

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

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Lance Corporal Edgar James BURN, No.27061

Edgar James Burn was the youngest son of Edgar Huie and Fanny Louisa (née Millar) Burn. Edgar was born on 11 December 1896 at Hilton, Geraldine. His father was a school teacher and spent time at Hilton, Silverstream and Fairlie schools in the South Canterbury region before moving to Waipahi and Romahapa in South Otago. Edgar jnr was educated at Fairlie School before spending a couple of months at High Street School in Dunedin on his way to Waipahi. He followed in his father's footsteps as a pupil of Otago Boys' High School. In 1904 while the family was at Fairlie their mother Fanny died. In that same year Edgar's father was appointed a Justice of the Peace at Fairlie.

The second annual shooting competition for Territorials and Cadets was held at the East Gore Rifle Range in late 1914. Sergeant E. J. Burn (48th Company) won some prize money in the Senior Cadets 500 yards championship.

Edgar James Burn was a school teacher with the Otago Education Board, in a relieving capacity at Tahakopa, when he enlisted on 31 May 1916, aged 19 years 5 months. He was following a teaching tradition in the family – his father and uncle being teachers, his brother Haitly, before joining the Defence staff and his sister Mary; and in 1871 his paternal grandmother, Mrs Margaret Gordon Burn née Huie, was appointed the first principal of the Otago Girls' High School, later taking the position of principal at Waitaki Girls' High School.

At Trentham Camp, Edgar was appointed lance-corporal, his rank on embarkation on 23 September 1916 on the Pakeha. In May 1917 he was transferred to the 3rd Battalion, Otago Regiment and proceeded overseas. Soon after he was detached to the School of Instruction for a

week. The next report was the final one – Lance-Corporal Edgar James Burn of the Otago Infantry had died of wounds on 5 October 1917 in Belgium. Having suffered gunshot wounds to the buttock and right leg and a fractured skull in action, he died at the 17th Casualty Clearing Station. He was just 20 years old. Edgar James Burn was buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinge, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. His name was recorded on the memorial of the High Street Primary School, Dunedin, and on the Romahapa Roll of Honour. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, which were to be sent to his sister, Miss M. G. Burn, school mistress in Dunedin, while the plaque and scroll were sent to his father. Edgar's brothers Captain Andrew Haitley Burn and Second Lieutenant Guy Millar Burn, both served in World War I.

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