

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 6978
Name: Sidney Leonard BATES
Nickname: Sid



Medals and Decorations

British War Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Lance Corporal
Service: Army
Enlisted: 11 Mar 1916
Discharged: 13 Apr 1919

Sid was born on 12 May 1888 at Port Adelaide to James Bates and Annie Maria Bates (nee Mildren). He was the second youngest of 6 children in the family, all boys. His family moved from Port Broughton to the Tumby Bay area in Jul 1902, where they leased a block of 3690 acres at Wild Dog Hill, Sect 19, Hd of Butler.

Sid went to school at Tumby Bay, leaving at grade 7, which was the norm at the time. On completion of schooling he worked on the family farm and other farms in the area prior to enlisting in the Army at Tumby Bay on 11 Mar 1916 at the age of 25. At the time of enlistment he recorded his occupation as farmer and his address as Warratta Vale.

On enlistment Sid was sent to 2nd Depot Battalion (Bn) at Mitcham for training before being posted to 7th Reinforcements/50th Bn on 10 Oct 1916. A month later (16 Nov 1916) he was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements/ 10th Bn.

The 10th Bn was among the first units raised for the AIF during the WW1. The Bn was recruited in South Australia, and was amongst the first ashore at Gallipoli; it is believed to have penetrated further inland than any other Australian unit. After the withdrawal from Gallipoli in Dec 1915, the 10th Bn returned to Egypt.

In Mar 1916 the Bn sailed for France and the Western Front.

Meanwhile, Sid and his reinforcement group embarked aboard HMAT "*Berrima*" at Adelaide on 16 Dec 1916; two months later they disembarked at Devonport (UK) and were sent to 3 Training Bn. Two days later he was admitted to Parkhouse Military Hospital with mumps, where he remained for 3 months. On 14 Jun 1917 he left UK and proceeded overseas to France, finally being taken on strength by his Bn in France on 6 Jul 1917, just in time for the fighting at Ypres and then returning to the Somme for winter; an incredibly harsh winter.

However, he did not remain with his unit for long, as a few months later he was admitted to hospital in Nov 1917 and remained there for several weeks before being released back to the Bn.

On 1 May 1918 he was promoted to Lance Corporal.

On 28 Jun 1918 he was wounded in action and admitted to the Line of Communication Hospital where he remained for a month before being released back to his unit.

His Bn then participated in the Great Allied Offensive of 1918, fighting near Amiens in Aug 1918. This advance by Commonwealth troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war". It was also the action that resulted in Sid being wounded for a second time, on 13 Aug 1918, with gunshot wounds to his right leg and arm.

As a result of these wounds he was evacuated to the UK and admitted to Reading War Hospital on 17 Aug 1918. He did not get to rejoin his unit, as on release from hospital he was "invalided" and remained in the UK recovering from his wounds.

On 25 Jan 1919 he embarked aboard the HS "*Ceramic*" for return to Australia, disembarking in Adelaide on 14 Mar 1919. He was medically discharged in Adelaide on 13 Apr 1919, before returning to Tumby Bay.

Sid married Gladys Doris Bawden from Port Broughton on 6 Oct 1920; they had a family of 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls. The family farmed at Butler. (Sect 87, Hd Dixon)

Sid decided to retire from the farm in 1948.

He was a founding member and the first President of the Tumby Bay RSL.

His name is included on the Port Neill Honour Roll

Sid died on 12 Jan 1965 and is buried in the Payneham Cemetery. His wife lies beside him.



British War Medal Victory Medal



Butler Church of Christ, 1911