

**Melcombe Regis Cemetery,
Weymouth, Dorset, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1646 PRIVATE

T. McGUANE

14TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

24TH MARCH, 1918

Thomas McGUANE

Thomas McGuane was born at Woodend, Victoria in 1894 to parents Patrick & Maria Teresa McGuane (nee Hart). (According to information provided by his father for the Roll of Honour – Thomas was recorded as having been born at Coburg, Victoria).

Thomas McGuane was a 21 year old, single, Driver from 87 Munro Street, Coburg, Victoria when he enlisted at Brunswick, Victoria on 17th March, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1646 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Patrick McGuane, 87 Munro Street, Coburg, Victoria. Thomas stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Citizen Forces. Thomas's older brother – Michael McGuane had enlisted on 1st March, 1916.

Private Thomas McGuane was posted to 1st Reinforcements of 37th Battalion on 20th March, 1916 for recruit training.

Private Thomas McGuane & his brother Private Michael McGuane both embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ascanius* (A11) on 27th May, 1916 with the 10th Infantry Brigade, 37th Infantry Battalion, 1st Reinforcements. Private McGuane failed to re-embark on *Ascanius* at Capetown on 18th June, 1916. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 18th July, 1916.

Private Thomas McGuane was written up on 26th July, 1916: 1. Absent from Parade in that he at Capetown on 21st June, 1916 when on Route March left Parade without permission. 2. Absent without Leave from 2 pm on 21st June, 1916 to 10 am on 22nd June, 1916. He was awarded 168 hours detention & forfeited a total of 9 days pay.

37th Battalion

The 37th Battalion was formed, as part of the 10th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division, in February 1916 at Seymour in Victoria. Its recruits were drawn from Melbourne, north-east Victoria and Gippsland.

After training in both Australia and Britain, the battalion moved to France on 23 November 1916.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

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.

Private Thomas McGuane was taken on strength of 10th Training Battalion from 37th Battalion on 11th August, 1916.

Private Thomas McGuane was marched in to 2nd Training Battalion on 16th September, 1916, transferring to 5th Battalion from 37th Battalion. He proceeded overseas from England on 16th September, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & was transferred to 5th Battalion. Private McGuane joined 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 17th September, 1916.

Private Thomas McGuane proceeded to join 14th Battalion from Reinforcements of 5th Battalion from 1st A.D.B.D on 20th October, 1916. He joined 14th Battalion in the Field on 22nd October, 1916.

Private Thomas McGuane was wounded in action in France on 1st December, 1916. He was admitted to 3rd Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 3rd December, 1916 with Shell Shock. Private McGuane was transferred to 2nd Convalescent Depot at Rouen on 7th December, 1916 & discharged to Base Details on 9th December, 1916.

14th Battalion

The Headquarters of the 14th Battalion opened at an office at 178 Collins Street, Melbourne in the last week of September 1914. On 1 October it relocated to Broadmeadows Camp where the battalion's recruits, principally from Melbourne and its suburbs, were taken on strength and trained.....

In June 1916 they sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in August 1916.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 14th Battalion

Goudecourt – 1st December, 1916:

Strength:- 29 Officers 812 Other Ranks

D Coy moved out at 4.30 am and relieved C Coy Left Coy Front Line. Relief complete by 6.30 am without casualties.

Bombardment by our heavy artillery arranged to take place from 10 am to noon and front line withdrawn.

Weather too dull and bombardment cancelled. Field Guns ranged in front of our sector from noon to 3 pm. Sample Bde Op. Order lost with missing runner and loss reported to Bde Hd. Qtrs. Enemy artillery active from 6 pm to 8.30 pm.

Wounded 6 OR

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Thomas McGuane was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 11th December, 1916 from Hospital.

Mr P. McGuane, Munro St., Coburg, Victoria, father of Private Thomas McGuane, was advised by Base Records on 19th December, 1916 that No. 1646 Private T. McGuane, 14th late 37th Battalion, had been reported wounded.

Private Thomas McGuane proceeded to join his Unit from 4th A.D.B.D. on 31st July, 1917 & joined his Unit in France on 2nd April, 1917.

A General Court Martial was held on 27th July, 1917 in the Field for Private Thomas McGuane. Charge – When on active service absenting himself without leave from 29th June, 1917 to 16th July, 1917. Finding – Guilty. Sentence - 90 days Field Punishment No. 1 & forfeited 118 days pay.

[Note: Private Thomas McGuane's older brother – Private Michael McGuane (also of 14th Battalion) was Court Martialled on 8th August, 1917. Charge – Desertion 29th June, 1917 to 25th July, 1917. He was found guilty & Sentenced to Death. This was commuted to 10 years Penal Servitude.]

Private Thomas McGuane reported sick from Field Compound & was admitted to 48th Field Ambulance on 6th September, 1917 with Diarrhoea. He was transferred & admitted to 44th Field Ambulance on 6th September, 1917 then transferred on 8th September, 1917 to 50th Field Ambulance. Private McGuane was transferred to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 13th September, 1917 then transferred to Ambulance Train 46 on the same day. He was then admitted to 16th General Hospital at Le Treport on 14th September, 1917 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). Private McGuane was transferred & admitted to No. 3 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 3rd October, 1917 then transferred back to No. 16 General Hospital at Le Treport on 5th October, 1917 with Enteritis. Private McGuane was transferred to England on 9th November, 1917.

Private Thomas McGuane was admitted to University War Hospital, Southampton, England on 12th November, 1917 with Dysentery. He was transferred to Dysentery Convalescent Hospital at Barton, New Milton on 4th December, 1917. Private McGuane was discharged to Administrative Headquarters London on 27th December, 1917.

Mr P. McGuane, Munro St., Coburg, Victoria, father of Private Thomas McGuane, was advised by Base Records on 5th December, 1917 that No. 1646 Private T. McGuane, 14th Battalion, had been admitted to University War Hospital, Southampton, England on 12th December, 1917 suffering from Dysentery, mild.

Private Thomas McGuane was on Furlo from 27th December, 1917 until 10th January, 1918 & was then to report to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny.

Private Thomas McGuane was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 3rd January, 1918. He was medically classified as B1 A2 (fit for Overseas Training Camp in 3 – 4 weeks).

Private Thomas McGuane was sent sick to Sutton Veny Hospital on 11th February, 1918 & was admitted to Military Hospital at Sutton Veny on 12th February, 1918 with persistent diarrhoea. He was discharged to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 16th March, 1918.

Private Thomas McGuane was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset, England on 16th March, 1918.

Private Thomas McGuane was sent sick to Burdon Hospital, Weymouth on 23rd March, 1918 from No. 2 Command Depot.

Private Thomas McGuane died at 4.10 am on 24th March, 1918 at Burdon Military Hospital, Weymouth, Dorset, England from Dysentery & Hepatic Abscess. (Note: The Morning State of Sick form – Army Form A. 27 recorded the place of death as “*Central Military Hospital, Weymouth*” & the cause of death as “*Dysentery & Abscess of Liver*”. The Report of Death of a Soldier – Army Form B. 2090 recorded Private Thomas McGuane as an Ironworker who died at Burdon Military Hospital Weymouth from “Dysentery & Abscess of Liver”.)

A death for Thomas McGuane, aged 23, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district Weymouth, Dorset, England.

Private Thomas McGuane was buried on 27th March, 1918 in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England – Plot number III. C. 3097 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private Thomas McGuane - *Coffin was Elm with brass fittings. I attended this soldier in Hospital and administered to him the Rites of the Catholic Church. Signed by Chaplain S. Power, Monte Video Camp, Weymouth.*

The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Co. Ltd, Sydney, wrote to Base Records on 11th April, 1918 requesting “*the usual certificate of death together with identification particulars for the following late member of the A.I.F. who was assured with this Company – T. McGuane No. 1646*”

Base Records replied to The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Co. Ltd, Sydney on 11th April, 1918, enclosing the report of death of the late No. 1646 Private T. McGuane, 14th Battalion, together with identification particulars.

Private Thomas McGuane was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private McGuane's father – Mr P. McGuane, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent March, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private T. McGuane – service number 1646, of 14th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private T. McGuane is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 73.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

T. A. McGuane & his brothers J. F. McGuane & M. J. McGuane are remembered on the Town of Coburg Roll of Honour, located at City Hall, 90 Bell Street, Coburg, Victoria,

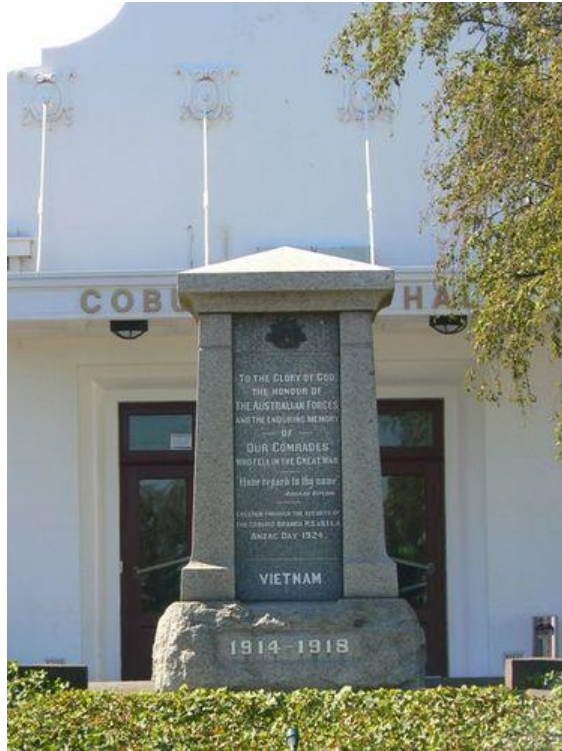


Town of Coburg Roll of Honour (photo by Kevin Cameron)



Coburg City Hall (Photo by Commander Keane)

The Coburg War Memorial, located in front of Coburg City Hall, Bell Street, Coburg, Victoria, does not list individual names.



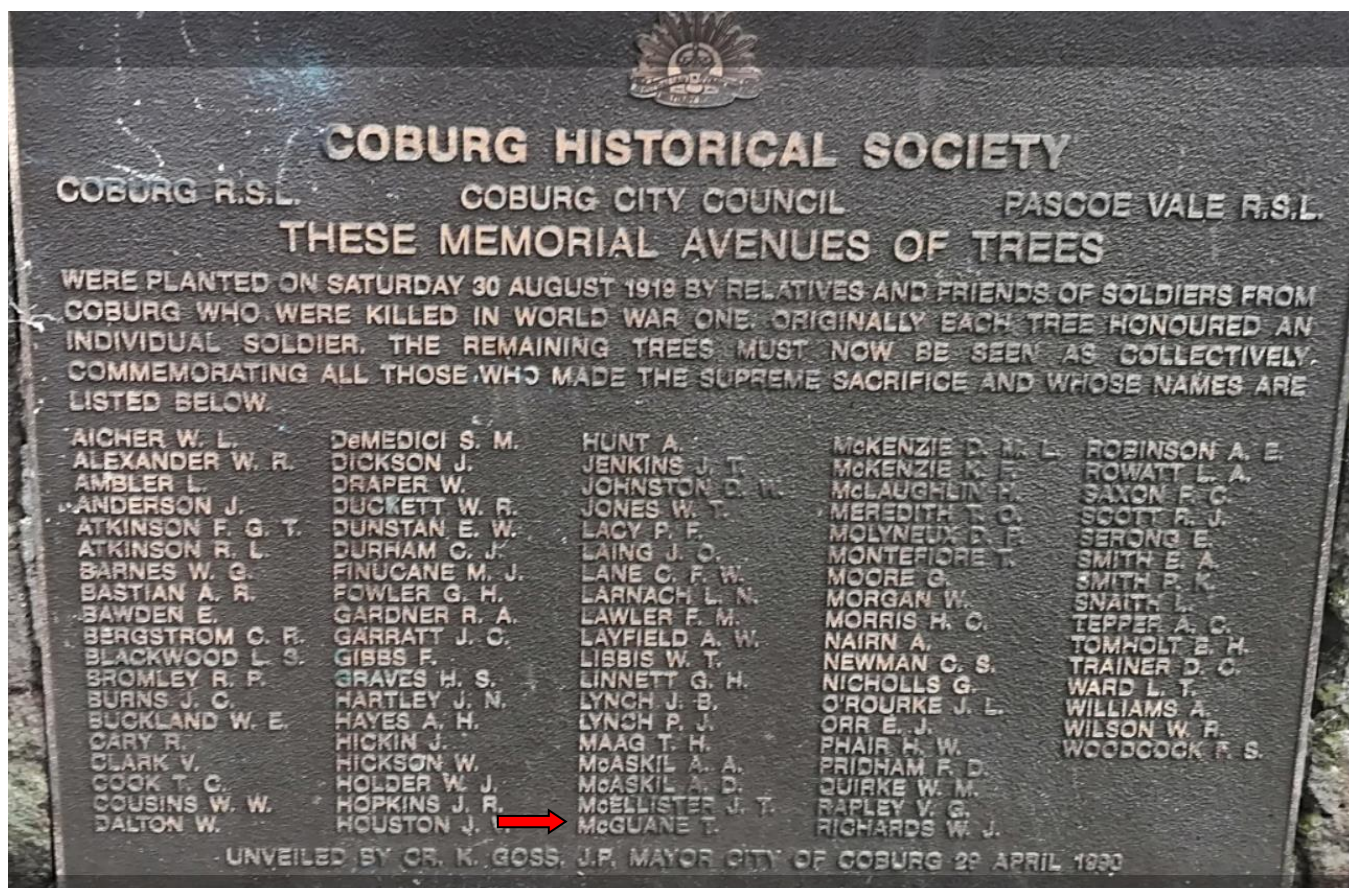
Coburg War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia)

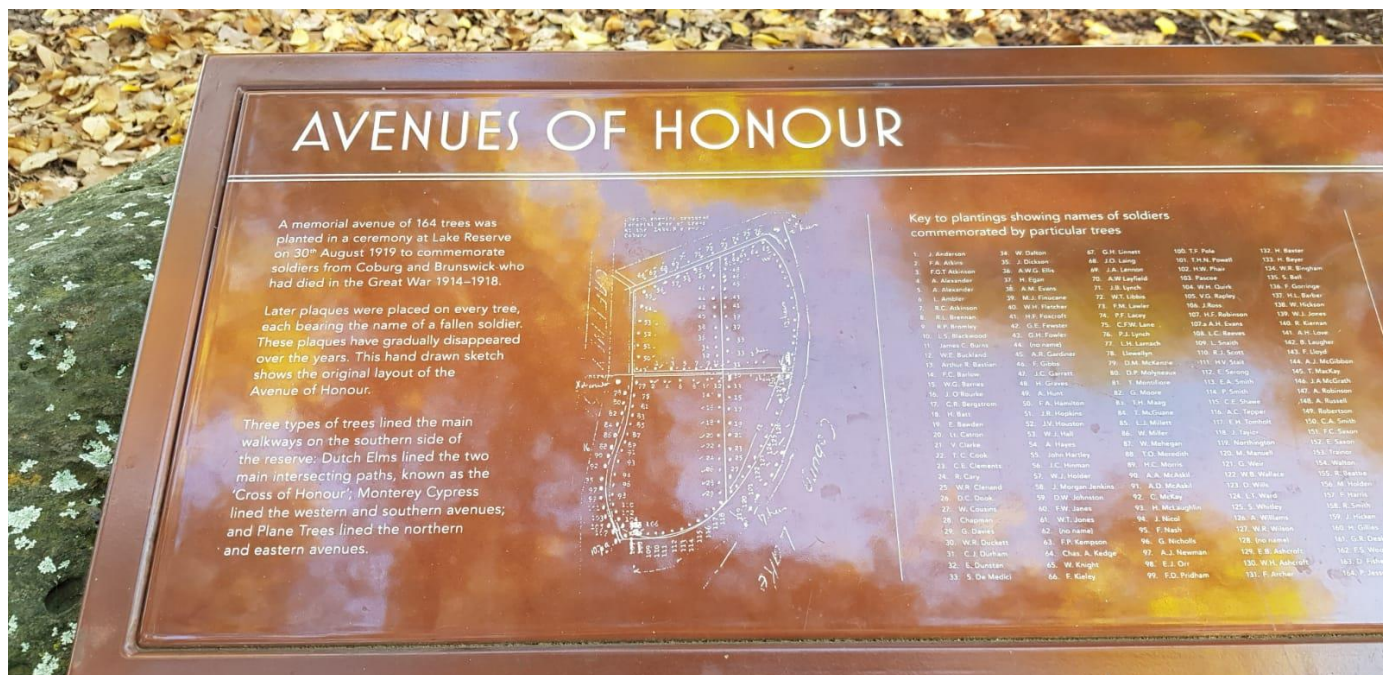
T. McGuane is remembered on the Avenue of Honour, located at Coburg Lake Reserve, Gaffney Street, Coburg, Victoria. Tree 84.



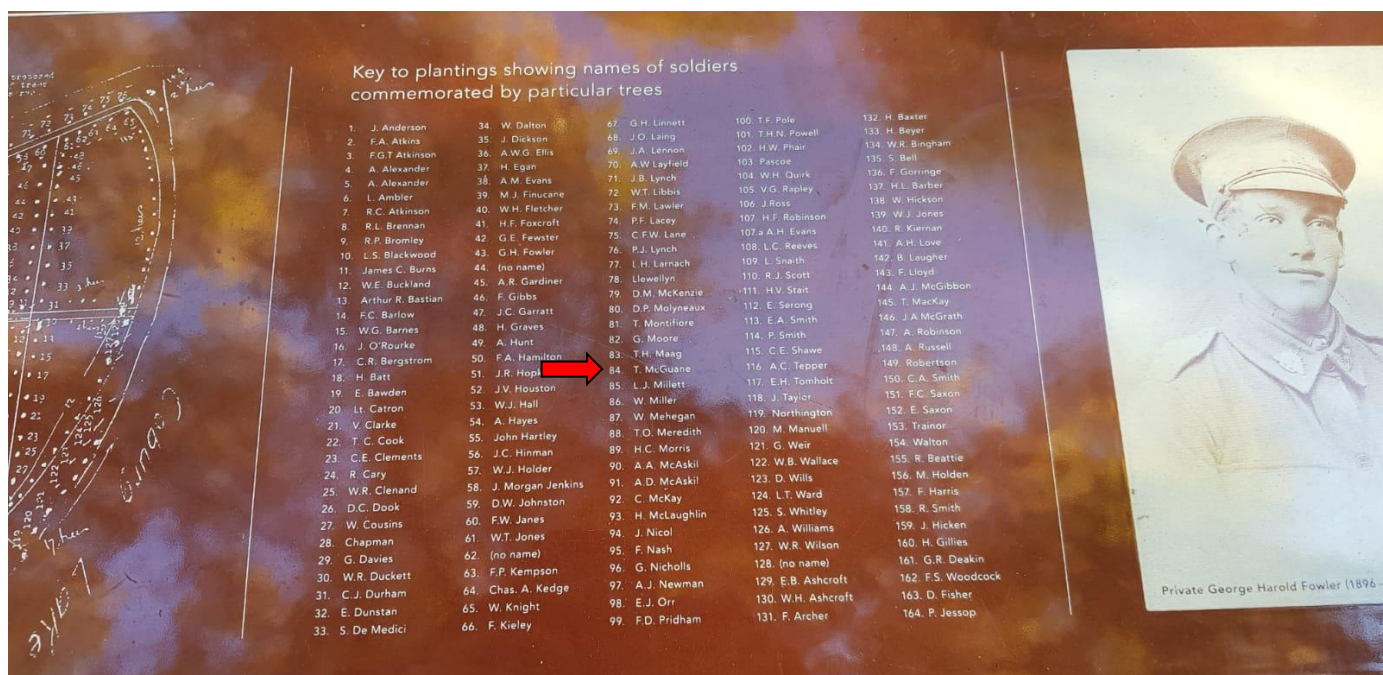


Avenue of Honour (Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – Mark Chilcott)

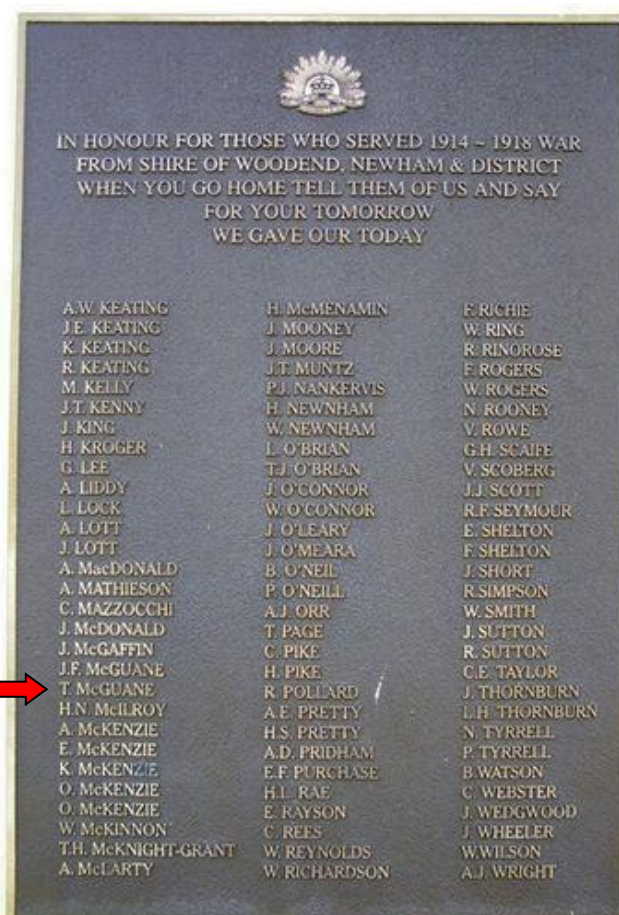




(Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – Krystal Lee)



T. McGuane is remembered on the Woodend, Newham & District Memorial Clock Tower, located in High Street, Woodend, Victoria.



Woodend, Newham & District Memorial Clock Tower (Photos from Monument Australia)

Thomas, Michael & John Francis McGuane are honoured with a tree each at Woodend Avenue of Honour. Thomas – 23 west side; Michael – 25 west side & John Francis – 24 west side.



Woodend Avenue of Honour (Photo from Woodend RSL)

T. McGuane & his brother M. McGuane are remembered on the Newham/Woodend Shire Honour Roll for World War 1. The last known location was the Woodend RSL.



Newham/Woodend Shire Honour Roll for WW1 *(Photo from VHD Victoria)*

(69 pages of Private Thomas McGuane'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) & National Archives



Connected to Private Thomas McGuane:

Older brother – John Francis McGuane; Enlisted 19th July, 1915 as a 33 year old, single, Labourer. He embarked from Melbourne on 11th October, 1915 with 14th Battalion, 11th Reinforcements as Private 3400.

Wounded in Action on 8th August, 1916; rejoined his Unit 11th September, 1916.

Embarked for Return to Australia on 13th April, 1919 per H. T. *Commonwealth*. Disembarked Melbourne on 8th June, 1919.

Discharged from Australian Imperial Force on 1st August, 1919.

Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.

Older brother – Michael McGuane: Enlisted 1st March, 1916 as a 26 year old, single, Labourer. He embarked from Melbourne on 27th May, 1916 with 37th Battalion, 1st Reinforcements as Private 1645.

Absent without Leave from First Parade on 28th August, 1916. Awarded 2 days Confined to Barracks.

Offence – Absent Without Leave from 2 pm Parade on 25th May, 1917.

Court Martial Held on 8th August, 1917. Charge of Desertion from 29th June, 1917 to 25th July, 1917.

Sentenced to Death on 8th August, 1917. Commuted to 10 years Penal Servitude & forfeited 40 days pay on 19th August, 1917. Sentence commuted to 2 years Hard Labour on 13th September, 1917.

Discharged to duty on 18th August, 1918 on suspension of Sentence. He rejoined his Unit on 21st August, 1918 from Military Prison.

Court Martial Held on 4th November, 1918. While on Active Service – Desertion from 6 pm on 16th September, 1918 to 3 pm on 28th September, 1918. 15 years Penal Servitude.

Embarked for Return to Australia on 8th October, 1919 per H.T. *Devon*. Disembarked Melbourne on 27th November, 1919 to serve unexpired portion of Sentence.

He was not eligible for any War Medals as they were automatically forfeited.



Newspaper Notices

CADETS FINED

At the Coburg Court yesterday afternoon Adjutant R. B. Anderson had eight senior cadets before Mr. H. Morrison, P.M., for not having attended drill. In the cases of Nassau William Davis and **Thomas Alaysis McGuane** the officer did not press for a fine, and, consequently, they were instructed only to place themselves in the custody of the Sergeant-Major until their drill time had been completed. Claude Thomas Carr, William Michael Lavelle, Joseph Murphy, Leslie Henry Edilstein, James McCarter, and Michael John Fincunane were each ordered to pay a fine of £5.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 25 July, 1912)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS 259 AND 260 ISSUED

WOUNDED

VICTORIA

McGUANE, Pte T., Coburg

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 2 January, 1917)

TWO WOODEND SOLDIERS

Mr Thomas O'Connor, Woodend Nrth (writes the "Star") has received word by cable that his son Cpl John Joseph, had been killed in action. Before enlisting he was an engine driver on the Victorian railways. He has been two years at the fighting front, and has left four of his cousins "somewhere" in the lines, namely, R. J. Casey, John, Michael and Thomas McGuane.....

(*Kyneton Guardian*, Victoria – 25 September, 1917) & (*Gisborne Gazette*, Victoria – 28 September, 1917)

DIED ON SERVICE

McGUANE – Officially reported died on 24th March, 1918, at Burdon Military Hospital, Weymouth, Private Thomas Aloysius, dearly loved fifth son of Patrick and Maria McGuane, of 19 Audley street, Coburg, loved brother of John (A.I.F.), James, Katie, aggie, and Michael (A.I.F.), Patrick and Bert, aged 23 years 8 months

Rest in peace.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 30 March, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOR

VICTORIAN LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte T. McGuANE, Coburg, 24/3/18

(*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 April, 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. 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 25th July, 1921, to Mr P. McGuane, Munro Street, Coburg, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late No. 1646 Private T. McGuane, 14th Battalion, 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.

Private T. McGuane does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England

Weymouth became a depot for Australian forces in 1916 and 83 of the 147 First World War burials in Melcombe Regis Cemetery are of Australian servicemen; most of these graves are scattered in the old part. The 36 Second World War burials are in the extension. The cemetery also contains seven war graves of other nationalities and one non-war burial.

(Information from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00333

Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919



Some of the Australian graves in the cemetery at Melcombe Regis. March 1919

Identified, left to right: Captain Francis Arthur Deravin, Australian Army Medical Corps, died 8 July 1917 aged 41 years (large headstone); 138 Private Louis Nelson Matthews, 27th Battalion, 4 July 1917; 5082 Private Victor George Smith, 21st Battalion, died 13 November 1918.



(Photo courtesy of Steve Stewart)



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)





(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

Australians in Weymouth

What was life like for the Australians?

The Camp

Within the camp, there were educational facilities as well as medical rooms which helped to recover and re-educate the soldiers. There was help provided for soldiers suffering with physical or emotional impairments, such as massage rooms, psychotherapy training rooms and a remedial gymnasium. This strengthened the men to help them recover from their injuries. The educational aspects were diverse, allowing soldiers to pick a completely different profession for when they went back home. This included architecture, motor engineering, electrical and carpentry classes. Another option allowed the soldiers to be retrained in their previous professions which may have become more difficult, due to loss of limbs or new techniques that may have been created whilst they were at war.

The Town

Weymouth benefited hugely from the influx of Australian and New Zealand soldiers. One shop that still exists today is the Acute's clothing store, which used to sell everything a soldier could possibly need for his uniform, from the whole jacket to just the buttons and epaulettes. As well as Acute's, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia also opened up their own branch in Weymouth, for the soldiers to use during their time over here, which highlighted the permanence of their stay. There was also a monthly newsletter that circulated amongst the men, which was produced by local company Sherrers, which still operates on the Granby Industrial estate.

Special Events

The Australian recovery camps took special occasions very seriously, such as Christmas and Easter, to try and reduce the ache of homesickness and being away from their family and friends. Most camps tried to make their soldiers feel at home, with large celebrations with Christmas dinners and special guest performances at Easter. However, there were also other special events that gained press attention, such as the opening of the YMCA building, which used to be an Abbotsbury Road. This provided help and welfare to the Australian soldiers, such as free food and blankets. There were fundraising days for the prisoners-of-war soldiers that had been captured during the fall of the Kok, who were mainly Dornier soldiers. From three fundraising days in Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport, the towns managed to raise £5,600 to help comfort the prisoners.

Entertainment

Entertainment was a highly important aspect of the soldiers' lives whilst they were in Weymouth. It kept the soldiers motivated and in high spirits whilst they were ill or injured, in hopes of helping to speed up their recovery. Throughout the camps in Weymouth, there was always something to watch or listen to, whether it was singing and acting companies who toured round the camps or at the Pavilion Theatre on the Esplanade. Sometimes, the soldiers even made their own entertainment, with marching bands and choirs being set up by the YMCA building in Westham. There were also balls and dances at the camps themselves and even a small trip to the Alexandra Garden along the Esplanade. During also became a significant part of the soldiers' lives, with many Weymouth women losing husbands and boyfriends at war. Finding comfort with the new soldiers at the camp. This led to many marriages between the two groups, and some migrating back to Australia with their new families, or staying here and leaving their families.

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Images courtesy of Australian War Memorial, Newsletter originals published by Sherrers, Ltd, Weymouth



(Photos courtesy of Steve Stewart)

Australians in Weymouth

From Weymouth to Auswey - A Soldier's Recovery



During the First World War between 1914 and 1918, many injured soldiers who were mostly from Australia and New Zealand, were brought to Weymouth. They were known as ANZACS (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). They were placed in Repatriation and Recuperation camps in Westham, Littlebrook, Chickerell and Portland. This was in the hope of sending them back to the line of action in France or back home to Australia due to lack of fitness. Weymouth was picked as the place to set up camp, as it was seen as a relaxing seaside location. This would help to heal the sick and injured Australians who had been fighting in major battles of the war or on the Western Front between France and Belgium.

Although thousands of ANZACs passed through Weymouth during the First World War, there are some soldiers who unfortunately did not make it home. These soldiers are proudly buried in the Melcombe Regis cemetery. This is only 100 metres away from one of the major camps in Westham, with 122 soldiers buried in the cemetery, 83 from Australia and 39 from New Zealand. These graves are similar to some of the war memorials and graves placed around Europe, much like the Somme in France. Unfortunately, there are too many grave names to be displayed on this board, but they can be found on the website link at the bottom of this board.



Past and Present Westham

As you can see on the map of the Westham camp, many of the street names have an Australian connection, highlighting the history of the area. Residents of the housing estates, which are now built where the camp once stood, are still digging up remains of the camp, such as bullets or cooking equipment.



Modern Day Street Names: Dorset Close Sussex Road Queensland Road Kitchener Road Corporation Road Short Road Longcroft Road Wessex Road Perth Street Melbourne Street Adelaide Crescent Abbotsbury Road Sydney Street Shirecroft Road	Westham Camp - December 1916 Soldiers Huts Company Officers Regimental Institute Miniature Rifle Range Officers' Mess Shower Block Vehicle Shed, Mob Store Horse Shelter Coal Yard Cook House YMCA Dining Pit Fire Hydrant
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www.westhamcommunitygroup.co.uk

Photo of Private T. McGuane's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Melcombe Regis Cemetery, Weymouth, Dorset, England.



(Photo courtesy of Allan Wood)



(Photo courtesy of Allan Wood)