

## **Remembering the sacrifices of those with SC connections who served their country 100 years ago.**

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**By Teresa Scott**

### **Private Edward FRIEL, No.32658**

Edward Friel, known as Ted, was born on 29 July 1887 at Pleasant Point and baptised Roman Catholic on 31 July 1887 at Temuka. He was the son of Daniel and Catherine (née Carr or Kerr) Friel. Edward was likely educated at the Upper Waitohi School where his father was a committee member during the 1890s and some of his siblings featured in prize lists. His father died in an accident in December 1906 at Pleasant Point, suffering a fractured skull when he was struck by a dray. In 1911 Edward was farming at Pleasant Point, then about 1912 he moved to Puketi in South Otago, where his brother Humphrey also farmed for a few years.

Enlisting on 26 July 1916, while living at Puketi, Waitahuna, Edward Friel joined the South Otago quota for the 19th Reinforcements of the Otago Infantry Regiment. The men paraded left from Milton on the morning express of 27 July 1916, they were enthusiastically farewelled by a large number of residents. The night before they had been entertained at the "usual complimentary socials". On 12 October 1916 Private Ted Friel and five other locals were tendered a farewell social and presentation at the Pleasant Point Oddfellows Hall. At Trentham a few days before embarkation he was appointed lance-corporal, though he was deprived of the Lance Stripe at Sling Camp before proceeding to France on 1 March 1917 and joining his battalion at Rouen.

The next news of Edward was by way of a cable received by his mother at the beginning of June 1917, advising that he had been severely wounded in France. He had been wounded in action on 27 May 1917 and admitted to the casualty clearing station on 30 May, dangerously ill from wounds to his right elbow. His younger brothers Francis Hugh and Michael Joseph who also served in World War One were at the front at this time. In fact Edward had died of his wounds – gunshot wounds to his back and right elbow - on 2 June, aged 30 years.

The news of his death must have been of great sadness to his mother. She had lost her husband in an accident in 1906, a son James who died in 1902 aged 26 years, another son who died in 1914 at the age of 41 after a long illness, and a daughter Annie who had died in 1893.

Edward Friel was described as of a kindly and gentle disposition, of upright, genial character, and a staunch Catholic; a man whose death was regretted by a wide circle of friends. He was remembered by relatives in an In Memoriam notice in the New Zealand Tablet of 6 June 1918, and again on 5 June 1919.

Edward was buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France and he is remembered on his parents' headstone in the Pleasant Point Cemetery. His name is inscribed on the Timaru Memorial Wall, the Pleasant Point War Memorial and on the St Joseph's Church Temuka Memorial.

*This is part of the SCRoll project. You can find SCRoll stories, hosted by the South Canterbury Museum, at [museum.timaru.govt.nz/scroll](https://museum.timaru.govt.nz/scroll)*