

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



3762 PRIVATE

S. CLARKE

49TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

21ST JUNE, 1918 Age 28

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte S. Clarke is located in Main Third Row (Right Hand Side)
Grave Plot # 50 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

(CWGC Reference - Grave #93)

Sydney James Clarke was born at St. George, Queensland in 1890. He was aged 27, single & a stockman from Warwick, Queensland when he enlisted at Toowoomba, Queensland on 11th April, 1917 with the 52nd Infantry Battalion, 10th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 3762 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his friend, Mrs Ellen Noud, Goondiwindi, Queensland. (From the information supplied for the Roll of Honour, completed by Mrs Ellen Noud, she was Sydney's foster mother.)

Pte Sydney Clarke embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 31st October, 1917 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 26th December, 1917. While in Port of Spain on 11th December, 1917, Pte Clarke was disciplined for neglecting to obey an order given by his superior officer. He was awarded 7 days C.B. (Confined to Barracks) and forfeiture of 2 days pay.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Pte Sydney Clarke was marched in to 13th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 26th December, 1917.

Pte Clarke was admitted to Group Hospital with bronchitis on 9th January, 1918 & discharged 21st January, 1918. He was readmitted on 24th January, 1918 with pneumonia & on 5th February, 1918 was admitted to the New Zealand Hospital with Bronchial Pneumonia (Seriously ill). Pte Clarke was discharged on 17th May, 1918 after 101 days. During this time Mrs E. Noud, Pte Clarke's next-of-kin, received the following notifications from Base Records:

27/3/1918 – Reported Private Sydney Clarke Ill Will Advise Anything Further Received.

27/3/1918 – Now Reported Private Sydney Clarke Admitted New Zealand Hospital Codford England Fifth February Broncho Pneumonia Severe.

5/4/1918 – Private Sydney Clarke Removed From Seriously Ill List.

7/4/1918 - Private Sydney Clarke Condition Improving.

13/4/1918- Private Sydney Clarke Seriously Ill.

1/5/1918 – Now Reported Private Sydney Clarke Removed From Seriously Ill List.

20/5/1918 - Private Sydney Clarke Progressing Favourably.

6/6/1918 - Private Sydney Clarke Convalescent.

Pte Clarke was then transferred to 49th Battalion at Codford on 26th May, 1918.

Pte Clarke was readmitted to the New Zealand Hospital with Pneumonia (Seriously ill) on 14th June, 1918.

Pte Sydney Clarke died at 11.45 a.m. on 21st June, 1918 at 3rd New Zealand General Hospital at Codford. A Post Mortem was completed on 22nd June, 1918 & the cause of death was pneumonia.

A death for Sydney Clarke, aged 28, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

From the burial report of Pte Sydney Clarke - he was buried at St Mary's Cemetery Codford in Grave No. 93, Australian Section on 24th June, 1918. *Coffin was good, Polished Elm with Brass Mountings – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours. The coffin was conveyed to the graveside on a Gun Carriage, preceded by a Firing Party and Band.*

Six of deceased's comrades acted as Pallbearers. A half company of N.C.O.'s and men from deceased's training Unit attended as mourners. A large wreath from Officers, N.C.O.'s and men of the Unit was placed on the grave.

The late Pte Clarke was very popular and always proved himself a keen soldier and a true comrade.

Pte Clarke requested in his Will, dated 24th November, 1917, that his property be left to his Friend – Mrs E. Noud of Goondiwindi, Qld.

Private S. Clarke is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 147.

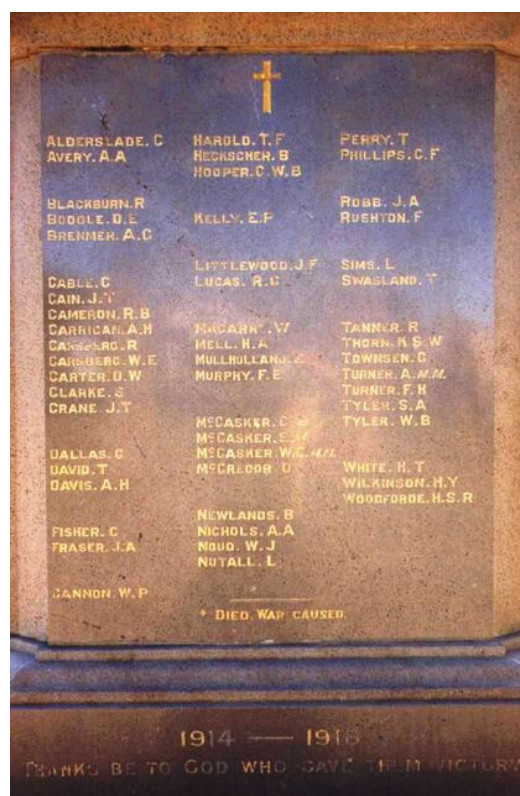


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

Pte Sydney Clarke is also remembered on the Goondiwindi WW1 War Memorial located in Lehman Park, Marshall St, Goondiwindi, Queensland.



(Photos by Shirley & Trevor McIvor)

Pte Sydney Clarke was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. Before Pte Clarke's medals were sent to his "next of kin" – Mrs E. Noud of Goondiwindi, Queensland, Base Records of the Australian Army sent Mrs Noud a letter, dated 4th June, 1921, asking her to supply answers to their questions regarding living blood relatives of Pte Clarke. On the copy of this letter, held in Pte Clarke's Service Record file, the Officer in charge of Base Records had written the following information across the letter:

"No reply to this but Memorial form for Headstone over grave shows deceased soldier to have been an illegitimate half-cast aboriginal, whose foster-mother was Mrs E. Noud. War Medals & to foster-mother under bond.

Mrs Noud then had to sign a Statutory Declaration stating that she would take due care of any War Medals or other items she received of Pte Clarke's & would return the medals to the Department of Defence should someone have a prior claim to them.

A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Clarke's foster-mother – Mrs E. Noud (October, 1922 & March, 1923).

(73 pages of Pte Sydney Clarke'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

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Newspaper Reports

ROLL OF HONOUR

389th List – The Queensland Names

ILL

Sydney Clarke, Goondiwindi (ser.)

(The Queenslander, Brisbane, Saturday 20th April, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

Casualty list No. 416, containing the names of the following 270 Queenslanders, was issued tonight:-

Died from Other Causes

Private S. Clarke(Goondiwindi – illness)

(The Capricornian, Rockhampton, Queensland, Saturday 20th July, 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 Codford War Graves Cemetery. 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 S. Clarke does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte S. Clarke's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)