

A FINE 'WESTERN FRONT' AUSTRALIAN FIELD AMBULANCE M.M. GROUP FOR GALLANTRY IN TREATING WOUNDED UNDER HEAVY FIRE. HAVING SERVED WITH THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS PRE WAR, HE WAS LATER WOUNDED IN ACTION DURING THE BATTLE OF AMIENS



MILITARY MEDAL, G.V.R. '13972 PTE. J. STURROCK. 14/F.A. AUST: A.M.C.',
BRITISH WAR AND VICTORY MEDALS '13972 PTE. J. STURROCK. 14 F. AMB.
A.I.F.'

M.M. *London Gazette* 7 October 1918.

The original Recommendation, dated 24 May 1918, states:

'The 5th Australian Divisional Main Dressing Station in Daours, east of Amiens, on the morning of 20 May 1918 was under bombardment with shells of large calibre, and sustained a direct hit. In spite of this shelling Private Sturrock continued with the utmost coolness to discharge his duties in the Operating Theatre during an operation for the amputation of a wounded man's thigh. His coolness was well exemplified by the way in which he anticipated the needs of the surgeons. The Dressing Station sustained a second direct hit, which demolished the Operating Theatre just as the operation was completed. Private Sturrock assisted to remove the patient to a cellar nearby where the wound was cleaned and dressed and the patient successfully evacuated. Whilst this was being done the soldier was indefatigable in going backwards and forwards between the Dressing Station and cellar under heavy shell fire to obtain dressings for his patient and two other patients who were under treatment in the theatre. The conduct of Private Sturrock under these trying circumstances was an inspiring example to all and doubtless saved many lives.'

John Sturrock, a 28 year old Clerk from South Melbourne, attested for the Australian Imperial Force on 16 July 1915. Noting on enlistment under previous service; Junior Cadets, 5th Infantry, 6 Months and Australian Army Medical Corps, 6 years. Originally listed under Special Army Medical; Corps Reinforcements, he embarked from Australia on 1 April 1916

and was taken on strength with 14th Australian Field Ambulance at Tel-El-Kebir on 12 May 1916. Embarking for France on 19 June, he landed at Marseilles on 26 June 1916. Sturrock was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry on 20 May 1918 when the operating theatre he was working in came under heavy shell fire before receiving a direct hit. Despite this, Sturrock stuck to his job in assisting the surgeons (M.M. Citation and War Diary refers).



Sturrock was wounded in action (Gunshot Wound in back), on 12 August 1918 but remained on duty, however on 28 September, he was admitted to hospital in France and was transferred to London just over a week later. Sturrock's health did not improve and he was returned to Australia on 24 December 1918, being discharged from the Army on 28 March 1919. It is not clear where exactly where he was when wounded but the War Diary notes much about organising casualty clearing, bearers, forward posts etc relating to the 5th Australian Division, who were taking part in the battle of Amiens. Sturrock was wounded on the final day of this battle, so was presumably one of the forward bearers.

Along with the research are copies of the War Diaries for May and August 1918. These are most interesting, especially as in the Appendix for May 1918, there are maps and aerial photographs of the exact position of 14th FA were on this date (at Daours), showing trench lines, shell holes etc.



Condition GVF. Sold with copy service papers, MM recommendation and War units diary for May 1918 (on CD). Not entitled to the 1915/15 Star.