

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



178 CORPORAL

N. A. COOK

6TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

21ST JULY, 1917 Age 27

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte N. A. Cook is located in Grave Plot # 249
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Norman Alan Cook

Norman Alan Cook was born in 1890 at Poowong in the Gippsland district, Victoria. He was a 24 year old, single, Driver from 158 Cochrane Street, Garden Vale, Victoria when he enlisted on 22nd August, 1914 with the 6th Infantry Battalion "B" Company of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 178 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his father – Charles Cook of Holbrook Estate, Poowong, Victoria.

Pte Norman Alan Cook embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 19th October, 1914.

Pte Norman Alan Cook was admitted to Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* with dysentery from Gallipoli on 11th June, 1915. He was then admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Heliopolis suffering from a Thigh wound on 19th-20th June, 1915. He was returned to duty 6th January, 1916 at O/Seas Base, Cairo.

Pte Norman Alan Cook proceeded to join his Unit at Tel-El-Kebir on 21st January, 1916 from O.S. Base at Cairo. He was admitted to 1st Australian Stat. Hospital at Tel-El-Kebir on 25th March, 1916 with a septic ankle & then transferred to Hospital Train on 25th March, 1916. He was admitted with Cellulitis at Abbassia on 25th March, 1916. He was discharged to duty on 12th April, 1916,

Pte Norman Alan Cook was reallocated to 15th Training Battalion as Reinforcements to 58th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 19th May, 1916. He embarked from Alexandria on 21st June, 1916 on *Ivernia* to join British Expeditionary Force & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th June, 1916.

On 22nd July, 1916 Pte Norman Alan Cook proceeded to join the 58th Battalion at Etaples & was Taken on Strength in the Field on 23rd July, 1916.

Pte Norman Alan Cook was promoted to Temporary Corporal from 6th August 1916 whilst attached to 58th Battalion to replace Cpl Masterson who had been evacuated wounded. Temporary Corporal Norman Alan Cook was promoted to Corporal on 12th November, 1916.

Corporal Norman Alan Cook was admitted to Hospital sick on 16th November, 1916 in France & returned to duty on 9th December, 1916. He was transferred to 6th Battalion on 6th January, 1917. He was again admitted to Hospital on 23rd January, 1917 with influenza, In the Field & rejoined his Unit on 1st February, 1917.

Cpl Norman Alan Cook was detached for Duty with 2nd Training Battalion in England from 6th Battalion AIF on 11th July, 1917. (Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was usually completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.)

Cpl Norman Alan Cook was marched in to 2nd Training Battalion at Durrington from France on 14th July, 1917. He was detached for duty with Perm. Cadre of 2nd Training Battalion on 15th July, 1917.

Cpl Norman Alan Cook was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 20th July, 1917 with a lacerated wound of Buttock from a bombing accident & a compound fracture of pelvis.

Cpl Norman Alan Cook died at 3.35 a.m. on 21st July, 1917 in Fargo Military Hospital from wounds received by an accidental bomb explosion.

A Coroner's Court was held at Fargo on 21st July, 1917 – *“Verdict – Norman A Cook died on the 21st day of July 1917 in Fargo Military Hosp from injuries received by him caused by the accidental explosion of a bomb at Larkhill in the parish of Durrington on the 20 day of July 17. Patient died of haemorrhage and shock.”*(as recorded on Admissions to Hospital form).

Details of the Inquest into Cpl. Norman Alan Cook's death (From [Salisbury Inquests](#)):

The Coroner for South Wilts (Mr F H Trethowan) held an inquest on Saturday at Fargo Military Hospital touching the death of Corpl. Norman A Cook, of the AIF, stationed at Larkhill, whose home was in Victoria, and 25 years of age.

Sergt. Bingwood said that on Friday he was at certain experimental grounds when a tactical scheme was in progress. He was standing about five feet from Cook when there were shouts for a doctor. He had heard no report but on examination it was found that Cook's right buttock was severely injured, as he thought, by something exploding in Cook's pocket. While waiting, there was an explosion under his own boot which blew off the heel. He did not think the charges used in the bombs the men were using could have caused the injuries. Men were not allowed to carry bombs except those issued to them.

Capt. Richmonds, RAMC, medical officer, stationed at Fargo Military Hospital, stated that Cook died on Saturday at 2.30 from shock caused by the injuries.

A verdict of accidental death due to explosion was returned.

Cpl Norman Alan Cook was buried on 24th July, 1917 in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – plot number 249. From the burial report of Pte Norman Alan Cook - *Coffin was polished oak with Brass Mounting. The funeral was of a military nature with full hours of firing party etc. It was attended by the Officer Commanding the 2nd Training Batt. and by officers and N.C.O.'s of the 6th Battalion.*

A death for Norman A. Cook, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Cpl Norman Alan Cook has the following letters:

- Cert by A.I.F. Hqrs 10-10-17 – *“D/Wds lacerated Wd of Buttock by bomb R. comp. frac. Of pelvis.”*
- Letter from Pte H. Knox, 6th Australian Battalion Company, dated 7th November, 1917 – *“I knew Corporal N.A. Cook of B Coy... He was sent to England to a Training Battalion, Lark Hill, in July, 1917. I heard that he was accidentally killed while conducting bombing practice.”*

- Letter from Q M S - W. G. Wright No. 10 Sta. Hospital, St Omar, dated 15th November, 1917 – *“I believe this man went to England about the beginning of July on a six months course of instruction on bombing; he was demonstrating with a Mills bomb when it exploded and he received injuries from which he afterwards died. The man I mean was about 25 had light hair and a slight lisp”.*
- Cert by letter from C.O. 2nd T. B. Sutton Veny dated 26th November, 1917 – *“I have to advise that the above N.C.O. on the 20th July 1917 received a severe wound in a Bombing Demonstration. He was admitted to Fargo Hospital where he died on 21st July 1917.”*
- Letter from Assistant Matron, Fargo Military Hospital dated 3rd December, 1917 – *“Was admitted to Hospital on 20.7.17, suffering from injuries caused by the accidental explosion of a bomb at Larkhill. He died at 3.35 a.m. on 21st and was buried on 24.7.17 in grave No. 249 Right hand side of cemetery patch, Durrington, Wilts. I am sorry I cannot give you more details but he only lived a few hours after admission. It may be a little consolation to his people to know that his suffering was short. Kindly convey to his relatives in Australia our heartfelt sympathy”*

In his Will, extracted from his pay book, dated 4th May, 1915, “Pte” Norman Alan Cook left the whole of his property and effects to Miss Ethel Stevens “Lawside” Canterbury Rd, Albert Park, Victoria. Another Will written by Pte N. A. Cook 6th Battalion, Dardanelles left of all the money due from the Defence Dept to his mother “Mrs Chas. Cook” & all the money drawn up at the time of his death he left to Miss Stevens “Lawside” Canterbury Rd, Albert Park.

Corporal N. A. Cook is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 46.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

N. A Cook is also remembered on the Poowong Hall Honour Roll (First World War) located on Main Street, Poowong, South Gippsland Shire, Victoria. (3rd column, first name)



(Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

N. A. Cook is also remembered on the Poowong War Memorial located on Nyora Road, Poowong.



(Photos from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

Cpl. Norman Alan Cook was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Cook's father – Mr C. Cook (June, 1921 & September, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal Norman Alan Cook – service number 178 as being 27 years old & served with 6th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Charles and Marie Louise Cook of Holbrook, Poowong, Victoria.

(74 pages of Cpl. Norman Alan Cook'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

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(Studio portrait of Cpl Norman Alan Cook 1916-1917 AWM)

Pte Norman Alan Cook was connected to the following Army men from WW1 –

- Capt Gordon Clunes Mackay Mathison was a cousin to Cpl Norman Alan Cook. Capt Mathison died of wounds in Egypt on 18th May, 1915 & was buried in Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt.
- Sergeant Louis Frederick Perrottet (20223) was also a cousin to Cpl Norman Alan Cook & was recommended for Military Medal on 13th June, 1917 & awarded the Military Medal on 16th August, 1917 (London Gazette). He was mentioned in Despatches on 6th March, 1917 & 1st June, 1917 (London Gazette).

Newspaper Reports

THE ROLL CALL – 52nd CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

Pte N. A. Cook, 6th Bat, Poowong

(Mount Alexander Mail, Victoria Thursday 15 July, 1915)

OUR SOLDIERS

Other Gippsland casualties are: Pte N. A. Cook, Poowong, died of wounds.

(Gippsland Farmers Journal, Traralgon, Victoria Friday 24 August, 1917)

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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 6th July, 1921, to Mr C. Cook (father of late Cpl N. A. Cook) advises that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription of the late Pte headstone had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Cpl. N. A. Cook does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Cpl. N. A. Cook's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)