

Wark, Alexander

ASC 1901-5



Portrait of Alexander Wark among NSW Servicemen Portraits 1918-19 NSW State Library.

ALEXANDER WARK

ALEX WARK died early in 1956. Having received his education at All Saints' in Mr. Britten's time, he joined the first A.I.F. in the Great War. After his discharge he entered the service of the Austral Nail Co. Ltd., subsequently taken over by Ryland Bros. (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. Consequently he saw the development of the wire-drawing industry since its inception at Newcastle. In June 1955 he retired from the position of Sales Superintendent with Rylands, after nearly thirty-five years service.

Bathurstian

Wark's brother Keith, also served (see his dossier.) Another brother Blair, also served but was not an Old Boy. Note article at bottom. Blair won a V.C.

Arrived at camp in England two days after the Armistice.

60056

Name { Surname MARK

in full { Christian Name Alexander

Unit 56 Bn 53 Bn

Joined on _____

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

You are hereby warned that if after enlistment it is found that you have given a wilfully false answer to any question set forth in this Attestation Paper, you will be liable to be tried for the offence.

What is your Name? ... 1. Alexander Mark.

In or near what Town were you born? ... 2. Lisimore N.S.
In the State or Country of _____

Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... 3. Natural Born
28 3/12 22 Jan 1890

What is your Age? (Date of birth to be stated) ...

What is your Trade or Calling? ... 5. Orchardist

Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... 6. No

Are you married, single, or widower? ... 7. Single

Who is your next of kin? (Address and relationship to be stated) ... 8. Mother, Blanche Mark,
154 West 44th Street, N.Y.C.
U.S.A.

The answer to this question shall not be construed as in the nature of a Will.

What is your permanent address in Australia? ... 9. Melb. N.S.W.

Description of MARK Alex

Age 28 years 3 months.

Height 5 feet 9 1/2 inches.

Weight 142 lbs.

Chest Measurement 33-37 inches.

Complexion Fair

Eyes Blue 6/16 6/16

Hair Fair

Religious Denomination Ang B

W A R K	Alexander	32
WAR GRAVITY SCHEDULE	Other Names.	38
Pte. P.R. 514132	PURPORT.	
Embarked at Sydney per S.S. "GAIKA" on 30/7/1918		
19/10/18. Adm to. M.H. Fovant. INFLUENZA.		
13.10.18. Allotted to 53rd Bn. St. GSRfts. (8/19		
13.10.18 M/into 14th Tn. Btn Codford. from Aust.		
19.11.18 Disc. from Hosp. to Tn Depot. INFLU.		
10/11/18. TRANS. TO 56th BTN FROM 53rd BTN.		

Note that about a month before the war ended, he was allotted to 53rd Bn. only to come down with flu, some days later. Then, a day before the war ended he was transferred to 56th Bn.

Alexander inquires about his eligibility to be awarded the "Victory Medal," With the reply stating that he was not eligible as his service only in England, did not qualify.

90 Town Hall Hotel
Waratah
Via Newcastle NSW
Apt 19/3

Officer in Charge
Pay Records
Newbourne

Sir

I put in a claim for whatever
war Medals were due to me that sent to
me the General Service Medal, but the
Authorities in Sydney stated they didn't think
I was entitled to the Victory Medal, etc with
you on the subject as were in a position
to give me full particulars they request
to be as follows

No 60056 ER Sgt A. Wark
56 Bn. M Bde. AIF

went overseas July '18. returned from
overseas Sept '19, if I am not entitled I
would be pleased if you would give me an
extract of the regulations entitling those

RWE/MAS.

14th July, 1923.

DESPATCHE

17 JUL 1923

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 4th July, and to inform you that the Army Order governing the award of the Victory Medal, states that it is only to be issued to those who served on the establishment of a unit in a Theatre of War.

The records at this office show that you did not proceed beyond England, which was at no time during the course of operations proclaimed a Theatre of War. I regret, therefore, that under the circumstances you are not eligible for the award of the medal referred to.

Yours faithfully,

Officer in Charge Base Records. Captain,

A. Wark,
c/o Town Hall Hotel,
Waratah,
via Newcastle, N.S.W.



Note "N/E" (not eligible) written on first and third.

Wark, Blair Anderson 1894–1941)

By Richard Gorrell

Australian Dictionary of Biography vol.12

Blair Anderson Wark (1894-1941), army officer and quantity surveyor, was born on 27 July 1894 at Bathurst, **fourth child of Alexander Wark, a gas engineer from Scotland, and his native-born wife Blanche Adelaide Maria, née Forde.**

Educated at Fairleigh Grammar, Bathurst, St Leonards Superior Public School (North Sydney) and Sydney Technical College, Blair worked as a quantity surveyor while pursuing his military interests. A senior cadet in 1911-12, he enlisted in the 18th (North Sydney) Infantry, Australian Military Forces, and was provisionally commissioned in 1913.

On 5 August 1915 Wark was appointed to the Australian Imperial Force and embarked for Egypt with the 30th Battalion in November. A captain from 20 February 1916 and a company commander, he reached the Western Front in June. He was wounded in the battle of Fromelles. On his return to duty in November, he joined the 32nd Battalion. His conduct at Fromelles and in action at Sunray Trench in March 1917 led to his recommendation for the Distinguished Service Order. Though no award was made, he was promoted major on 27 April. In late September and early October, while in command of the front line east of Ypres, his vigorous patrolling and personal reconnaissance kept his sector secure and enabled him to repulse one counter-attack and to thwart another. He won the D.S.O. for this achievement and for his previous courage and devotion to duty. In May 1918 he was mentioned in dispatches.

Experienced and self-reliant, careless of his own safety, yet solicitous for his men, at the age of 24 Wark was given temporary command of the 32nd Battalion in operations against the Hindenburg line that began on 29 September. Often moving ahead of his troops in the face of heavy fire, he secured the help of a passing tank near Bellicourt and attached two hundred leaderless Americans to his command before rushing a battery of 77mm guns which were firing at his rear companies: he captured four guns and ten of their crews. With two non-commissioned officers, he surprised and captured fifty Germans near Magny-la-Fosse. **On 1 October he 'dashed forward and silenced machine-guns which were causing heavy casualties'. For his bravery he was awarded the Victoria Cross. His brothers Alexander and Keith also served in the A.I.F.; Keith won the Distinguished Conduct Medal.**