

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



2307 PRIVATE

O. M. J. GOLDSMITH

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

14TH FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 22

*In Memory Of The Loved Son
Of Mr & Mrs Goldsmith
Of Aust.*

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte O. M. J. Goldsmith is located in Grave Plot # 197
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Oliver Mathew James GOLDSMITH

Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was born at Corack East in the district of Donald, Victoria, in 1894, to parents Henry and Mary Ann Goldsmith. He was a 22 year old, single, Grazier from Gorey Downs, Condamine via Miles, Queensland when he enlisted on 26th June, 1916 with the 41st Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2307 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Mary Ann Goldsmith of Gorey Downs, Condamine via Miles, Queensland. On his Attestation Paper Oliver had stated that he had previously been rejected for serving due to his false teeth.

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was admitted to Hospital for 13 days with Measles from 31st July, 1916 until 12th August, 1916 while still in Australia.

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Boonah (A48)* on 21st October, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 10th January, 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 Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was marched in to 11th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire from Australia on 10th January, 1917.

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 11th February, 1917 with Influenza & reported on 12th February, 1917 as suffering from Bronchitis – seriously ill.

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith died at 4 p.m. on 14th February, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire of Bronchitis.

A death for Oliver M. J. Goldsmith, aged 22, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith contains a letter from the Assistant Matron of Fargo Military Hospital, dated 19th September, 1917, & reads: *“In reply to your letter of enquiry dated 17.9.17, Pte O.M.J. Goldsmith was admitted to this hospital very ill on Feb, 11th 1917, suffering from Bronchitis. He died on Feb. 14th and was buried at Durrington, Wilts grave No 197 right hand side of cemetery path. I am afraid I can tell very little about Pte Goldsmith as he was very very ill the three days he was with us here. He left no message. The sister who nursed him wrote to his people in Australia just after his death.”*

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was buried on 17th February, 1917 in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – plot number 197.

Private O. M. J. Goldsmith is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 134.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



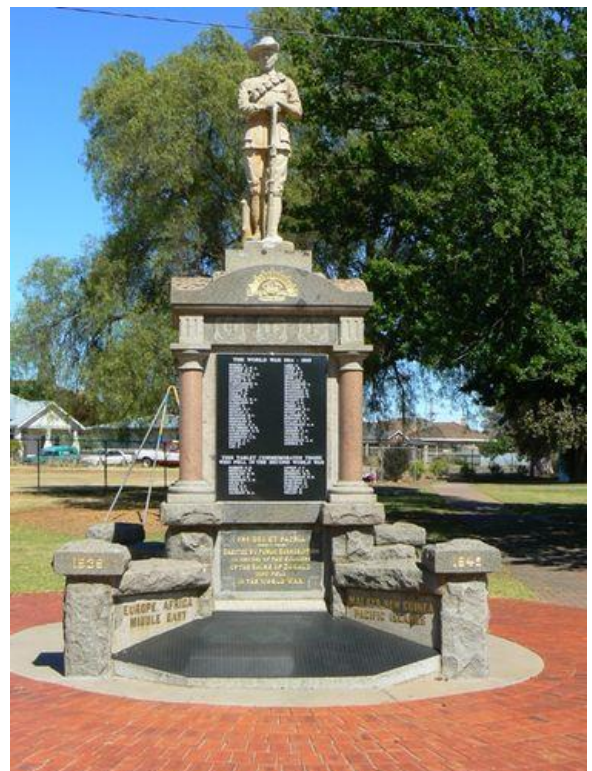
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Pte O. Goldsmith is also remembered on the Donald Shire Office Roll of Honour located at Houston & McCulloch Streets, Shire Offices, Donald, Victoria.



(Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

O. Goldsmith is also remembered on the Donald War Memorial located in Donald Park, Houston and Campbell Streets, Donald, Victoria.





(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Goldsmith’s father – Mr Henry Goldsmith of Ballarat, Victoria (December, 1921 & July, 1922) as under instructions of “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” any medals etc were awarded to the father over the mother.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Oliver Matthew James Goldsmith – service number 2307 as being 22 years old & served with 41st Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Henry and Mary Ann Goldsmith of “The Hutch” 209 Wendourree Parade, Ballarat, Victoria. Born at Corack, Victoria.

(50 pages of Pte Oliver Mathew James Goldsmith’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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Private Oliver Matthew James Goldsmith

Newspaper Reports

THE ROLL OF HONOUR – CASUALTY LIST NO. 275

QUEENSLAND – DIED OF ILLNESS

O. M. J. Goldsmith, Condamine; 14/2/17

(The Brisbane Courier, Tuesday 27 February, 1917)

LOCAL AND DISTRICT NEWS

Deep and widespread regret was expressed throughout the district when it became known that Private Oliver Goldsmith, son of Mr H. Goldsmith, had died in the London General Hospital. Private Goldsmith was a brother of Mr W. Goldsmith, of Corack. Deceased joined the colours in Queensland and subsequently underwent training in England. He contracted a severe attack of influenza which developed into pneumonia, and caused his untimely end. He was a young man with fine prospects of a successful career, and it is sad that he should be cut off before he had the opportunity to of fulfilling his mission. Man proposes but God disposes.

(Donald Times, Victoria, 2 March, 1917)

LOCAL AND DISTRICT NEWS

Last Sunday, at the Methodist church, Corack, the Rev. A. H. Horton made sympathetic reference to the late Oliver Goldsmith, of whose death in England his relatives had received word during the week. The deceased soldier had enlisted from Queensland, but previous to leaving for Queensland he had spent his childhood and young manhood days in Corack. There he was associated with Church and Sunday School work and was always popular, and had the esteem and affection of the young men of the district. On behalf of the congregation the preacher said he would forward a letter of sympathy to his relatives. Pte Goldsmith's father, an old identity of Corack, resides in Queensland; one brother is still at Corack, and a sister (Mrs Nicholls) lives at Wycheproof.

(Donald Times, Victoria, 13 March, 1917)

PERSONAL NOTES

Word has just been received of the death on the same day of two young soldiers from the Undulla and Brigalow Creek districts. Private Oliver Goldsmith, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Goldsmith, who came from Victoria, a few years ago and settled on the Condamine, is reported to have died of bronchitis in England, two or three weeks after arrival there. He had but a short time previously cabled to his parents advice of his safe arrival, and that he was well.

(The Queenslander, Brisbane Saturday 17 March, 1917)

OUR SOLDIERS

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE OLIVER GOLDSMITH

We have received the following letter sent to Mr Hy. Goldsmith of Queensland, from Pte. W. J. Sheahan, Durrington Camp, England, concerning the death in hospital of Private Oliver Goldsmith:-- February 17, 1917 Dear Mr and Mrs Goldsmith, - It is with deepest regret that I sit down to write and give you particulars of Oliver's death. As you are probably aware, by a letter I sent to you, he went into Fargo Military Hospital on Sunday, February 11. For four days previous to being admitted he was certainly off colour a good deal, but he did not show or feel any symptoms to cause anxiety, as I was sleeping and was continually with him until the ambulance took him to the hospital. On Monday night about 8 o'clock the hospital authorities rang up, and informed our O.C. that he was dangerously ill, and if he had any particular friends to tell them. Mr. Mitchell our O.C. informed me, and I, together with Mick Cane and another chap, walked over. After finding the ward he was in, we asked the Sister in charge to allow us to see him. At first she refused, but after explaining things a little, she allowed me to go in alone, but only for three minutes. When I spoke to him I was quite surprised to see him in such good spirits and appearances than we were led to believe he was in. We chatted together for about five minutes, during which he told me he was beginning to feel better, as he had just had a bath. On Tuesday morning Mick and I were off parade, and went over and saw him, and found him feeling a lot better. On Wednesday, neither of us were allowed off parade in the daytime, and we had night



operations after dark which stopped us both again. On Thursday, 15th, we were informed that he had succumbed to pneumonia. On Saturday 17th (to-day) he was buried in a small cemetery near a village called Durrington, on the Avon river, about 1 1/2 miles from here. He was taken on a gun carriage drawn by two horses to the cemetery, and as it is the custom in military funerals, only 12 men who fire the volley over the grave, beside six pall-bearers and two mourners are allowed. (As shown in the photograph to the right). Well, friends this is the worst task I have ever been set at in my life in penning you these few particulars. I can truthfully say you have lost a lad who was a credit to you in every respect, and I hope you will bear up well under your load of sorrow. Well, friends I have nothing else to say, except that I am brokenhearted, and I cannot yet realise that the best friend I ever had has gone. Let us hope to a less troublous world, and hoping that I may be spared to see you all again. I will find out and forward all particulars should you want any tombstone placed on his grave.

Private W. J. SHEAHAN.

(Donald Times, Victoria, 11 May, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

GOLDSMITH – In loving memory of our dear son, Pte O. M. J. Goldsmith, who died of illness in Fargo Military Hospital, England, February 14th, 1917.

Only a bundle of letters,

All that is left to us,
But the boy who died for country,
 Ever lives in our memory.
Only some lines from the dear one,
 And the hand of the writer is cold,
But his name on the paper is graven,
 In shining letters of gold.
-Inserted by his loving mother and father.

GOLDSMITH – In loving memory of our dear brother, Pte O. M. J. Goldsmith, who died of illness in Farga Military Hospital, England, February 14th, 1917.

Far off our thoughts do wander,
 To a grave far, far away,
Where they laid our dear one,
 Just one year ago to-day.
We often sit and think of him,
 And think of how he died,
But Oh, it was so hard to think,
 We could not say good-bye.
-Inserted by his loving sisters, Lily, Ivy and Gladys.

GOLDSMITH – In loving memory of Pte O. M. J. Goldsmith, who died of illness in Farga Military Hospital, England, February 14th, 1917.

Died of illness said the Cable,
 That is all the tale they tell,
Of the brave young lad who loved us,
 Of the lad we loved so well.
Somewhere in England he's laid to rest,
 His life's work truly done,
'Twas a sacrifice for liberty,
 Ere life had scarce begun.
-Inserted by his sorrowing sister, brother-in-law, little nephew and nieces, A and F Gray, Oliver, Nellie, Lily and Ruby.

(Donald Times, Victoria, Friday 22 February, 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 O. M. J. Goldsmith does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of The Loved Son Of Mr & Mrs Goldsmith Of Aust.

Photo of Pte O. M. J. Goldsmith's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)