



MILLS Alec – Service No. 2294

1916

Alec enlisted in the Australian Army on the 27th March 1916 and joined B Company, 2nd Depot Battalion A.I.F. at Mitcham, SA as a Private.



On the 12th August 1916 Alec embarked on the ¹ HMAT ² “Ballarat”, bound for England. On 28th August he was admitted to the Ship’s hospital suffering from Influenza and was discharged on the 11th September.

Alec disembarked at Devonport on 30th September 1916 and that same day he marched into Codford and was assigned to the 13th Training Battalion at the Australian Divisional Base Depot.

Alec was despatched from Folkstone, England onboard the ³ SS “Princess Victoria” on the 5th November, arriving at Etaples, France.

He was transferred to the 50th Battalion A.I.F. on 24th December 1916.

1917

On 2nd April 1917 Alec was wounded in action with a serious gunshot wound to the right shoulder and was admitted to the 13th General Hospital in Boulogne. On the 9th April Alec embarked on the ⁴ HS “Princess Elizabeth” from Boulogne, France and admitted to the ⁵ King George Hospital at Waterloo, England.

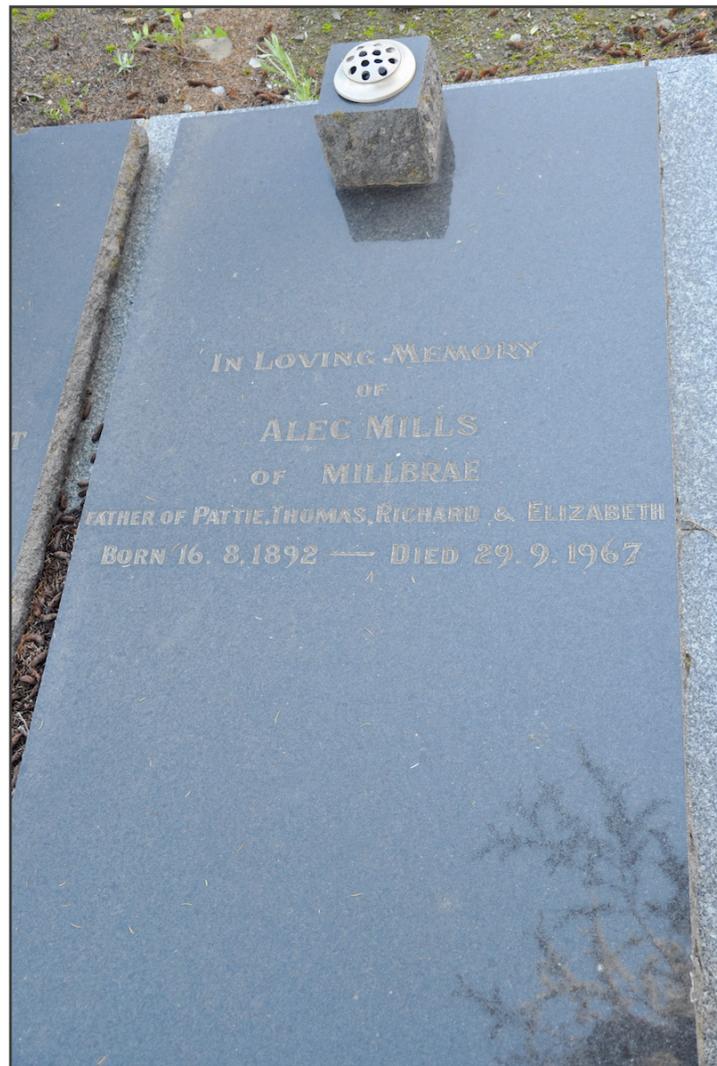
Alec departed England bound for Australia on 3rd July 1917 aboard HMAT ⁶ “Karoo”, disembarking at Adelaide on 23rd August.

Alec was admitted to ⁷ A.G.H. Keswick for further treatment to his shoulder and was discharged on 31st October.

Alec spent 1 year and 228 days in the army, 1 year 12 days being served overseas, and was discharged on 9th November 1917, being medically unfit. His character was recorded as "Good".

Alec died on 29th September 1967, aged 75 and is buried in the Nairne Cemetery.

Alec was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal in April 1917.



¹ **HMAT** – His Majesty’s Australian Transport

² “**Ballarat**” – The HMAT A70 *Ballarat* weighed 11,120 tons with an average cruise speed of 14 knots or 25.92 kmph. It was owned by the P & O SN Co, London. The *Ballarat* was torpedoed by a submarine in the English Channel, 25 April 1917 and sank the next day.

³ **SS** - Steam Ship

⁴ **HS** - Hospital Ship

⁵ **King George Hospital** - At the outbreak of WW1 the War Office commandeered a newly built 5-storey warehouse for use as a Red Cross military hospital. Within a fortnight, by December 1914, all 1650 beds had been subscribed for - at a cost of £25 per bed - thus raising £41,250. Queen Alexandra, the mother of King George V, had provided the first one.

Reputedly the largest hospital in the United Kingdom, the King George Hospital finally opened at the end of May 1915 (labour disputes and strikes had delayed its opening). The first convoys of wounded men were brought by boat train to Waterloo station nearby (tunnels built as an integral part of the warehouse connected the building to the station so as to facilitate movement of supplies, and these enabled badly wounded men to be conveyed to the Hospital out of sight of the public). Some 200 men a day were admitted over three days to the two uppermost ward floors, whilst carpentry work continued on the lower floors.

⁶ “**Karoola**” – The HMAT A63 *Karoola* weighed 7,391 tons with an average cruise speed of 15 knots or 27.78 kmph. It was owned by the McIlwraith, McEacharn’s Line Pty Ltd, Melbourne, and manned by Australian officers and crews. The *Karoola* was leased by the Commonwealth until June 1919.

⁷ **A.G.H.** – Australian General Hospital