

My Soldier
Clarence Cobourne



BY HARRY PACKER

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Basic Details



Rank: Captain

Serial Number: 13/39

NZEF Auckland Mounted Rifles

Died 1st October 1918, Le Cateau

Buried Grevillers Auckland Memorial, France

Personal Life

Clarence Taylor Cobourne was born to Mr Alfred and Mrs Mary Cobourne in Port Waikato in 1892, the exact date unknown. Clarence was a strong Roman Catholic. He had two sisters, Daphne and Florence, and was older than both. He was homeschooled for most of his youth, like most children at the time, on the estate that his father owned. When war was declared he was not in a relationship and had no children.



Education



Clarence didn't have much of an education at school, his only schooling was for two years at Sacred Heart College Ponsonby from 1905-1906. Despite this he did earn prizes for multiple subjects including geography, religious education, and reading.

Work Before War



Before the war, Clarence would help his parents out on the farm. This would include tough and monotonous tasks like milking the cows and planting crops. At age 20 he left the farming life behind and joined the military. Two years after joining, war was declared and he went off to fight for New Zealand with the ANZACs.

War Life



Clarence's war journey began on the 16th of October, 1914, when he boarded the vessel *Star of India*, on route to Suez, Egypt. He arrived on the 3rd of December and continued his training as a Sargent. After months of training, he was shipped off to Gallipoli to fight the Turks on April 25th, now known as ANZAC day. Records show he fell ill and was evacuated to Malta, where he remained until 24 January 1916 when he was sent back to Egypt being cleared for active service once again. He awaited reinforcements from New Zealand to bolster the depleted troops, with many casualties being sustained at Gallipoli. In early April 1916, he was shipped to France to serve on the Western Front. He was wounded on 20 July 1916 and arrived at the Camp Hospital two days later. Clarence served for over two years on the Western Front, before being declared initially as missing in action and subsequently as killed in action on 1 October 1918 in the fields of France. Having served almost 4 years, Clarence died less than a month before the signing of an armistice on 11 November 1918, which ended World War I.

War Records

Clarence was a brave and heroic soldier and was awarded the 1914/15 Star, (Left) the British War Medal, (Middle) and the Victory Medal (Right). During the war he was promoted from Sargent to Captain.



Bibliography

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- Mrs Graham