

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War 1



3451 PRIVATE

E. J. SMILEY

59TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

30TH DECEMBER, 1917 AGE 25

In Memory Of Dear Jim

Adopted Son Of

W. & J. Wood Of Northcote

*CWGC Headstone for Pte E. J. Smiley is located in
Grave Plot # 315. D. 5. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Ezekiel James SMILEY

Ezekiel James Smiley was born at Northcote, Victoria in 1892 to parents Ezekiel & Margaret Smiley (nee Willis). Ezekiel's parents – Margaret Smiley died in 1893 & Ezekiel Smiley died in 1898.

The 1914 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Bourke, subdivision of Alphington, Victoria lists Ezekiel James Smiley, Attendant, of Yarra Bend, Fairfield.

Ezekiel James Smiley was a 23 year old, single Hospital Attendant from 85 Beaver's Road, Northcote, Victoria when he enlisted at Melbourne, Victoria on 6th July, 1915 with the 8th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 3451 & his religion was Congregational. His next of kin was listed as his foster father – Mr W. Wood of 85 Beaver's Road, Northcote, Victoria.

Pte Smiley was attached to A Company, 9th Battalion at Ascot Vale Depot from 12th July, 1915 to 17th September, 1915.

Private Ezekiel James Smiley embarked from Adelaide on HMAT *Nestor* (A71) on 11th October, 1915 & disembarked at

Pte Smiley was admitted to No. 1 Australian Hospital at Heliopolis with a Hernia on 4th December, 1915. He was discharged to Suez Convalescent Camp on 11th December, 1915.

Pte Smiley was admitted to Abbassia Detention Barracks with VD on 17th January, 1916 & discharged to duty on 16th March, 1916.

Pte Smiley was marched in to Overseas Base on 17th March, 1916. He was then marched in and posted to 2nd Training Battalion at Zeitoun on 29th March, 1916.

Pte Smiley was allotted to 60th Battalion, 15th Training Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 24th May, 1916.

Pte Smiley embarked to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) on *Ivernia* from Alexandria on 21st June, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th June, 1916.

Pte Smiley was marched out to his Battalion from Etaples on 14th September, 1916. He joined the 59th Battalion from 8th Battalion on 15th September, 1916.

Pte Smiley was absent without leave from 18th September, 1917 to 27th September, 1917. This was dismissed.

Pte Smiley was sent to Hospital sick & admitted to 1st New Zealand Stationary Hospital at Amiens on 20th October, 1916 with Influenza. Pte Smiley was discharged to duty on 7th November, 1916 & rejoined his Battalion from Hospital on 9th November, 1916.

Pte Smiley was sent to Hospital sick on 6th April, 1917 & admitted with Influenza then transferred to Casualty Clearing Station on 8th April, 1917. He was transferred to 6th General Hospital at Rouen on 9th April, 1917 with Laryngitis. Pte Smiley was transferred from Havre to England on 29th April, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Warilda*. He was admitted to 5th Southern General Hospital at Portsmouth on 30th April, 1917 then transferred to Red Cross Northwood Hospital at Cowes from 25th June, 1917 to 27th July, 1917. Pte Smiley was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 27th July, 1917 & discharged to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 6th August, 1917.

Pte Smiley was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 6th August, 1917. He was marched out to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 4th October, 1917.

Pte Smiley was medically classified as B1 A2 (fit for Overseas Training Camp in three to four weeks) while at Hurdcott on 5th October, 1917. He was classified again on 11th October, 1917 as B1 A3 (fit for Overseas Training Camp in two to three weeks). Pte Smiley was medically classified on 16th October, 1917 as B1 A4 (fit for Overseas Training Camp when dentally fit) & on 24th October, 29th October & 30th November classified as A3 (fit for Overseas Training Camp to which transferred for hardening, prior to rejoining Unit overseas).

Pte Smiley was marched out to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 7th December, 1917.

Private Ezekiel James Smiley was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 24th December, 1917 with Laryngitis.

Private Ezekiel James Smiley died at 4.30 pm on 30th December, 1917 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of a new growth in stomach - malignant carcinoma.

A death for Ezekiel J. Smiley, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Ezekiel James Smiley was buried on 3rd January, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 315. From the burial report of Pte Smiley - *Coffin was Elm. Pte Smiley was given a Military funeral which was officiated by Chaplain Johnson of Pioneer Training Battalion, Sutton Veny.*

Pte Ezekiel James Smiley requested in his Will dated 22nd September, 1915 that all his real & personal Estate be left to Sarah Jane Wood & that Walter Wood, Gardener of 85 Beavers Rd, Northcote be appointed as Executor of the Will.

A War Pension was granted to Sarah Jane Wood, foster-mother of late Ezekiel James Smiley in the sum of 15/- per fortnight from 14th March, 1918.

Private E. J. Smiley is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 168.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Northcote War Memorial does not list individual names.



Northcote War Memorial (Photo courtesy of [Carol's Headstone Photographs](#))

Pte Jim Smiley is also remembered on the headstone of his foster parents – Walter & Sarah Jane Wood, located in Fawkner Cemetery, Victoria



Pte Ezekiel James Smiley was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Pte Smiley's next-of-kin. A letter was written from Base Records, dated 17th August, 1920, to Mr W. Wood, foster father of Pte Smiley, asking for details of any blood relatives. Mr Wood replied with the names of 2 of Pte Smiley's sisters – Mrs M. Jones & Mrs N. Cooper along with their addresses. Base Records advised Mr Wood that if he considered that he had claims to Pte Smiley's War Medals etc to advise the full facts for the Minister otherwise the items would go to the eldest surviving sister. Details supplied by Mr Wood – *"At the age of six years we took the deceased from the State without any remuneration whatever, and brought him up and acted as a father to him, and I consider that I am entitled on these grounds to the war medals."* Mr W. Wood accepted & signed as receipt of the Memorial Scroll on 31st October, 1921 & the Memorial Plaque on 1st December, 1922. Mr W. Wood was also granted the War Medals which were awarded in recognition of Pte Smiley's service.

The CWGC lists Private Ezekiel James Smiley, 3451, of 59th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F., as the son of Ezekiel and Margaret Smiley of 85 Beavers Rd, Northcote, Victoria.

(79 pages of Pte Ezekiel James Smiley'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.



[Connected to Pte Ezekiel James Smiley:](#)

Older Brother – Pte John Willis Smilie, 4919, 14th Battalion A.I.F. – killed in action 30th March, 1918 (From the Roll of Honour information supplied by Mr W. Wood, foster father of Pte Ezekiel James Smiley. Details given were Pte John William Smiley). Remembered on Villers Bretonnux Memorial, France.





Pte Ezekiel James Smiley



Items belonging to Pte Ezekiel James Smiley

Newspaper Reports

GALLANT AUSTRALIANS

Private E. J. Smiley, adopted son of Mr and Mrs W. Wood, of 85 Beaver's road, Northcote, died in the Sutton Veney Military Hospital, England, on the 30th December, 1917, The sad news was received on the 3rd inst. and came as a great shock to his relatives, especially as during the Christmas week two cheerful letters had been received, in which he expressed pleasure at being given light duties at Salisbury Plains before returning to France, where he had previously served in the trenches.

(Northcote Leader, Victoria – Saturday 12 January, 1918)

AUSTRALIA'S HEROES

CASUALTY LISTS Nos 378 & 379

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private E. J. Smiley, Northcote

(*The Ballarat Star*, Victoria – Monday 14 January, 1918)

DEATHS

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

WOOD (SMILEY) - Officially reported on the 30th December, 1917, at Sutton Veny Military Hospital, of illness, Private Jim Wood (Smiley), after two and a half years on service, loved adopted son of W. and J. Wood, of 85 Beaver's Road, Northcote; also loving brother of Mrs Jones (Toorak), Mrs Cooper (Colac), and Private J. W. Smiley (on active service).

Age 25 years.

He answered his country's call.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Vic - Saturday 12 January, 1918 & *Preston Leader*, Victoria & *Northcote Leader* – Saturday 19 January, 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 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*)

Pte Ezekiel James Smiley does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of Dear Jim Adopted Son Of W. & J. Wood Of Northcote

Photo of Private E. J. Smiley'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)

