**SAPPER GUSTAVE EDWARD HANLEY**

**7946 – Tunnelling Company Details**

Gustave Edward Hanley was born in 1881 at Kyneton, Victoria the son of Alfred James and Jane (nee Cox) Hanley. He went to work at Broken Hill, New South Wales as a labourer and married there in 1907 to Ida Leonore Pearl Delbridge.

At the recruiting depot in Broken Hill on 26 July, 1917 the thirty-five-year-old married labourer applied to enlist for active service abroad and passed the medical examination. Attestation forms describe him as 173cms (5ft 8ins) tall, weighing 57.2kgs (126lbs) with a chest expansion of 83-88cms (32-34½ins) and had a fair complexion with good eyesight in his grey eyes and had light brown hair. Church of England was his faith. Next-of-kin nominated was his wife Ida Lena Pearl Hanley of 466 Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW and allotted three-fifths of his pay in support of her and their three children. The Oath of Allegiance was signed and taken the same day.

Basic training commenced in Adelaide, South Australia (4th Military District) on 3 August, 1917 with B Coy at Mitcham camp, Adelaide until 14 August then allotted to the Tunnellers Reinforcements until 5 September, 1917. From there was transferred to their training camp at Bendigo, Victoria joining the May, 1917 Reinforcements until 8 November then moved to Seymour camp to prepare for embarkation. On 20 November spent a night at Broadmeadows camp, near Melbourne in preparation for departure. Military authorities noted his Will had been lodged with them. His rank was Sapper with the regimental number 7946.

The troopship HMAT A71 *Nestor* departed Port Melbourne, Vic on November 21, 1917 with 168 Reinforcements on board. The voyage of twenty-five days duration terminated at the Suez on December 15, 1917 and the men disembarked going to the Australian Infantry Camp, Suez the same day. Sapper Hanley went sick to hospital on December 29 with pleurisy and discharged to duty and taken on strength with the Details camp at Suez on January 27, 1918. Sapper boarded the Transport E620 *Abbasiah* for Taranto, Italy arriving on February 21. Other Tunnelling Reinforcements made the unusual journey of a weeklong train travel from Taranto to Cherbourg, France, and then crossed the English Channel to Southampton, England and Sapper Hanley also disembarked there on March 4, 1918. A further entrainment completed his journey to Tidworth and marched into No. 3 Details Camp at Parkhouse for further training for the front.

Sapper was admitted on 24 March, 1918 to the Delhi Military Hospital, Tidworth with pleurisy.

He appeared before the Medical Board at Tidworth on 2 April, 1918 and his Statement of Case reads;

 Disability: Tubercule of lung

 Date of disability: Oct. 1917

 Place of disability: Bendigo, NSW (man’s statement)

 Essential facts: He stated he has been troubled with a cough worst in morning

 and much sputum for past seven years, but was always able to

 carry on with his work. Six months ago, while training at Bendigo

 he noticed he got short of breath and began to lose flesh. On arrival

 in England (six weeks ago) cough got worse and ultimately go so

 bad he could not sleep so he was sent into Military Hospital, Tidworth

 22 March, 1918.

 Aggravated by: by service during present war (exposure on ordinary Military Service)

 Present condition: Cough very troublesome at night and morning. Sputum TB+. Present

weight 54.4 kgs (8st 8lbs) used to be 64kgs (10st 1lb.) Temp stable. Dyspnoea on slight exertion. Chest expansion poor. Much flattening in insupra and inpra clavicular regions. Lungs upper right lode, disease of upper 1/3rd lower lobe, disease of apex left upper lode, infibulation of upper 1/3rd.

 Recommendation: Discharge as permanently fit.

 Tidworth 7/4/18

 Attributable to: Constitutional

 Aggravated by: Climate and military service during present war

 Disablement: 50%

 Finding: Permanently unfit for General and Home Service

 26/4/18

His wife was regretfully notified by Base Records on 5 April, 1918 as reported admitted to the Tidworth Military Hospital, England on 3/4/18, suffering from pleurisy. His address for correspondence was also included.

On 18 April, 1918 was transferred to the No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth to await his voyage home.

His name appeared in the 390th Casualty List published in the:

*Barrier Miner* Thursday April 18, 1918:

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION – 390th CASUALTY LIST

The 390th A.I.F. casualty list was released last night for publication. It contains the names of the following Broken Hill and District and South Australian soldiers:

BROKEN HILL – ILL

Sapper Gustave Edward Hanley, Broken Hill *Article abridged*

Sapper Hanley embarked for discharge in Australia due to Tubercule of Lung on 12 May, 1918 on board H.T. *Ruahine*. Base Records advised his wife on 10 June that he was on his way home.

His name was among those listed as returning soldiers published in the:

*Register* (Adelaide) Tuesday June 18, 1918:

MORE SOLDIERS COMING HOME

The following soldiers (list K) have been listed for return to Australia and are actually en route from abroad:

7946.—Sap. G.E. HANLEY, Tnlrs Rfcts *Article abridged*

The transport docked in Sydney (2nd Military District) on 5 July, 1918 and the soldiers for South Australia were entrained to Adelaide (4th Military District) and arrived on 7 July. News of their arrival was reported in the:

*Daily Herald* Monday July 8, 1918:

RETURNING SOLDIERS

Yesterday morning about 75 returning soldiers comprising list K which had been published during the week arrived at the Keswick Railway Station. There was a large number of friends and relatives at Keswick to meet them. Military Officials also met the men there.

A bus service from the Adelaide G.P.O. to Keswick to meet the convenience of relatives and friends to the servicemen and was partaken freely.

During the voyage his health had improved considerably but was admitted to Bedford Park Sanatorium on 23 July, 1918 and improvement followed.

Base Records wrote to the 4th Military District on 21 April, 1918 inquiring that no further information on this soldier had been received regarding his disposal. Last information was that on 7 December, 1918 was reported undergoing treatment at Bedford Park Sanatorium and could they advise of any later information in their possession.

His Will was returned to the 4th Military District on 31 October, 1919.

Sapper appeared before the Medical Board at the Sanatorium on 22 April, 1920 and his case details read:

 Has been troubled with a cough for seven years, but has been able to carry on with his work until

 enlistment. While in training at Bendigo began to get short of breath and began to lose flesh.

 On arrival in England, cough got worse and he could not sleep.

 Admitted to Tidworth Military Hospital 22/3/18. Returned to Australia, improved considerably.

 Admitted to Bedford Park 23/7/18.

 Has improved while in Bedford Park

 Has considerable domestic troubles, and wishes for his discharge.

 Pencilled in notation: Tuberculosis

 Disability caused by: military service

 Present condition:

 Fibrater conditions in both lungs. Few crepitations right apex – breath sounds harsh and

 high pitched right apex front. Some signs at left base. Site of old injury. No marked

 activity. Appetite very capricious. Sleeps badly.

 Recommendation: Discharge

 Board’s notes:

 Aggravated by military service

 Disability permanent

 Labour market: Total

 Discharge as permanently unfit: yes

 Further treatment: further treatment in Sanatorium desirable. For indefinite period.

 Bedford Park: 22/4/20

The 4th Military District replied to Base Records on 29 April, 1920 advising to their inquiry that he was still under-going treatment at Bedford Park Sanatorium.

Military Discharge was issued in Adelaide (4th M.D.) on 30 May, 1920 as medically unfit.

In service for his country entitled Sapper 7946 Gustave Edward Hanley, Tunnelling Company Details to wear the British War Medal (22054). As he did not get to a theatre of war was ineligible for the Victory Medal.

Gustave Edward Hanley passed away on 17 July, 1917 at Myrtle Bank Sanatorium, South Australia aged 48 years. Announcement of his demise was placed in the:

*Advertiser* Monday July 18, 1927:

DEATHS

HANLEY. —On the 17th July, at Myrtle Bank Sanatorium, Gustave Edward Hanley, late 4th Battalion Tunnellers, A.I.F. Aged 48 years.

Adelaide War Cemetery, South Australia

Photos courtesy Heather Pearce

Interment took place in the Light Oval of West Terrace Cemetery, Adelaide, within row 4N, aspect E, in site no. 14.

Base Records replied to a letter from the Imperial War Graves Commission in Melbourne, Vic on 23 October, 1947 advising that the correct particulars of this soldier were:

 No. 7946, Sapper Gustave Edward Hanley – Tunnelling Company Details

Mrs Ida Leonore Hanley died in 1978.

© Donna Baldey 2021

www.tunnellers.net