

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



6564 PRIVATE

M. P. GEARY

17TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

1ST MAY, 1917 Age 21

In Memory

Of The Dearly Loved Only Son

Of Mrs E Geary RIP

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte M. P. Geary is located in Grave Plot # 240
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Michael Phillip GEARY

Michael Phillip Geary was born in Marrickville, Sydney, New South Wales. His birth was registered in 1896 to parents James & Emily Geary (nee Gilroy). Michael was the only child. He was a 21 year old, single, Clerk from Marrickville, Sydney, NSW when he enlisted on 20th November, 1916 with the 17th Infantry Battalion, 19th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 6564 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Emily Geary of 59 Pile Street, Marrickville, Sydney, NSW. From information supplied by his mother for the Roll of Honour, Mrs Geary stated her son's occupation was Professional Musician.

Pte Michael Phillip Geary embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Wiltshire (A18)* on 7th February, 1917 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 11th April, 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.

Pte Michael Phillip Geary was marched in to 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire on 11th April, 1917.

Pte Michael Phillip Geary was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire with Influenza on 18th April, 1917. He was reported seriously ill with Bronchitis on 23rd April, 1917.

Pte Michael Phillip Geary died at 12.10 a.m. on 1st May, 1917 of Broncho-pneumonia at Fargo Military Hospital having spent 14 days in hospital.

A death for Michael Phillip Geary, aged 21, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Pte Michael Phillip Geary was given a Military Funeral & buried on 3rd May, 1917 in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – plot number 240.

A War Pension was granted to Emily Geary – mother of late Pte Michael Phillip Geary in the sum of £2 granted from 4th July, 1917.

Private M. P. Geary is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 82.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

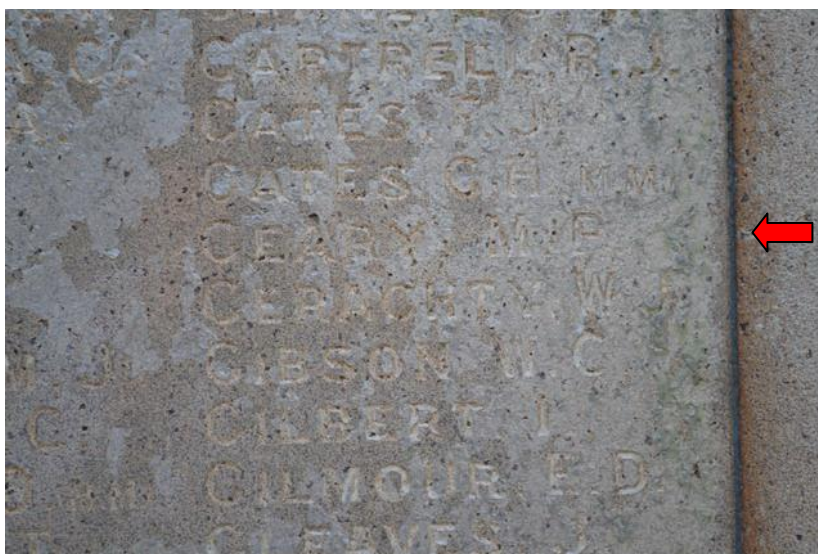
M. P. Geary is also remembered on the Marrickville War Memorial located outside Marrickville Town Hall on Marrickville Rd, Marrickville, Sydney, NSW.



(Photo from Register of War Memorials NSW)



(With thanks to Michael Adams – Marrickville Library and History Services for these photos)



Pte Michael Phillip Geary was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Geary's mother – Mrs Emily Geary (July, 1921 & September, 1922). Instructions under the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" determined that the father received the War Medals, Scrolls & Plaques over the mother. In reply to a communication from Base Records, dated 23rd May, 1921, regarding the father of the late Pte Geary - Mrs Geary stated that she had no contact with her son's father in over 2 years & did not know his address or even if he was still living.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Michael Phillip Geary – service number 6564 as being 21 years old & served with 17th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James & Emily Geary of 59 Pile St, Marrickville, Sydney.

(52 pages of Pte Michael Phillip Geary'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

GEARY – Died May 1, 1917, of bronchitis, in Military Hospital, England. Pte Michael P. Geary, aged 21 years. Dearly loved and only son of Mrs E. Geary, 59 Pile Street, Marrickville. R.I.P.

GEARY – Died May 1, 1917, of bronchitis, in Military Hospital, England. Pte Michael P. Geary, aged 21 years. Dearly loved nephew of Mr and Mrs J. Plummer, Marrickville. R.I.P.

GEARY – Died May 1, 1917, of bronchitis, in Military Hospital, England. Pte Michael P. Geary, aged 21 years. Dearly loved nephew of Mrs P. Gilroy, Marrickville. R.I.P.

GEARY – Died May 1, 1917, of bronchitis, in Military Hospital, England. Pte Michael P. Geary, aged 21 years. Dearly loved nephew of Mr and Mrs M. Breen, Marrickville. R.I.P.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Thursday 10 May, 1917)

OFFICIAL CASUALTY LISTS

299th and 300th Lists

NEW SOUTH WALES – Died of Illness

Pte M. P. Geary, Marrickville, 1/5/17

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Saturday 19 May, 1917)

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

GEARY – In loving memory of my dearly loved and only son, Pte Michael P. Geary, died in England from illness on May 1, 1917, while on active service. R.I.P. His loving mother, E. Geary.

GEARY– In loving memory of our dearly loved nephew, Pte Michael P. Geary, died in England from illness on May 1, 1917, while on active service. R.I.P. Inserted by his uncle and aunt, M. and S. Breen.

GEARY – A tribute to the memory of M. P. Geary, who died May 1, 1917, in Military Hospital, Fargo, England. Inserted by his friends, F.W. and F. O. Stackelberg, O.A.S.

GEARY – In sad memory of my dear friend, Private Michael P. Geary, who died in hospital, England, May 1, 1917. R.I.P. Inserted by E. Carlyle-Kenney.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Wednesday 1 May, 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 Durrington 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 M. P. Geary does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of The Dearly Loved Only Son Of Mrs E Geary RIP

Photo of Pte M. P. Geary's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)