

Norman Wheatcroft



Norman Wheatcroft Enlistment No 218. Private in Australian 44th Battalion, enlisted 8th January 1916. He was born in Perth, Western Australia in 1896 to parents Arthur Wheatcroft and Rose Garland. His occupation was Labourer.

He embarked from Australia on the 1st June 1916 on the HMAT Suevic . On arrival in France in early December 1916 Norman was hospitalised suffering mumps. By late December 1916 Norman had rejoined his Battalion. On the 10th June 1917 Norman was wounded in action with a gunshot wound to the right arm.

At this time Norman's Battalion would have been in action at Messines. He was sent to England to recover at the Bethnal Green Military Hospital then returned to his Battalion in France late October 1917. In early December 1917 Norman was wounded a second time with a gunshot wound to the head. When recovered Norman rejoined his Battalion late December 1917.

During 1918 the 44th Battalion was involved in action at Hamel, Amiens, Albert, Mont St Quentin and St Quentin Canal before the Armistice in November 1918. On the 4th November 1918 Norman was transferred to the Provisions Corp and promoted from Private to ER/2/Corporal. In early February 1919 Norman was again sick and sent to Millbank Hospital in London. It was here that Norman met an attractive embroidress called Beatrice May Geen.

Norman extended his time in London as a Military Policeman before embarking for Australia on the 17th April 1920 per "Bahia Castillo". Norman was discharged on the 29th August 1920. Beatrice followed Norman to Australia and they married in December 1920 at Midland Junction. Over the next 18 years they had five children.

Norman held a variety of jobs working at Wyndham on his return then Midland Junction as a labourer. During WWII he enlisted on the 21st August 1941 in the Australian Army No W18616. He served in the W/ComD Labour Coy. He worked at Hollywood repatriation Hospital constructing the beds. Norman was discharged 25th May 1942.

Three of Norman's children sons Norman Victor; Percy Cecil and daughter Gwendoline also served in the Army during WW2. Norman Victor as a Gunner in the 53 Aust Ack Ack Regiment, Percy in the Navy and Gwendoline as an Aircraftwoman. After his service Norman worked on the Midland Railways and in the 1950's he and his wife moved to New South Wales (NSW) where one of their daughters was living.

Here Norman worked as a lift Driver and Storeman. By the 1960's Norman and Beatrice returned to Western Australia (W.A) to retire. In the early 1970's the pair again moved to NSW to be looked after by their daughter where Norman died in 1972, and Beatrice in 1985, both are buried in Lakeside Memorial Park, Dapto, NSW.

Courtesy of Lyn Myles Margaret Wanstall and Thelma Foster