

Cannock Chase War Cemetery, Staffordshire War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



72391 RIFLEMAN

J. AIKEN

N.Z. RIFLE BRIGADE.

4TH AUGUST, 1918 Age 27

John AIKEN

John Aiken was born on 8th February, 1891 at Miller's Flat, Otago, New Zealand to parents Thomas and Louisa Aiken (nee Kitto). His father was born in Antram, Ireland & his mother was born at Miller's Flat, Otago, New Zealand.

John Aiken was a 26 year old, single, Packer (Alexandra Meat Preserving Company) from 61 Orbell Street, Dalmore, Nth East Valley, Dunedin, New Zealand when he enlisted at Dunedin, New Zealand on 5th October, 1917 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (N.Z.E.F.). His service number was 72391 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Thomas Aiken of 61 Orbell Street, Dalmore, Nth East Valley, Dunedin, New Zealand.

John Aiken was granted Leave without pay from 12th November, 1917 to 13th November, 1917 to take up duty on Home Service.

Private John Aiken was posted to "A" Company, 38th Regiment on 5th February, 1918. He was transferred to "A" Company, 37th Regiment on 26th April, 1918.

John Aiken married Elsie Mullin in Wellington, New Zealand on 29th April, 1918.

Rifleman John Aiken commenced active service on 2nd May, 1918. He embarked on *Maunganui* from Wellington, New Zealand on 9th May, 1918. Rifleman Aiken disembarked at Liverpool, England on 24th June, 1918.

Rifleman John Aiken was marched in to N.Z.R.B. (New Zealand Rifle Brigade) Reserve Depot at Brocton, England on 24th June, 1918.

Rifleman John Aiken was admitted to Hospital on 11th July, 1918. He was reported as seriously ill on 11th July, 1918 at Military Hospital, Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, England. On the 17th July, 1918 he was reported as having inflammation of membranes of brain. Rifleman Aiken was listed on 30th July, 1918 as still seriously ill – "*condition not so good as last report.*"

The Hospital Admission form records that Rifleman John Aiken was admitted to Hospital on 12th July, 1918 – Inflammation of membranes of the brain (Influenzial) "*contracted during influenza epidemic, showed typical signs of meningeal irritation. Treated by lumbar puncture & vaccine administration, did not improve & began to show signs of internal hydrocephalus.*"

Rifleman John Aiken died on 4th August, 1918 at Military Hospital, Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, England from Inflammation of membrane of brain.

A death for John Aiken, aged 27, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Lichfield, Staffordshire, England.

Rifleman John Aiken was buried on 7th August, 1918 in Cannock Chase War Cemetery, Staffordshire, England – Plot number 4. A. 6. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

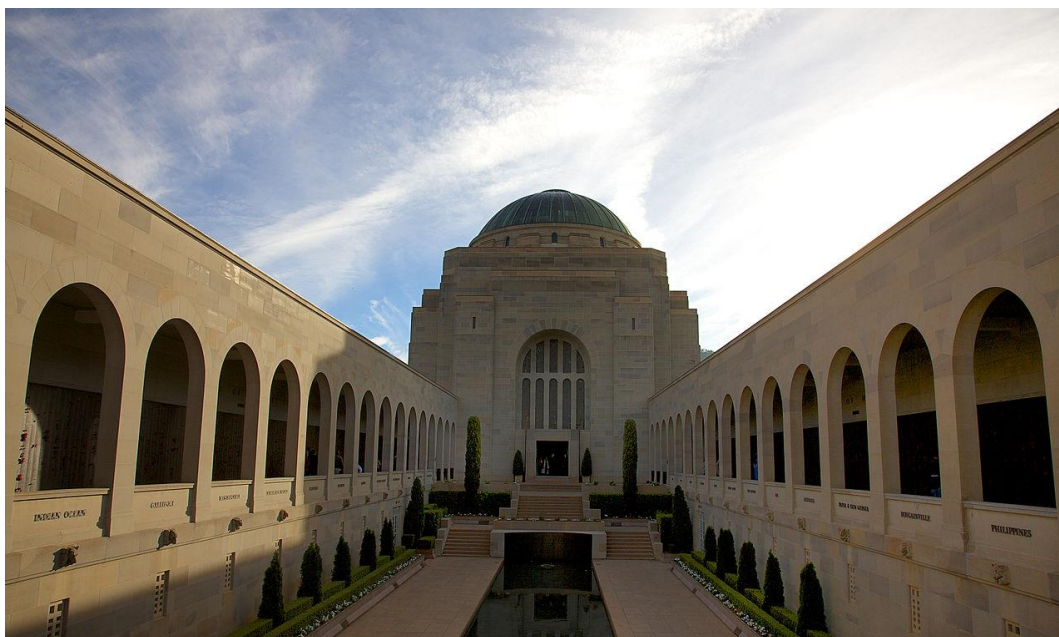
Rifleman John Aiken was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Rifleman Aiken's remarried widow - Mrs E. Fisher, 39 Elizabeth St., Paddington, Sydney, NSW, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent May., 1923 & Plaque sent January, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Rifleman John Aiken – service number 72391, aged 27, of 3rd New Zealand Rifle Brigade. He was the son of Thomas and Louisa Aiken, of Dunedin; husband of Elsie Fisher (formerly Aiken), of 39 Elizabeth St., Paddington, Sydney, Australia.

Rifleman John Aiken is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

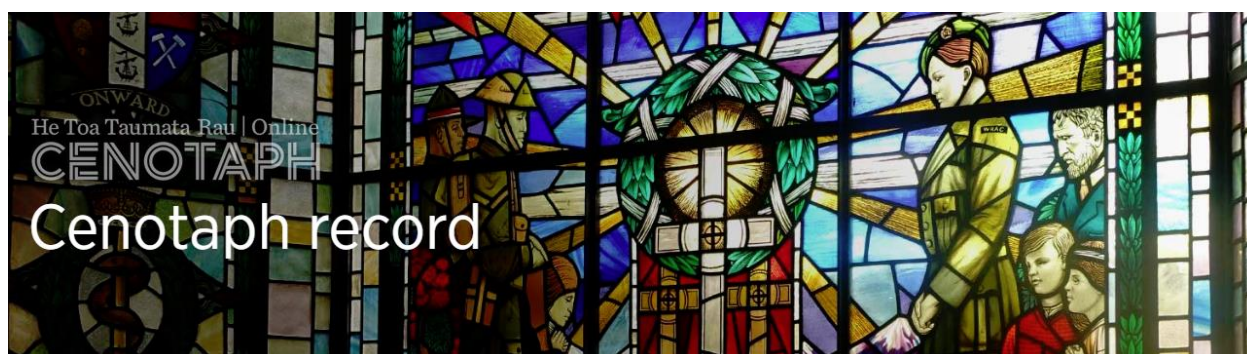
(Note: It appears that Rifleman John Aiken's name on the Commemorative Roll was based on the information that his next-of-kin's address was listed as Australia & therefore the soldier concerned, it was assumed, would be Australian.)

- Elsie Aiken, widow of Rifleman John Aiken, remarried in 1922 in Sydney, NSW to Albert Fisher. Her address for the delivery of Memorial Scroll & Plaque was Mrs E. Fisher, 39 Elizabeth St., Paddington, Sydney, NSW.



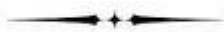
Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial *(Capital Photographer)*

John Aiken is remembered on the Online Cenotaph for New Zealand.



(22 pages of Rifleman John Aiken's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial & Archives New Zealand



Newspaper Notices

ROLL OF HONOUR

FOUR DEATHS REPORTED

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DIED OF SICKNESS

Aiken, John, R.B., Aug 4 – Mrs E. Aiken, Dunedin

(New Zealand Herald, Volume LV, Issue 16923 – 8 August, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

FALLEN NEW ZEALANDERS

YESTERDAY'S CASUALTY LIST

OTAGO MILITARY DISTRICT

DIED OF SICKNESS

Aiken, John, 72391, N.Z.R.B. (Mrs E. Aiken, Dunedin); August 4th

(New Zealand Times, Volume XLIII, Issue 10044 – 8 August, 1918)

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

DEATH

AIKEN – On August 4th, at Cannock Chase Hospital, England, Private John, dearly beloved husband of Elsie Aiken, and third son of Thomas and Louisa Aiken, 61 Orbell Street, Dalmore; aged 27 years.

(Evening Star, Issue 16807 – 8 August, 1918)

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

IN MEMORIAM

AIKEN – In loving memory of Rifleman John Aiken, who died at Cannock Chase Hospital, England, on August 4th, 1918 – Inserted by his loving wife.

(Evening Star, Issue 17112 – 4 August, 1919)

Cannock Chase War Cemetery, Staffordshire, England

During the First World War when there was a large military camp at Cannock Chase which became the base for the New Zealand Rifle Brigade. There was also a prisoner-of-war hospital with 1,000 beds, and both camp and hospital used the burial ground. Cannock Chase War Cemetery contains 97 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, most of them New Zealanders, and 286 German burials. There are also three burials of the Second World War. The 58 German burials in Plot 4 were all brought into the cemetery in 1963, as part of the German Government's policy to remove all graves situated in cemeteries or war graves plots not maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

(Information & photos from CWGC)





Photo of Rifleman J. Aiken's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Cannock Chase War Cemetery, Staffordshire, England.



John Aiken is also remembered on the family headstone located in Andersons Bay Cemetery, Dunedin, New Zealand. (Block 24, Plot 23)

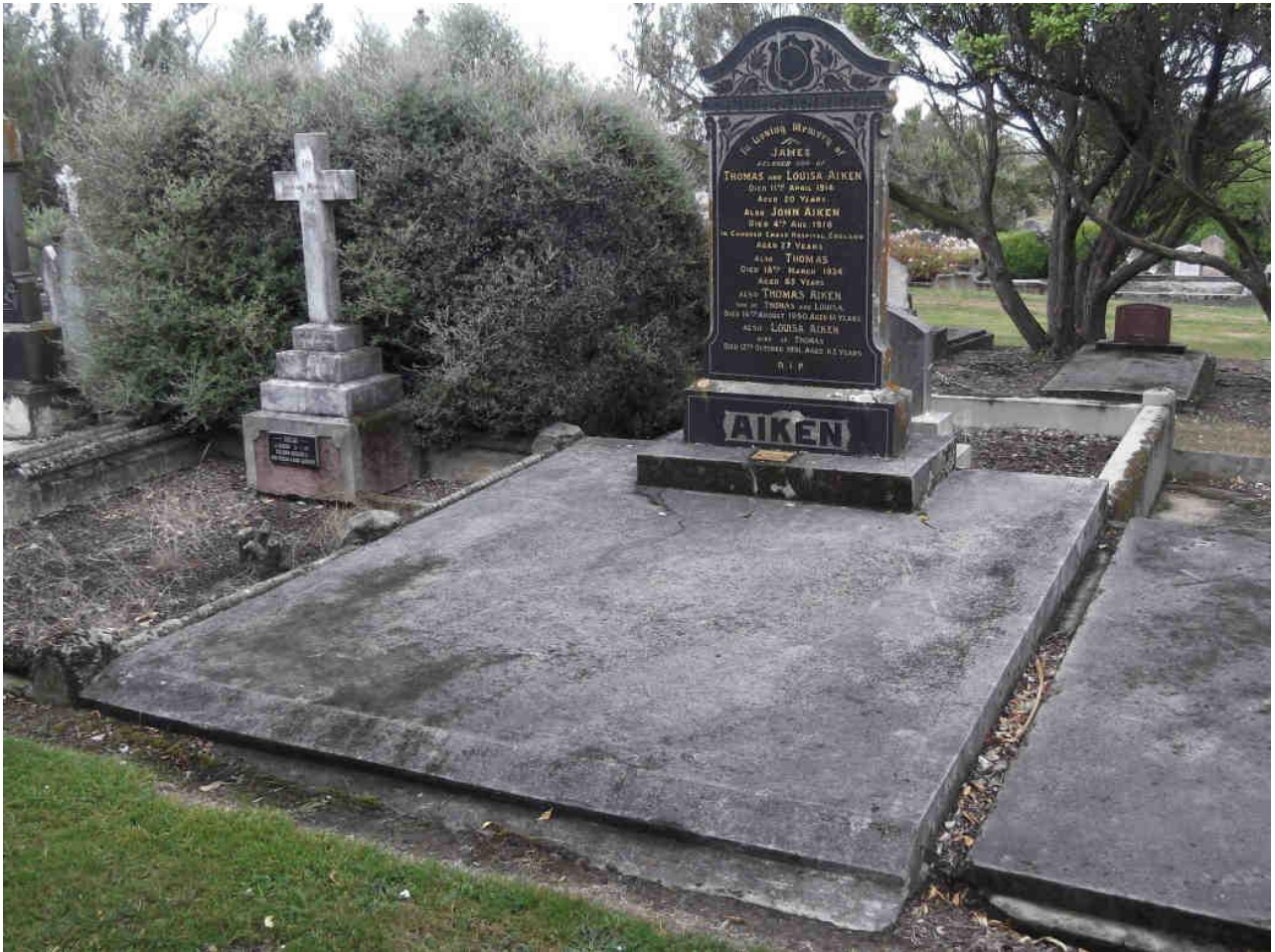


Also JOHN AIKEN

Died 4TH Aug. 1918

In Cannock Chase Hospital, England

Aged 27 Years



Aiken Family Headstone in Andersons Bay Cemetery, Dunedin, New Zealand.

James Aiken – brother of John, Thomas Aiken – father of John

Thomas Aiken – brother of John & Louisa Aiken – mother of John



Andersons Bay Cemetery, Dunedin, New Zealand (Photo by Mattinbgn)