

## James Walter Wight



Private (Pte) 3903 James Walter Wight enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment in Ballarat on 11 August 1917 and embarked overseas on 21 November. He disembarked in Egypt on 15 December, then sailed for England on 8 January 1918, where he disembarked at Southampton on 24 January and joined the Light Horse Training Depot at Tidworth Camp in Wiltshire.

Pte Wight was subsequently transferred to the Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery at Heytesbury, and re-mustered as a Gunner (Gnr), on 18 March 1918. He proceeded overseas on 22 April and landed in France the next day, where he was taken on strength of the 14<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade (FAB) in the 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division on 9 May.

He was re-mustered as a Driver (Dvr) on 30 May, which meant he led a team of horses, as this remained the most common mode of transport in the field artillery at the time.

At the conclusion of the German Spring Offensive in early 1918, the 14<sup>th</sup> FAB operated in the Corbie area during April – June, then supported the successful attack on Le Hamel on 4 July.

On 5 August they moved to positions east of Villers-Bretonneux to support the allied offensive set for 8 August. The assault was a complete success, and the forward movement of all units was quite rapid compared to previous engagements.

In mid-September 1918 the column came under the command of the 46<sup>th</sup> British (North Midland) Division, which famously crossed the Canal du Nord on 29 September, while the Australians and Americans were fighting just to the north.

While the AIF infantry units had fought their last battles on the Western Front by 5 October, the artillery units continued to operate under British Army control until they finally left the line on 23 October, following which Dvr Wight was granted leave in England between 5 – 19 February 1919.

He was hospitalised in England with influenza between 21 February – 3 March, and then in France with venereal disease between 12 May – 10 June. He returned to England and spent a month at the Sutton Veny Camp before he embarked for Australia on 1 August 1919.

Driver 3903 James Walter Wight disembarked in Melbourne on 22 September, where he was discharged from the AIF on 15 September 1919.

Name: Wight, James Walter	
Service Number	3903
Date enlisted	11 August 1917
Place enlisted	Ballarat, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	4 <sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment
Date and ship embarked for overseas	21 November 1917 HMAT A71 <i>Nestor</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	25 years 6 months (31/1/1892)
Place of birth	Ballarat, Victoria
Marital status	Married
Occupation	Driver
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Wight, Mrs Gladys, wife, 1110 Sturt Street, Ballarat, Victoria
Permanent address	1110 Sturt Street, Ballarat, Victoria
Appearance	Fair complexion, fair hair, blue eyes, height – 5 feet 7 inches, weight – 9 stone, 5 lbs, chest measurement – 32/35 inches
Final Rank	Driver
Final Unit	14 <sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, France
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and ship embarked for Australia	1 August 1919 HT <i>Argyllshire</i>
Date discharged	15 September 1919
Nature of discharge	Termination of Period of Enlistment
Honours/medals	British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Listed on the Ballarat Arch of Victory and Avenue of Honour (Tree 3005). Brother of John Powell Wight (SN 278) and Albert Gordon Wight (SN 304 & 1930).