Private William Boland (XC 1891)

AWM ~ Roll of Honour
William Patrick Boland

Service Number: 4156
Rank: Private
Unit: 11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Date of death: 5 August 1916
Place of death: United Kingdom
Cause of death: Died of wounds received in action in France (gunshot wounds to his spine)
Age at death: 39
Place of association: Richmond, Australia
Cemetery details: Wanisworth Cemetery (Australian, Section 30), Earlsfield, London, United Kingdom

From “The Xaverian” 1916 p. 39

William Boland (‘80-82) ‘listed in Western Australia in August, 1915, and sailed in December in one of the Battalions, A.I.F. Wounded in France in July, and died on August 3rd in the Military Hospital at Wandsworth Common, London.

Some facts touching him read like those collected for the Beautification of the Little Flower. His sister writes: “On hearing of his death, we asked the Little Flower to inspire the priest or nurse who attended him to let us know if he received the Last Sacraments, and on the 30th of September (the day the Little Flower died) we received the enclosed consoling letters.”

Again: “We had not heard from him for many years, and in our anxiety made a Novena to Sister Theresa (the name in religion of the Little Flower). On the 30th September, 1914 (he birthday into Heaven) he wrote. Then his letters ceased, and again we made a Novena. Again he wrote on the 30th September. Is it not proof that she is (as she said she would) spending her time in Heaven doing good on earth?” Truly we think it is. We append the two letters mentioned above because in the light of what has been written they are full of interest. They speak for themselves, and need no comment of ours.

Wanisworth Cemetery, London, England
Dear Mr. Boland, -

Altho’ I am a complete stranger to you, I want to send my sincerest sympathy on the loss of your son.

He was in my charge from the time of his arrival in England until his death, and was in every way such a patient fellow. I feel you will be happy to know that he did not suffer severe pain—as his wound caused a certain amount of paralysis. He spoke of you—his father—and hoped you would receive the few lines he managed to send off upon his arrival here.

Several of my convalescent Australians, Newfoundlanders, and English boys, followed him to his last resting place—carrying with them a beautiful wreath from us all.

I think you will also receive a letter from the priest who gave him the Last Sacraments, and he also said Masses for the repose of his soul every day for a week.

I wish I could find better expression to tell you how sorry we are for you, and I want you to know that everything possible was done for your laddie, and that his last days were peaceful.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely.

AMY M. HALE (Sister)