base Records replied with some details into the death of Gunner Sager but advised that concerning the enquiry as to whether it is permissible to have the body returned to Australia, it was suggested that he communicate with the High Commissioner for Australia, Australia House, London, England who may be able to advise him on the matter.

Mrs Clara Sager wrote to Base Records advising that a comrade of her late son – Gunner W. E. Sager, had given her a photo of her son’s grave with the wooden cross but was writing to advise that his service number on the cross was incorrectly marked as 63738. She advised that the correct number was 63788. The letter was stamped as received and 2 pencil notations at the top of the letter read - “ Photos sent subsequently” & “63788 Sager W.E.”.

Pte William Edmund Sager requested in his Will dated 8th March, 1918 that all his real & personal Estate be left to his mother – Clara Maria Stroud Sager. She was also named as Executrix of the Will.

Gunner W. E. Sager is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 22.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Gunner William Edmund Sager 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 Sager's father – Mr W. Sager (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

Mr W. Sager wrote to Base Records on 15th May, 1924 applying for the Victory Medal on account of the service of his son – Gunner William Edmund Sager. He was advised that owing to the fact the Gunner Sager did not serve on the strength of a unit in a theatre of war, his son was not eligible for the issue of the Victory medal.

The CWGC lists Gunner William Edmund Sager, 63788, of Australian Field Artillery, A.I.F., as the son of William and Clara Maria Stroude Sager of "Glenelg" Crane Avenue, Haberfield, NSW. Born at Leichhardt, Sydney.

(70 pages of Gunner William Edmund Sager'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 file) & National Archives.





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02462.001

Studio portrait of Gunner William Edmund Sager



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P08925.001

Gunner William Edmund Sager



Newspaper Reports

ROLL OF HONOUR

SAGER – October 26, 1918, died of pneumonia, in England, Gnr William Edmund Sager, aged 23 years, dearly beloved nephew of Albert and Susan Reader and cousin of Clarence Reader. A young life's noble end.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Wednesday 6 November, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

SAGER- Gunner William E. Sager, died in England, October 26, 1918, of pneumonia. Dear friend of Olga Thew, Haberfield.

SAGER - October 26, 1918, In England, of pneumonia. Gunner W. E. Sager, dear friend and comrade of L. Thew and H. Abbott, Haberfield.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 8 November, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

SAGER - October 20. 1918, died of pneumonia, in England, Gunner William. Edmund Sager; late of Haberfield, aged 22. At rest. Inserted by his loving sisters. Elsie, Florrie, and Rose.

SAGER - Gunner William Sager; died of influenza, October 26, 1918. Sadly missed. Inserted by his aunts and uncles, Christina and Thomas Sager, Susan and Alfred Reader, and cousin of Clarence Reader

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Saturday 9 November, 1918)

DOUBLE CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Gnr Wm. Edmund Sager, Haberfield

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Monday 2 December, 1918)

On Active Service

SAGER - In sad but loving memory of our dear and only son, Gunner William Edmund Sager, died of pneumonia, in England, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

In the dawn of a splendid manhood,
When the tide of his life, was high.
Just when his life was brightest
He bade us a last good bye.

So sadly missed by his loving parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sager. Crane-avenue, Haberfield.

SAGER - In ever-loving memory of Gunner William E. Sager, only brother of Rosina Mackay, who was called to a higher life on October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

Oh for the touch of a vanished hand
And the sound of a voice that is stilled.

SAGER - A tribute of love to the memory of our dear and only brother, Gunner William E. Sager, died in England, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

Sweet to remember him, once so near,
Although absent is just as dear.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Florrie and Walter Gallimore, Haberfield.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only brother, No. 63788. Gunner William E. Sager, died Sutton Veny, England, on October 26, 1918.

We loved him in life too well
To ever forget him in death.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Elsie and Sid Gallimore, and little niece. Gwenia.

SAGER - In loving memory of my dear grandson, Gunner William H. Sager, who died October 26, 1918, of pneumonic influenza, at Sutton Veny Hospital, England, Sadly missed. Inserted by his loving grandmother, H. Haddow.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear nephew and cousin. Will, who died of illness in England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by his loving uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. T. Becroft and cousins.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear nephew. Gunner William E. Sager, who died in England from pneumonia, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years. Sadly missed. Inserted by his loving aunts and uncles, Mr. and Mrs. Rogers and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson.

SAGER - A tribute to the memory of our dear friend, Gunner W. E. Sager, who died in England on October 26, 1918. Inserted by his soldier pals, H. Abbott and W. Warr.

SAGER - In fond memory of my dear friend. Gunner W. E. Sager, who died of pneumonia, in England. on October 26, 1918. Inserted by his fond friend. Olga Thew.

SAGER.--In memory of our dear friend, Gunner W. Sager. who died in England, on October 26. 1918. Inserted by Mr. and Mrs. J. Thew, Mr. and Mrs. McDonald, Lily Thew, and Miss Joseph.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Saturday 25 October, 1919)

On Active Service

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear nephew, Gunner William E. Sager, who died in England from pneumonia, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years. Sadly missed.

Inserted by his loving uncles and aunts, Mr. and Mrs. Reader and family, and Mr. and Mrs. T. Sager.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Monday 27 October, 1919)

On Active Service

SAGER – In sad and loving memory of our only darling son, Gunner William Edmund Sager, died England, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

Do not ask us if we miss him,
There is such a vacant place;
We shall never forget his footsteps,
Nor his dear smiling face.

Inserted by his mother and father, Haberfield.

SAGER – A tribute of love to the memory of our dear and only brother, William E. Sager, died in England, October 26, 1918.

A day to remember, but sad to recall.

Inserted by his sorrowing sister and brother-in-law, Rose and Norman Mackay, and family Haberfield.

SAGER – In loving memory of our dear only brother, Gunner W. E. Sager, died in England of pneumonia, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

Too far away for sight or speech.

But not too far for thoughts to reach.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Florrie and Walter Gallimore.

SAGER – In fond remembrance of our dear only brother, No. 6388, Gunner, W. E. Sager, died Sutton Veny Hospital, England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Elsie and Sid Gallimore, and little niece, Gwenie.

SAGER – A tribute to the memory of our dear friend, Gunner W. E. Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1916. Inserted by his sincere friends, Olga, Lily and Mrs. Thew.

SAGER – In fond remembrance of our dear pal, Gunner, W. E. Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by his pals, W. Warr and H. Abbott.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Tuesday 26 October, 1920)

On Active Service

SAGER — In loving memory of our dear and only son, Gunner William E. Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1918.

Too dearly loved and sadly missed

To ever be forgotten.

Inserted by his loving mother and father, Haberfield.

SAGER.— In loving memory of our dear only brother, 63788, Gunner W. E. Sager, died. Sutton Veny Hospital, Eng., October 26, 1918.

He laid down a suit of khaki,

To take up a beautiful robe of white.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Elsie and Sid Gallimore, and little niece, Gwenie.

SAGER — In loving memory of our dear only brother, Gunner William E. Sager, died in England, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years. Sadly missed. Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Florrie and Walter Gallimore.

SAGER — In loving memory of our dear and only brother, Gunner William E. Salter, died in England, October 26, 1918, aged 22. Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Rose and Norman Mackey, and family.

SAGER — In fond memory of Gunner W. E. Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by his fond friends, O. and L. Thew, W. Warr, and H. Abbott

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Wednesday 26 October, 1921)

On Active Service

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only son, William Edmund Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1918. Though the rolling sea divides his grave from us, he will never be forgotten. So sadly missed by his mother and father, Haberfield.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear brother, Gnr. William Sager, died in England, October 26, 1918, age 22 years. Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Florrie and Walter Gallimore.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear only brother, Gnr. William E. Sager, died in Sutton Veny Hospital, England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Elsie and Sid Gallimore, and little niece, Gwenie.

SAGER - In fond memory of our friend, Gunner W. E. Sager, who died in England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by O. Thew and W. Warr.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Thursday 26 October, 1922)

On Active Service

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only son, William Edmund, who died at Sutton Veny, England, October 26, 1918, aged 22 years.

So dearly loved, so sadly missed.

Inserted by his loving mother and father, of Haberfield

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only brother Gunner William Edmund, who died In England, October 26, 1918, age 22 years. Inserted by his loving sisters, Rose, Florrie and Elsie.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 26 October, 1923)

On Active Service

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only son, Will, who died in England. October 26, 1918.

Always remembered

Inserted by his mother and father, of Haberfield.

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear brother. William E. Sager, died Sutton Veny Hospital, England, October 26, 1918. Inserted by loving sisters.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Wednesday 26 October, 1927)

On Active Service

SAGER - In loving memory of our dear and only son, William, died of pneumonia in England. October 26, 1918.

Dearly loved and sadly missed.

Inserted by his mother and father, of Haberfield.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 26 October, 1928)

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 William Edmund Sager does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Our Only Darling Son So Brave, So True So Sadly Missed

Photo of Gunner W. E. Sager'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*)

