

## The WW1 Wesley College Roll of Honour

The World War One Wesley College Roll of Honour of former students (OWs) records 157 men who died as a result of their service.

These names were compiled by the Old Wesley Collegians Association (OWCA) during and shortly after the war. The names were included on memorials at the school and are remembered each year at Anzac Day services.

Generally a broad definition was applied, so men who enlisted but died in Australia before going overseas are included. Also included are men who went in support roles, rather than direct military roles.

An issue is the treatment of those who returned and died shortly after the conclusion of the war as a result of war injuries. With one exception, no deaths of returned soldiers are included. There are at least three men who died in 1920/21 who are not included in the Roll of Honour. A future research activity is to identify other men whose death can be attributed to their war service.

The only returned soldier included in the list is a man who returned in 1916, was discharged as being unsuitable for service and then died of illness six months later. Neither the Australian War Memorial (AWM) nor the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) recognise him as a WW1 casualty but the College includes him in its Roll of Honour.

The precise number of OWs who enrolled will never be known. A good estimate is 1,100 enlistments. Therefore the death rate is 14.2% of enlistments (one in seven). This is broadly in line with the overall Australian casualty rate.

Four sets of brothers were killed:

- Norman & Walter Emery
- Alan & Eric Kerr
- Alexander & John Mackie
- Spencer & Waldo Warne-Smith.

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The tables and commentary below provides an overview of the 157 men on the Roll of Honour.

### Age at death

	Years
Median	23.0
Average	24.5
Youngest	18
Oldest	52

### Death by type

Killed in action	96
Died of wounds	34
Illness: 5 in Aust, M-East and France; 3 at sea; 2 UK & 1 Germany	21
Accident: 2 in Aust, UK and France; 1 in Palestine	7
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Nearly 18% of the deaths were not as a direct result of military action. Influenza was a major cause of death especially in the later years. Several of the accidents were related to aircraft training incidents.

### Death by Rank

Clerk	1
Private/Rifleman	41
Trooper	1
Gunner	11
Signaler	1
Sapper	1
Driver	3
Bombardier	3
L/Bombardier	1
L/Cpl	10
Cpl	16
Sgt	13
QM Sgt	1
CSM/WO	1
2/Lt and 1/Lt	42
Captain	9
Lt Colonel	2
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Broadly, a third of the casualties held basic soldier rank; a third were NCOs and a third commissioned officers. Schools such as Wesley were the source of many of the officers of the AIF so 53 deaths (33.7%) is not a surprisingly high number. It is estimated that at least 270 of the total Wesley College former students enlistments of circa 1,100 (25%) were officers.

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### Death by Service

Infantry - AIF	85
Infantry - British	6
Infantry - NZ	1
Artillery - AIF	21
Artillery - British	1
Artillery - NZ	1
Engineers - AIF	3
Engineers - British	3
Light Horse	5
Camel Corps	2
Pioneers	2
AAMC – Stretcher bearer	6
AAMC – Doctor	3
AAMC – Dentist	1
Service units	7
Australian Flying Corps	5
Royal Flying Corps	4
Navy	1
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Sixteen of the deaths were men serving in either British or NZ units.

Three OWs died on the first day of the AIF landing at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915 and 2 OWs died on the last day of action by infantry at Montbrehain, France on 5 October 1918.

### Death by location

Australia	7
On sea in transit to/from Europe	3
Egypt	1
Palestine	5
Gallipoli (27)	
Anzac	19
Helles	2
Hospital ship - ex Gallipoli	3
Malta - ex Gallipoli	1
Egypt - ex Gallipoli	2
France	83
Belgium	28
UK (excluding 3 ex-France)	2
Germany (POW)	1
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Seven men died in Australia and only one of those was a returned soldier. The rest died of illness or accidents prior to leaving Australia. Two died of illness in the Alfred hospital within sight of the College.

### Known Gravesite

#### CWGC acknowledged:

Australia	6
Egypt	4
Gallipoli	10
Malta	2
Palestine (Jerusalem, Ramleh, Beersheba)	3
Belgium	15
France	68
UK	5

#### Not CWGC acknowledged:

Australia	1
	<u>114</u>

#### CWGC Memorial (no grave):

Lone Pine	11
Helles	2
Jerusalem	1
Menin Gate, Ypres	9
Villers-Bretonneux	11
VC Corner, Fromelles	3
Thiepval, France	3
Arras Flying Services	2
Hollybrook, UK	1
	<u>43</u>

### OWs died in WW1 who served at Gallipoli

Died on Gallipoli service	27
Died later, mainly in France/Belgium	33
	<u>60</u>

It is estimated just over 200 OW's served at Gallipoli. The death rate for these "originals" was 30% by the time of the armistice in November 1918.

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### Deaths in major campaigns/battles

Gallipoli – April/December 1915	27
Fromelles – July 1916	3
Pozieres/Mouquet Farm - July/August 1916	10
Second Battle of Bullecourt – May 1917	5
Third battle of Ypres – 31 July /October 1917	23
Battle of the Somme - 8 August 1918/October 1918	17

### Year of death

1915	29
1916	33
1917	49
1918	45
1920	1
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Compiled by Philip Powell (OW1973)  
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