



2143 Private Alfred Renwick

Alfred Renwick was born at Millfield, Sunderland, County Durham, England around 1875 to parents James & Isabella Renwick.

The 1881 England Census records Alfred Renwick as a 5 year old living with his family at 41 Potts St., Bishopwearmouth, Sunderland, County Durham.

His parents were listed as James Renwick (plater in ship yard, aged 36) & Isabella Renwick (aged 35). Alfred was one of seven children listed in this census – John W. (aged 15), Isabella (aged 13), Jane (aged 11), James (aged 9), then Alfred, George (aged 2), & Elizabeth (aged 5 months). Also listed was Hannah Renwick, sister of James Renwick (Domestic servant, aged 23).

The 1891 England Census records him as a 14 year old page Boy, living with his family at 103 & 101 Frederick St., Westoe, South Shields, Durham. His parents were listed as James Renwick (plater in ship yard, aged 45) & Isabella Renwick (aged 45). Alfred was one of six children listed in this Census – Jane (aged 20), James (Shipyard Labourer, aged 17), then Alfred, George (aged 12), Elizabeth (aged 10) & Ethel B. (aged 3).

Alfred arrived in Australia around 1907 or 1908 according to information provided by his sister for Roll of Honour.

He stated he was a 34 year old Seaman when he enlisted at Liverpool, NSW, on 22nd October, 1914. Alfred stated that he had served 12 years –with time expired with 68th Durham Light Infantry. Alfred was given the service number of 58 & was attached to 3rd Battalion, N. and M. Forces, Trop. Unit. Pte. Renwick was promoted to Corporal (temporary) whilst employed in signalling Station at Rabaul on 1st April, 1915. He was discharged on 31st December, 1915 – medically unfit & proceeded to Australia on S.S. Te Anau.

Alfred stated he was aged 35¹ years & 6 months old, single & a Seaman from 56 Druid Street, Sydney when he re-enlisted at Casula, NSW on 11th February, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 34th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2143 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Miss Isabella Renwick of Millfield, Sunderland, England.

His medical report stated no previous illness however teeth require attention. On his Attestation Papers, to the question "Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service" – Alfred replied – No.

Pte. Alfred Renwick embarked from Sydney on HMAT Anchises (A68) on 24th August, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 11th October, 1916. 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. Alfred Renwick was admitted to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire on 13th December, 1916. He was discharged on 1st January, 1917 after being treated for Eczema.

Private Alfred Renwick died on 13th January, 1917 at Military Hospital Fovant, Wiltshire from Septicaemia. A death for Alfred Renwick, aged 37, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

He was buried on 16th January, 1917 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

¹ Information provided by his sister for Roll of Honour states age at death – 42

Private A. Renwick is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 124.



Hall of Memory WWI Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

Pte. Alfred Renwick was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte. Renwick's sister – Mrs Davidson in England (both sent July, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred Renwick – service number 2143, as being 35 years old & served with 34th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James and Isabella Renwick. Born at Sunderland, England.

51 pages of Pte. Alfred Renwick'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

Newspaper Reports

LATEST CASUALTIES 269th LIST
NEW SOUTH WALES
Died (Other Causes)
Pte. A. Renwick, England

The Land, Sydney, NSW, Friday, 2 February 1917

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased WWI soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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. A. Renwick does have a personal inscription on his headstone.
Not Forgotten By His Two Loving Sisters Bella And Lizzie

Photo of Pte. A. Renwick's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.

(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)

