

PRIVATE STANLEY HENRY SCHROEDER – TANUNDA

First World War

Stanley Henry Schroeder was born on 26 June 1892. Stanley was the son of prominent Tanunda business owner, Henry Schroeder who owned and ran a general store on Murray Street. Started in 1852 by Henry's father, Schroeders was recognised as a business that offered fine quality clothing, and stockists of the increasingly popular Edison phonograph and records.

Stanley, along with good friend Carl Kindler, travelled into Adelaide by train to enlist on 9 August 1915. The two friends had known each other a long time and were both well-known and respected members of the Tanunda Town Band. Stanley was also an excellent bass singer and was a member of the choral group. Originally assigned to the 6th reinforcement of the 27th Battalion, Stanley, and Carl were part of a small Tanunda cohort who all enlisted within a few weeks of each other.

The first wave of enlisted Australian soldiers had to satisfy strict physical criteria and only the fittest and strongest of Australia's youth were accepted. Stanley had attempted to enlist prior to Gallipoli but had been rejected because of his teeth. With the ANZAC legend well and truly established, and the battle front in Europe demanding more man-power, the A.I.F. relaxed its physical standards and young men like Stanley were now accepted.

On 27 October 1915 Stanley, Carl and the rest of his Tanunda cohort were shipped from Port Adelaide on board the Benalla, via Fremantle to Egypt as part of the 27th Infantry Battalion. On 26 February 1916. Stanley arrived in Zeitoun and was transferred to the 10th Infantry Battalion.

In March 1916 the battalion was moved out of Alexandria and shipped to France. On board the boat, another local Tanunda boy, Louis Hoffmann, who was keeping a diary says 'A guard is kept – day and night watching for submarines – there is more life on this trip than the one just over. We have a band – Carl and Stanley joined it today'.

The Battalion was stationed only four miles behind the Belgium frontier where they were billeted in farmhouses while they continued training to be readied for combat. The band established on the ship was continued in the Battalion, and Carl and Stanley were both members. On 9 April 1916 the Battalion was issued cigarettes and tobacco, and they went under their first real gas attack.

They could hear the big guns from Flanders and were counting less than a minute between shots. The weather was 'beastly cold' and the Battalion was being marched in the rain, through mud up to their knees and covered in spots of white that were a mixture of snow and hail.

On 19 April 1916 the Battalion were being marched only 4 miles behind the front lines when they were shelled. It was a deadly attack.

On 20 April 1916 Louis says '...Carl killed April 20th and Stanley died of wounds on the 21st – Good Friday – a sad one for us. We received word at 8.30am yesterday that Carl was killed by a shell yesterday and Stanley was seriously injured. 75 casualties. Received word this afternoon that Stanley died early this morning from wounds received from the shells – he had 25 wounds. Carl was blown to pieces – killed instantaneously – happened yesterday about two hours after dinner. They were buried in the village so I have been told. We can't realise that only a few days ago we were all together'

Stanley sustained shrapnel wounds to his head, abdomen and arm. He was immediately transferred to No 3 Australian Field Ambulance, in field, France, but he died in the early hours of 21 April 1916. His personal effects, parceled up and sent home to his father, included: Bible, Diary, Wallet, letters, card, photos, note book. A second parcel from his stored kit consisted of his identity disc, silver wristwatch, wrist strap and purse.

In September 1917, seventeen months after the death of her son, Alice Schroeder contributed a recipe for veal cutlets to the fundraising Barossa Cookery Book. With all proceeds dedicated to the Soldier's fighting fund, and later to the Tanunda Soldiers'

Memorial Hall, Alice's strength and dedication to the cause is breathtaking.

When the Tanunda Honour Roll was unveiled in 1921 and the photographs of fallen sons were hung on the walls of the Memorial Hall, Stanley's image was hung next to his friend, Carl.

In February 1920, Stanley's commanding officer, Colonel Price Weir was the decorated officer who officiated at the opening ceremony of Tanunda's Cross of Sacrifice. Every year, on ANZAC day, the ground lights shine up onto the carved marble plinth that carries Stanley's name, along with the other Tanunda sons who never came home.

Stanley was originally buried in the village cemetery at Sully-sur-la-ye, France, but in December 1920 his body was exhumed by the Australian Army and he was reburied, with full religious rites, in the Port du Hem military cemetery 7 1/2 miles SW of Armentieres. He rests with a mixed contingent of Allied soldiers, including English, Canadian, New Zealand, and 18 other Australians.

Lest We Forget.



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