

Ralph Dawson KEARTON 6/4076

Oamaru Mail. 4 September 1916 (page 3)

The many friends of the late Private Ralph D. Kearton in South Canterbury and elsewhere will not be surprised to learn that he was a popular and efficient soldier. The following tribute is from Lieut. H. Y. J. Manson, who was with him when he was wounded. He says:—"I came into close contact with him and have no hesitation in saying he was one of my best men. He was a good soldier and always willing, and what was of greater value, he could be relied upon absolutely to do anything asked of him. I was surprised to learn of his death, for I assisted to bandage him when he was wounded in the legs and back, and when he left the trench we were holding I was sanguine as to his recovery. His grave is in the military cemetery in a very beautiful town in France. There is a regulation prohibiting the erection of any permanent memorial during the period of the war, but I believe there is a society in England formed for the express purpose of providing suitable monuments for soldiers' graves when the war is over."

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Waimate Advertiser. 27 October 1916

Writing from Sling Camp, Salisbury Plain, on 28th August, a Waimate officer describes the circumstances connected with the death of Private R. D. Kearton, of Redcliff. It seems that he was in a dug-out along with five others, one of whom was W. Brien, of Waimate. A bomb came in amongst them, and killed five of them out-right. Brien got a bad wound on the thigh. The explosion was so severe that the other men in the trench did not even go to look to see if there were any left alive. Brien lay there all night before they found him.