

Dorchester Cenotaph, Dorset, England



Lest We Forget

World War 1



582 PRIVATE

W. E. EARLY

2ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND MAY, 1915 Age 21

Walter Edward EARLY

Walter Edward Early was born at Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset, England on 16th May, 1894 to parents Walter Henry and Frances Hester Early (nee Churchill). His birth was registered in the June quarter, 1894 in the district of Dorchester, Dorset.

The 1901 England Census recorded Walter E. Early as a 6 year old, living with his family at 7 Victoria Buildings, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset, England. His parents were listed as Walter Early (Coach Builder's Labourer, aged 39, born Dorchester, Dorset) & Frances E. Early (aged 39, born Dorchester, Dorset). Walter Edward Early was one of six children listed on this Census (all born Dorchester, Dorset) – Mabel C. Early (dressmaker, aged 17), Ethel M. Early (Dye Stamper, aged 15), Beatrice A. Early (Dye Stamper, aged 12), Daisy G. Early (aged 9), then Walter & Winnifred G. Early (aged 2).

Walter Edward Early signed up with the Royal Navy on 17th March, 1910 at the age of 16 years. His place of birth was listed as Dorchester, Dorset & his occupation was Telegraph Messenger. His description at age 16 was – 5ft. 2 ½ inches, fair hair, blue eyes & a fresh complexion with two scars on back. Walter Edward Early was given a service number of J. 7574 (Portsmouth). On his 18th birthday – Walter Edward Early signed on for a period of 12 years with the Royal Navy. He was then 5 ft 6 inches.

The 1911 England Census recorded Walter Edward Early as a 16 year old Boy 1st Class on his Majesty's Ship *Impregnable*.

Walter Edward Early had served on the following ships:

- *Impregnable* - Boy Class II (Tel) from 17 March, 1910; Boy Class I (Acting ST) from 8 October, 1910; Boy Class I from 11 February, 1911
- *Essex* – Boy Class I from 10 June, 1911
- *Victory* - Boy Class I from 21 September, 1911
- *Arrogant* - Boy Class I from 2 October, 1911
- *Drake* - Boy Class I from 30 November, 1911; Ordinary Seaman from 16 May, 1912
- *Psyche* – Ordinary Seaman from 1 January, 1913; Able Seaman from 22 October, 1913

The "Remarks column on Walter Edward Early's British Royal Navy Seamen record has the following:

- Passed educationally for Petty Officer 4 June, 1913 and granted Educational Certificate 8th August, 1913.
- "Run Oct'13 "Pysche" Sydney.

New South Wales Police Gazette – 29 October, 1913:

Deserters from His Majesty's Service

.....

On 22nd October, 1913.

Walter Edward Early, able seaman, born in England, 19 ½ years of age, 5 feet 6 inches high, light-brown hair, blue eyes, fair complexion (two scars in back).

A reward of £5 will be paid for the apprehension of each of the abovenamed deserters.

According to information supplied by his father for the Roll of Honour, Walter Edward Early came to Australia when he was 18 years old.

Walter Edward Early was a 20 year old, single, Builder's Labourer when he enlisted at Randwick, Sydney, NSW on 17th August, 1914 with the 2nd Infantry Battalion "E" Company of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 582 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Walter Henry Early, of 4 Harvey's Terrace, Dorchester, England. Walter Edward Early stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Dorset Infantry Rifles for 13 months but had resigned to come to Australia. Walter Edward Early was described as 5 feet 5 inches with fair hair & a fair complexion.

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Private Walter Edward Early was posted to Camp with 2nd Infantry Battalion on 22nd August, 1914.

Private Walter Edward Early was promoted to Lance Corporal with "E" Company, 2nd Infantry Battalion on 25th September, 1914.

Lance Corporal Walter Edward Early embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Suffolk (A23)* on 18th October, 1914 & disembarked at Alexandria, Egypt on 8th December, 1914.

Lance Corporal Walter Edward Early was transferred to "B" Company & reverted to ranks on 1st January, 1915.

Private Walter Edward Early embarked from Alexandria, Egypt on *Derrflinger* on 5th April, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) Gallipoli Campaign.

Private Walter Edward Early was reported as missing at Gallipoli Peninsula on 2nd May, 1915.

Private Walter Edward Early was pronounced "Killed in Action" on 2nd May, 1915 by a Court of Inquiry dated 24th March, 1916.

2nd Battalion

The 2nd Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 1st, 3rd and 4th Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these battalions, formed the 1st Brigade.

The battalion was raised within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving on 2 December. The battalion took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 as part of the second and third waves, and was led by Lieutenant Colonel G. F. Braund, who was killed in action nine days later. On 6 August, the 1st Brigade led the charge at Lone Pine. Among the dead was the commander of the 2nd Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel R. Scobie, killed during a Turkish counter-attack. The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December 1915.

(Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 2nd Battalion

1st May, 1915 - 5 AM Gallipoli Beach – Battalion resting on Beach. Orders received to report to HQ. RMLI at 8.30 AM 2.5.1915

2nd May, 1915 – 7 AM Beach – BN fell in & left of Trenches at 7.40 AM arrived at 8.40 AM experienced heavy shrapnel in Gully

2nd May, 1915 – 10 AM Gully near 1st BHQ – BN established as Reserves. Weather fine.

2nd May, 1915 – 9 PM – Word received to hold BN in readiness

2nd May, 1915 – 10.30 PM – Orders received to move 1/ BN to position at head of Gully. A. Co. Capt Difnam B Co Lt Pain led into position by Capt Stevens.

3rd May, 1915 – 6.30 AM Gully – Fine weather. Enemy shelling our position

3rd May, 1915 – 9 AM – Capt. Morshead "CC" left to swap ___ on our Right 3 Casualties (2 Killed 1 Wounded)

3rd May, 1915 – 9.10 AM – Lt G. W. Brown left with party to collect Arms Ammunition & Bury dead on our right.

(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

It was reported on 17th July, 1917 at Alexandria that there was "No trace grave site" for Private Walter Edward Early.

Private Walter Edward Early is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula, Canakkale Province, Turkey – Panel 17 as he has no known grave. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Private Walter Edward Early was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Early's father in England - Mr W. H. Early, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll issued in England & Plaque sent November, 1921).

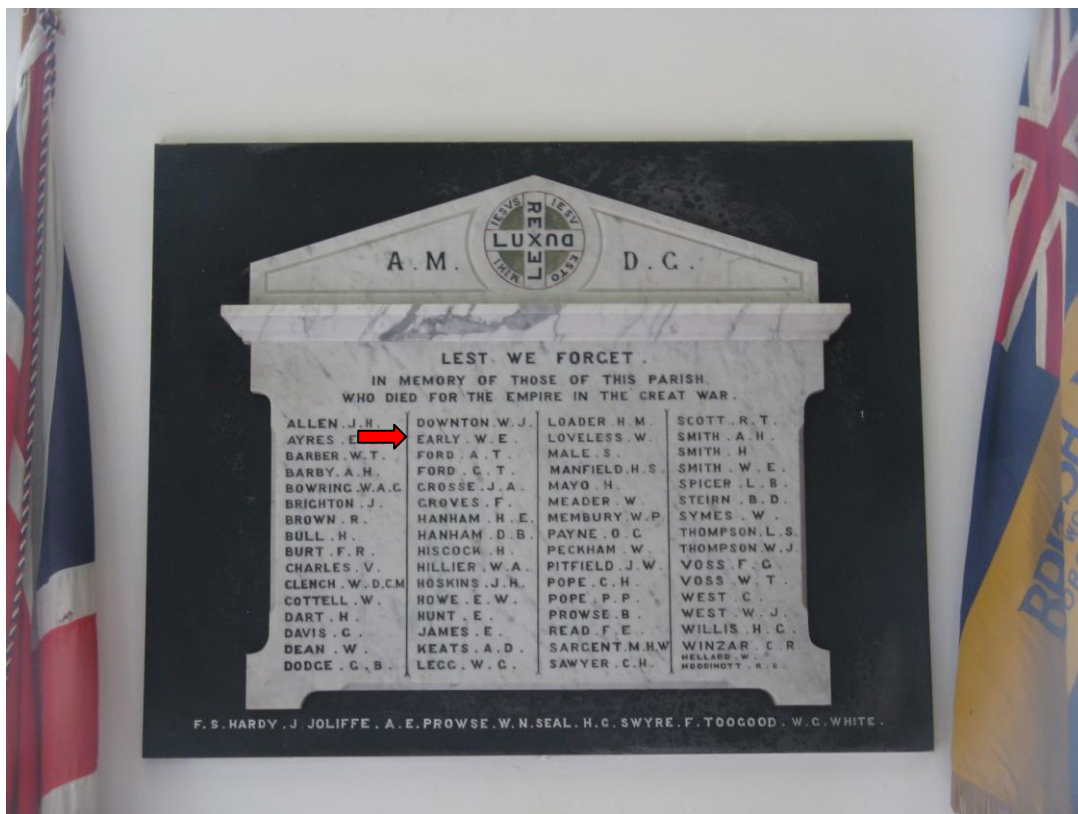
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Walter Edward Early – service number 582, aged 21, of 2nd Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Walter Henry and Frances Hester Early, of 4 Harvey's Terrace, Dorchester, England.

Private W. E. Early is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 32.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. E. Early is remembered on the Memorial Tablet for World War 1, located in the Church of St. George, High Street, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset, England.



Church of St. George, Fordington Memorial Tablet (Photo by Michael Day)

W. E. Early is remembered on the Dorchester Cenotaph located at South Walks Road & South Street, Dorchester, Dorset, England.



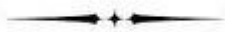
Dorchester Cenotaph (Photo by Michael Day)



Dorchester Cenotaph (W. E. Early - last Column, 9th from bottom)

(26 pages of Private Walter Edward Early'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



Newspaper Notices

ROLL OF HONOUR

41st CASUALTY LIST

Missing:-

NEW SOUTH WALES

W. E. Early (England)

(The Tamworth Daily Observer, NSW – 21 June 1915)

Lone Pine Memorial, Turkey

The Lone Pine Memorial is at the east end of Lone Pine Cemetery.

The eight month campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea.

The Allies landed on the peninsula on 25-26 April 1915; the 29th Division at Cape Helles in the south and the Australian and New Zealand Corps north of Gaba Tepe on the west coast, an area soon known as Anzac. On 6 August, further landings were made at Suvla, just north of Anzac, and the climax of the campaign came in early August when simultaneous assaults were launched on all three fronts.

Lone Pine was a strategically important plateau in the southern part of Anzac which was briefly in the hands of Australian forces following the landings on 25 April. It became a Turkish strong point from May to July, when it was known by them as 'Kanli Sirt' (Bloody Ridge).

The Australians pushed mines towards the plateau from the end of May to the beginning of August and on the afternoon of 6 August, after mine explosions and bombardment from land and sea, the position was stormed by the 1st Australian Brigade. By 10 August, the Turkish counter-attacks had failed and the position was consolidated. It was held by the 1st Australian Division until 12 September, and then by the 2nd, until the evacuation of the peninsula in December.

The LONE PINE MEMORIAL stands on the site of the fiercest fighting at Lone Pine and overlooks the whole front line of May 1915. It commemorates more than 4,900 Australian and New Zealand servicemen who died in the Anzac area - the New Zealanders prior to the fighting in August 1915 - whose graves are not known. Others named on the memorial died at sea and were buried in Gallipoli waters.

The memorial stands in LONE PINE CEMETERY. The original small battle cemetery was enlarged after the Armistice when scattered graves were brought in from the neighbourhood, and from Brown's Dip North and South Cemeteries, which were behind the Australian trenches of April-August 1915.

There are now 1,167 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 504 of the burials are unidentified. Special memorials commemorate 183 soldiers (all but one of them Australian, most of whom died in August), who were known or believed to have been buried in Lone Pine Cemetery, or in the cemeteries at Brown's Dip.

(Information & photo from CWGC)

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Lone Pine Memorial, Turkey

Photo of Pte W. E. Early's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Lone Pine Memorial, Turkey.

