



In Memory of

**Private**

**EDWARD HENRY KING**

QX16949, 2<sup>ND</sup>/26<sup>TH</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion

who died age 38

on 15 January 1944

Son of William Henry King and Anna Christine King,  
of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour

KANCHANABURI WAR CEMETERY, THAILAND



PRIVATE  
**EDWARD HENRY KING**  
2<sup>ND</sup>/26<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY BATTALION  
REGIMENTAL NUMBER: QX16949

Private Edward Henry King, the son of William Henry King and Anna Christine King (nee Vohland), was born at Oakey in Queensland on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1905. Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state, *'He was a Trustee at the Toowoomba Grammar School'*. He voluntarily enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Toowoomba on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1941 after giving a commitment that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. He was allotted the regimental number of QX16949. At the time of enlistment, he was single and employed as a Farmer and residing at "Iredale", Helidon. His physical description at the time of enlistment was that he had fair hair and blue eyes. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion. He gave his next of kin as his mother, Mrs Annie Christina King, residing at Nambour.

Private Edward King joined the Northern Command Reception Camp at the Exhibition Grounds in Brisbane on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1941. He joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion at Redbank Camp on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1941. He was granted pre-embarkation leave to farewell his family and finalize his personal affairs during the period 5<sup>th</sup> May until 12<sup>th</sup> May 1941. He was admitted sick to the Camp Dressing Station at Grovely Camp during the period 14<sup>th</sup> May until 17<sup>th</sup> May 1941. Joined 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Bathurst on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1941.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion was raised in Queensland in November 1940 at Grovely Camp in Brisbane. The Battalion transferred to the Redbank Camp on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1941. The Battalion left Redbank Camp shortly after midnight on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1941 and moved by rail to Bathurst in New South Wales where it joined battalions from the other states as part of the 27<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade. Military training continued whilst the battalion was located at Bathurst. By mid-July the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade units prepared for imminent embarkation. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion left Bathurst on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1941 and proceeded by rail to Port Melbourne where it boarded the Dutch registered transport ship "Marnix-Van-St Aldegond" on the following day. Private Edward King embarked with his battalion from the Port of Melbourne on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1941 and after clearing Port Phillip it joined a convoy of ships escorted by a cruiser of the Royal Australian Navy. It stopped at Fremantle in Western Australia and after departing that port sailed to Singapore where it docked on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1941.

Private Edward King disembarked with his battalion at Singapore and the battalion moved to Wavell Camp near Changi. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved to Johore in Malaya in September 1941 and was given responsibility for the defence of a nominated area should any invasion of Malaya be attempted. Active patrolling was conducted and the troops became acclimatised and trained in rubber plantations, open country and in the jungle environment. In early December 1941 the battalions moved to their battle stations. In mid-January 1942 the 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion was in action against the Japanese during the Allied Forces step by step withdrawal down the Malayan peninsula. The battalion was involved in action at Yong Peng, Ayer Hitam, Sempang Rengram, Namazi Estate. The battalion crossed the Causeway between Johore and Singapore Island on 1<sup>st</sup>

February 1942 and took up defensive positions in the Kranji area on the western side of the Causeway. The 2nd/26th Infantry Battalion was involved in the fierce fighting on Singapore Island until the Allied Forces surrendered on 15th February 1942.

Private Edward King became a prisoner of war of the Japanese when the Allied Forces surrendered at Singapore. He was sent by the Japanese as a member of "F" Force to work on the Burma Thailand Railway. He died of illness at Kanburi in Thailand on 15th January 1944. At the time of his death Edward King was 38 years of age. After the war his remains were exhumed and he was re-buried in the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery.

Edward King's name is commemorated on Panel No. 53 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Mothers' Memorial, The Toowoomba Soldiers' Memorial Hall Honour Board and the Toowoomba Grammar School WW2 Honour Board.

Note:

A comprehensive history of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Battalion during World War 2 can be found in Lieutenant Colonel Ron Magarry's book, "The Battalion Story", 1994. ISBN 0 646 820 582. An appreciation of his treatment whilst a prisoner of war of the Japanese that ultimately led to his death can be found in Don Wall's book, "The Heroes of "F" Force", D. Wall, Mona Vale, New South Wales.1985. ISBN 0 646 16047 8. His name appears in the Roll of Honour published in 'The Battalion Story'.



*Australian War Memorial photograph 00949/03*

*After the Australian winter, Queenslanders of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion enjoy the tropical heat at Singapore, Malaya.*

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