

# Warminster War Graves

## St. Denys Churchyard



*Lest We Forget*

### World War 1



7579 PRIVATE

**S. M. DEVENISH**

11TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

9TH FEBRUARY, 1918 Age 33

## Sydney/Sidney Milton DEVENISH

*(Note – Variations in the spelling of Sydney/Sidney - The Australian War Memorial has the name Sidney, however the Attestation Papers are in the name Sydney. The Birth Registration is in the name Sidney & the Marriage Registration is in the name Sydney. The Electoral Rolls list the name as Sydney.)*

Sidney Milton Devenish was born at Perth, Western Australia in 1884 to parents Ralph Trigg Devenish & Anne Mary Devenish (nee Brittain).

The 1912 Australian Electoral Roll for Claremont, Fremantle, Western Australia lists Sydney Milton Devenish, dairy hand, c/o Mr J. Shiel, Cottesloe.

Sydney Milton Devenish married Matilda Rose Durnin in 1912 in Fremantle. The following children were born to Sydney & Matilda Devenish – Olive May Devenish (born 1913), Harold Mick Devenish (born 1915) & twins Sydney Borda Devenish & Flora S. Devenish (born 1917).

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for East Fremantle, Western Australia lists Sydney Milton Devenish, horse driver living with his wife Matilda Rose Devenish at 131 Forrest Street, East Fremantle.

The 1917 Australian Electoral Roll for Fremantle, Western Australia lists Sydney Milton Devenish, horse driver living with his wife Matilda Rose Devenish at 147 Forrest Street, Fremantle.

Sydney Milton Devenish was a 32 year old, married, Carter from East Fremantle when he enlisted at Fremantle on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 with the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 25<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 7579 & his religion was Congregational. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs M. R. Devenish of 131 Forrest Street, East Fremantle, Western Australia. Sidney Devenish stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service 12 months prior due to Cardiac trouble.

Pte Sydney Milton Devenish embarked from Fremantle on HMAT *Borda* (A30) on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1917 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 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 Devenish was marched in to 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1917.

Pte Devenish was admitted to Military Hospital, Fargo with Influenza on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1917 & discharged on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1917.

Pte Devenish was marched out from 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Battalion at Durrington on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1917 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.

Private Sydney Milton Devenish died "suddenly in lines at 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion", Sutton Veny, Wiltshire at 3.30 am on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1918 from Acute Angio Neurotic Oedema. A report in reference to No. 7579 Pte Devenish S. M., from Captain Frank Beare, A.A.M.C. reads: "*This man paraded sick at 1.30 pm on 87.2.18 with "C" Coy. He had a diffuse swelling on the right side of the jaw. This did not extend down to the neck, nor were there any other signs of Oedema found. There was a history of these sudden swellings. A diagnosis of Angio-Neurotic-Oedema was made and Calc. Lact. gr.Xv. 4 indic was prescribed and three day's medicine given this man; he complained of no pain.*

*I was awakened at 3.25 a.m. this morning and told by two men that a man was choking in Hut 15, No. 2 Camp. On my arrival there I found that life was extinct but did artificial respiration for a few minutes proving that there was a block in the lower respiratory passages somewhere, as air was difficult to force out of the chest. This man was*

*cyanosed and there was a diffuse swelling of the face and neck and in my opinion the cause of death was Oedema of the Glottis due to Angio-neurotic-Oedema.*

A death for Sidney M. Devenish, aged 33, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Pte Sidney Milton Devenish contains a letter from The Matron, Military Hospital, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire in reply to a request from the Red Cross, on behalf of the relatives in Australia to obtain the fullest details possible regarding the death of Pte Devenish. The Matron wrote: *“Re Pte Devenish. He died in camp and was brought in here dead, the diagnosis being “Urticaria oedematosa”. I think you would obtain more detail from writing to his Unit. I believe he was buried at Warminster.”*

Private Sydney Milton Devenish was buried on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1918, North-west of Church in St. Denys Churchyard, Warminster, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Devenish - *Coffin was good quality Elm. Military Funeral.*

Pte Sydney Milton Devenish (Grocer) requested in his Will, dated 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1917, that all his real & personal estate to be bequeathed to his wife – Matilda Rose Devenish. She was also appointed Executrix.

Private S. M. Devenish is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 62.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Pte Sidney Milton Devenish was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Devenish's widow – Mrs M. R. Devenish (Scroll sent March, 1923 & Plaque sent October, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private S. M. Devenish – service number 7579, as being 33 years old & served with 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

A War Pension was granted to Matilda Rose Devenish, widow of late Pte Sydney Milton Devenish, in the sum of 40/- per fortnight from 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1918. Pensions were also granted to following children of Matilda Rose & Sydney Milton Devenish – all per fortnight from 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1918:

- Olive May Devenish – 20/-
- Harold Devenish – 15/-
- Sydney Borda Devenish – 10/-
- Flora S. Devenish – 10/-

(41 pages of Pte Sidney Milton Devenish's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **WAR CASUALTIES**

Mrs S. M. Devenish, of 131 Forrest-street, East Fremantle, has received word that her husband, Private Sydney M. Devenish, died in England on February 9.

*(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 19 February, 1918)*

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### **W. A. CASUALTIES**

#### **384TH CASUALTY LIST**

##### **DIED OF ILLNESS**

Devenish, Sydney Milton, East Fremantle

*(The Daily News, Perth, Western Australia – 25 February, 1918)*

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### **DEATHS**

DEVENISH – On February 9, 1918, in England, of pneumonia, Private Sidney Milton, beloved eldest son of R. T. Devenish, and brother of Violet, Ralph, Arthur (on active service), and Mrs K. I. Brownrigg.

God will remember when the world forgets

*(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 9 March, 1918) & (Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia – 15 March, 1918)*

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### **FUNERAL NOTICES**

DEVENISH - The Friends of Mrs M. R. Devenish and the late Sydney Milton Devenish are respectfully invited to follow the remains of their late dearly beloved daughter, Flora Suvic, sister of Sydney (twin), Olive, and Harold, to the place of internment, the Anglican portion of the Fremantle Cemetery. The Funeral is appointed to leave the residence of her mother, 133 Forrest-street, Fremantle East, THIS (Thursday) MORNING, at, 10.30 o'clock. JOSEPH C. SEMKEN, Undertaker, 81 and 83 Adelaide-street, Fremantle. Tel. B682.

FREMANTLE R.S.L. WOMEN'S AUXILIARY.

DEVENISH - Members of the above branch are respectfully invited to follow the remains of the dearly beloved daughter, Flora Suvic, of Mrs. M. R. Devenish, and the late Sydney Milton Devenish; also sister of Sydney (twin), Olive and Harold, to the place of interment, the Anglican portion of the Fremantle Cemetery. The Funeral is appointed to leave the residence of her mother, 133 Forrest-street, Fremantle East, THIS (Thursday) MORNING at 10.30 o'clock.

MRS. M PAINE. Secretary.

MRS. A G. KIRBY, President.

*(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 12 March, 1925)*

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### Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

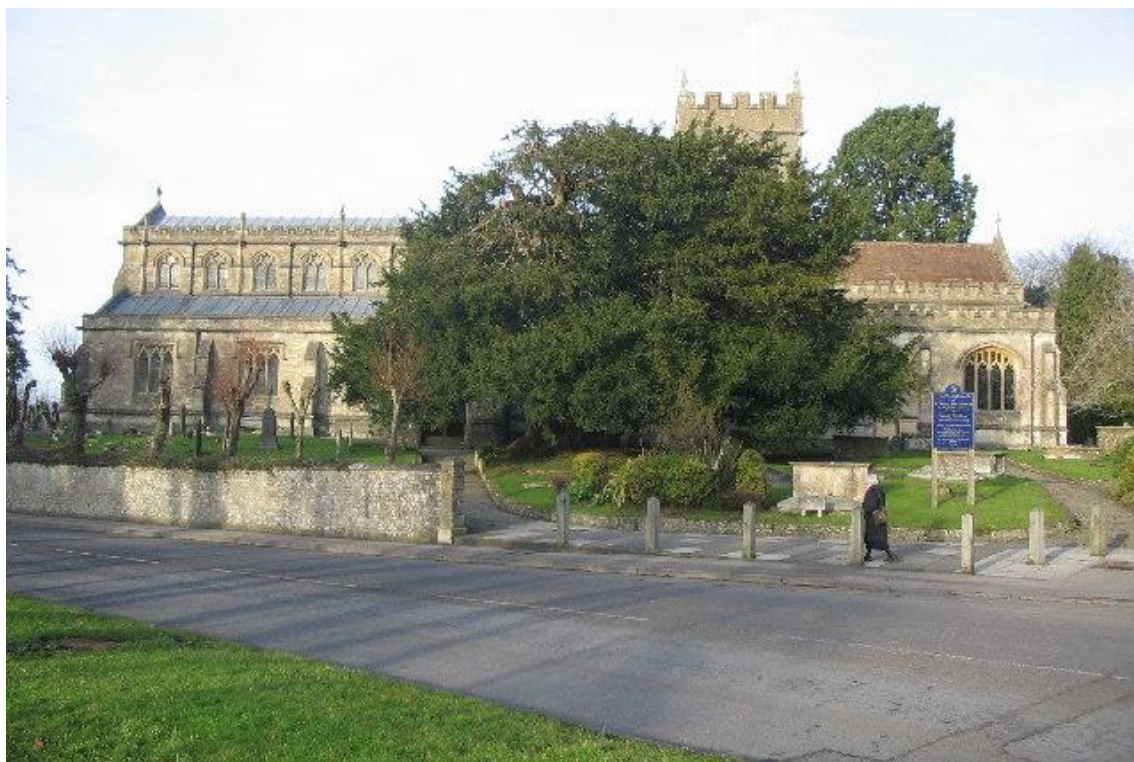
The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & 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 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1921, to Mrs M. R. Devenish of 131 Forrest Street, East Fremantle, advises that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone her husband, the late Pte S. M. Devenish, 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.

Pte Sydney Milton Devenish does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.



**Minster Church of St Denys, Warminster, Wiltshire** *(Photo by Phil Williams 2006)*



Photo of Pte S. M. Devenish's Headstone at St. Denys Churchyard, Warminster, Wiltshire.



*(Photo by Michelle Young)*