

Codford War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



27966 RIFLEMAN

A. D. SHAW

N.Z. RIFLE BRIGADE

15TH JANUARY, 1917 Age 36



Alexander Davidson SHAW

Alexander Davidson Shaw was born in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, the son of Thomas & Elizabeth Shaw (nee Davidson). His birth was registered in 1883 at Sandhurst, Sandridge, Victoria, however the date of birth in his Service Record file is recorded as 10th February, 1884.

Alexander Shaw was a 32 year old, single, Labourer from Wellington, New Zealand when he enlisted on 27th June, 1916 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 27966 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs A. Shaw of Woolsthorpe, Victoria, Australia.

Private/Rifleman Alexander Shaw was reported for failing to comply with an order whilst at Trentham Camp, New Zealand on 21st July, 1916. He was given 3 days Confined to Barracks.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw embarked with New Zealand Rifle Brigade, 12th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion, F Company from Wellington, New Zealand on HMNZT (66) *Willochra* on 16th October, 1916, destination England. While on Transport Ship to England, Rifleman Shaw was reported for an offence – “clothing issued” & punished with stoppage of pay. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th December, 1916.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw was admitted to Military Hospital at Devonport on 29th December, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw was transferred to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire on 10th January, 1917 with influenza. He was placed on Seriously Ill list on 11th January, 1917 with pneumonia.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw died on 15th January, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Pneumonia.

A death for Alexander Shaw, aged 32, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, Codford on 19th January, 1917.

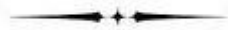
Rifleman Alexander Shaw, 27966 was last attached to New Zealand Rifle Brigade.

Rifleman Alexander Shaw 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 Rifleman Shaw's sisters – Misses Wilhelmina & Louisa Shaw of 170 Coventry St, Sth Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (October, 1921 & December, 1921)

Alexander Davidson Shaw is remembered in the Australian Commemorative Roll located in the Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia. The Commemorative Roll records the names in a book of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

(21 pages of Rifleman Alexander Shaw's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission & PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand.



Newspaper Reports

SICK AND WOUNDED

DANGEROUSLY ILL

Shaw, A., 27966, Victoria

(*Evening Post*, New Zealand, Volume XCIII, Issue 14, 16 January, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOUR

DIED OF DISEASE

CANTERBURY INFANTRY BATT

Shaw, A., 27966 (Mrs A. Shaw, Victoria, m) 15th January.

(*Evening Post*, New Zealand, Volume XCIII, Issue 16, 18 January, 1917)

DIED ON SERVICE

SHAW – Died from pneumonia, in New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on 15th January, Alexander Davidson Shaw, only son of Elizabeth Shaw and dearly loved brother of Mrs M. Tobin, Louie and Minnie Shaw; also eldest grandson of W. Davidson, Woolsthorpe, aged ___ years.

We lost the sunshine of roses;
 We lost the morning dew;
We lost the gladness that turned into sadness;
 When we lost you.

(*Warnambool Standard*, Victoria, Australia, Tuesday 23 January, 1917)

A WOOLSTHORPE HERO

DEATH AND BURIAL

Two very comforting letters have been received by Mrs Shaw, of Woolsthorpe, relative to the death of her son, Alexander, who died in January in the No. 3 New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, from pneumonia and bronchitis.

One of the letters was written by Sister Blanche Huddleston, who was in attendance on the patient. She says he asked to have his home letters read to him on the morning of the day he died – they had arrived the day before – and the chaplain (Rev. Cruickshank) read them to him. “He was such a nice patient,” adds the writer, “and went quite peacefully. We had every hope at first of his recovery, and were so sorry to lose him. I always think that one cannot do enough for our brave soldier boys – they give up everything for their country. We send our most sincere sympathy, and I am ever so sorry to be the bearer of such sad news.”

The other letter was from the wife of Chaplain-Captain Burrige, who gives details of the funeral. She was present and her husband officiated at the grave. With true motherly instinct Mrs Burrige says, “I thought that anything that I could tell you about your son would be of some comfort to you, as you are so far away from this land where he was laid to rest.” She then proceeds to explain that the body was placed in the military cemetery at Codford – a small plot of ground just over the road from St. Mary’s Anglican Church. The hero was buried with full military honours and it was a most impressive service, the band being in attendance playing the “Dead March”, a firing party fired three volleys and the Last Post was sounded. Two beautiful wreaths lay on the flag that covered the coffin and to the inscription on the plate were added to lines from the hymn, “Rock of Ages” –

Nothing in my hand I bring,

Simply to Thy Cross I cling.

The wreaths were composed of lovely Easter lilies, carnations and chrysanthemums. Mrs Burridge adds:- "The doctor who attended your boy through his illness was Dr. Evans, who is an elder of Knox Church, Dunedin. I thought you might like to hear these details of your boy's burial, for it is hard to be so far away and to hear nothing but the bare facts. I have just arrived from Australia, and feel glad that I can be of some help here. The work is great, and the boys need all the help and encouragement we can give them. They are brave lads, and very young – most of them. Accept my deepest sympathy, and may God comfort you in your loss."

(*Warnambool Standard*, Victoria, Australia, Saturday 24 March, 1917)

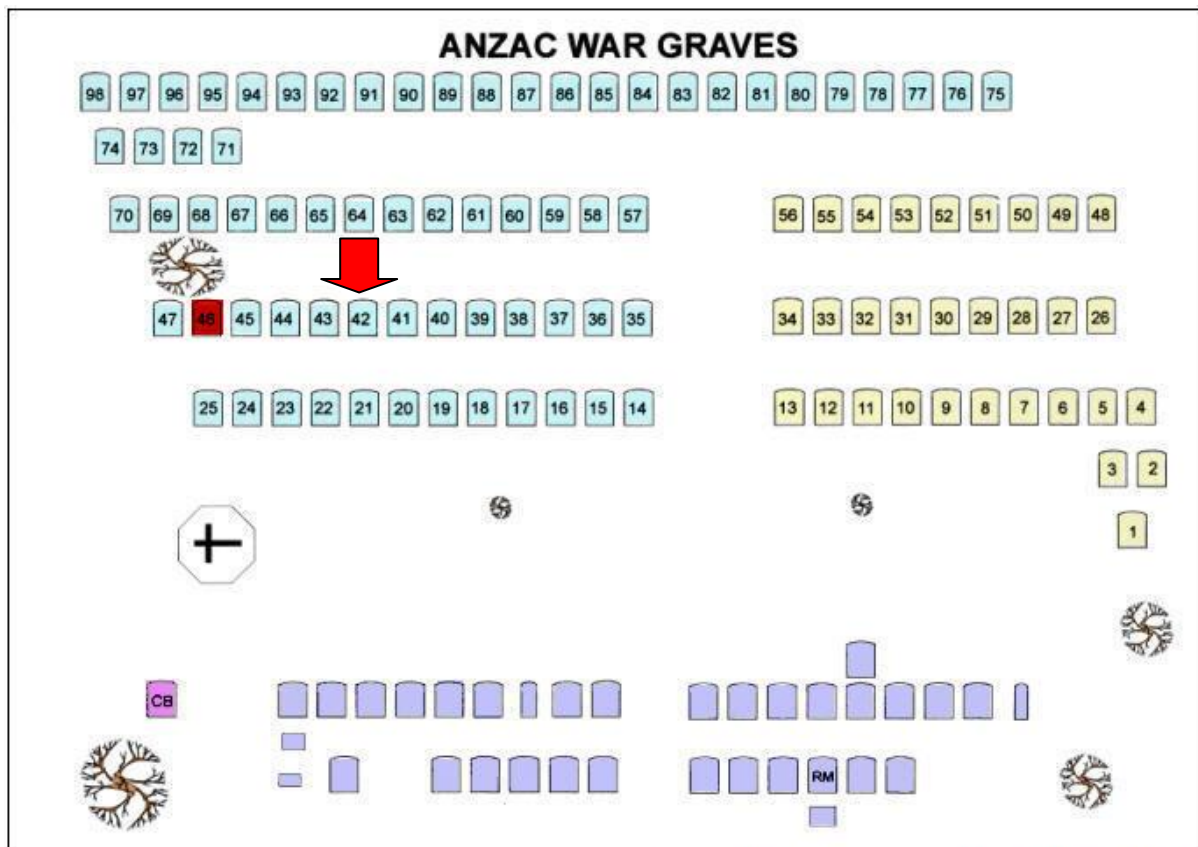
SHAW – In sad and loving memory of my dear son, Private Alexander Shaw, who died of illness at New Zealand Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire (England), January 15, 1917.

My thought they often wonder,
To a soldier's mourned grave.
Your name is often spoken,
A Mother's hero died.

- (Inserted by his loving mother, E. Shaw)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria Thursday 15th January, 1920)

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Rifleman A. D. Shaw is located in Second Row (Left Hand Side) Grave Plot # 42 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (CWGC Reference - Grave # 30)



- Australian Soldiers
- New Zealand Soldiers
- UK Soldier
- Welsh Soldier
- Local Burials

Codford War Graves map adapted from Brian Marshall courtesy of Romy Wyeth

Rifleman A. D. Shaw has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Rifleman A. D. Shaw's Headstone at Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



New Zealand Section of Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery *(Photo by Romy Wyeth 2013)*