

**Sutton Veny,
Wiltshire, England
War Graves
World War 1**



Lest We Forget



5974 CORPORAL

C. G. ASHTON

AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

11TH FEBRUARY, 1919

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Cpl. C. G. Ashton is located in
Grave Plot # 65. J. 5. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Charles Gerald ASHTON

Charles Gerald Ashton was born at Mudgee, New South Wales around 1881. (From Family Trees on Ancestry – he was born as Charles Gerald Haswell in 1881 to parents Frederick Haswell & Frances (Fanny) Catherine Mary Toohey.)

Charles Gerald Ashton married Edna Maud Trimm in 1910 in the Northam district of Western Australia. Three children were born to Charles & Edna Ashton – Edna May Ashton (1911), Judith Hilda Ashton (1912), Dorothy Francis Ashton (1913), Peter Gerald Ashton (1915; died 1915; aged 9 months) & Ronald Charles Ashton (1915).

The 1912 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Swan, subdivision of York recorded Charles Gerald Ashton, Blacksmith, of Quairading, along with his wife Edna Maud Ashton.

The 1913, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Dampier, subdivision of York recorded Charles Gerald Ashton, Blacksmith of Quairading, along with his wife Edna Maud Ashton.

Charles Gerald Ashton was a 33 year old, married, Blacksmith from Quairading, Western Australia when he enlisted at Black Boy Hill, Western Australia on 6th February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs E. M. Ashton, Post Office, Quairading, Western Australia.

Private Charles Gerald Ashton, Service number 5974, embarked from Fremantle on HMAT *Militades (A28)* on 7th August, 1916 with the 11th Infantry Battalion, 19th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 24th September, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Charles Gerald Ashton was marched in to Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England on 25th September, 1916 & promoted to Acting Corporal without extra duty pay on 26th September, 1916.

Acting Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton proceeded overseas per SS *Princess Victoria* from Folkestone on 4th December, 1916 & joined Base Depot at Etaples, France on 5th December, 1916. He joined his Battalion in France on 26th December, 1916.

Acting Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was transferred from 11th Battalion to Anzac C. Light Railway on 16th March, 1917. He was promoted to 2/Corporal in the Field on 11th June, 1917 & detached to O/C L. Railway Trouville on 12th August, 1917.

2/Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was promoted to Temporary Corporal on 8th October, 1917 & then promoted to Corporal on 20th October, 1917.

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was on Leave in England from 18th January, 1918 & rejoined from Leave on 4th February, 1918.

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was detached to Australian Corps School on 14th November, 1918 & rejoined his Unit on 19th November, 1918. On 26th January, 1919 Corporal Ashton was shipped out from Havre to England for demobilisation. He disembarked at Weymouth, England on 29th January, 1919 & was marched in to No. 1 Training Brigade Con. Camp, England on same day.

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was admitted to the 1st Australian General Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 30th January, 1919 with Bronchitis. He was reported dangerously ill on 6th February, 1919 with Broncho Pneumonia.

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton died at 11.20 a.m. on 11th February, 1919 at the 1st Australian General Hospital, Sutton Veny of Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for C. G. Ashton, aged 33, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton was buried on 15th February, 1919 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 63. (CWGC list Grave No. as 65 whereas the Burial report list Grave no. as 63).

From the burial report of Corporal Ashton - *"The deceased soldier was buried with full military honours, the coffin (elm with brass mounts) draped with the Australian flag being borne to the graveside on a gun carriage, preceded by a Firing Party from No. 1 Australian Command Depot Sutton Veny. The Pall was supported by six members of the A.I.F. and the funeral was attended by 2 Officers and about 80 Non Commissioned Officers and Men who followed the remains and were present at the graveside ceremony. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral. The utmost care and attention is being devoted where possible to the graves of our soldiers. It is understood that photographs are being taken as soon as is possible and these will be transmitted to next-of-kin when available."*

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton requested in his Will, dated 11th June, 1917, that all his real & personal estate be left to his wife – Edna Maude Ashton of Quairading, W.A.

Corporal Charles Ashton was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal as he had entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Corporal Ashton's widow - remarried – now Mrs Weaver (both resent June, 1923)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal C. G. Ashton, 5974, of 3rd Australian Light Rly, Forward Coy, Australian Engineers, A.I.F. No family details are listed.

Corporal C. G. Ashton is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 26.

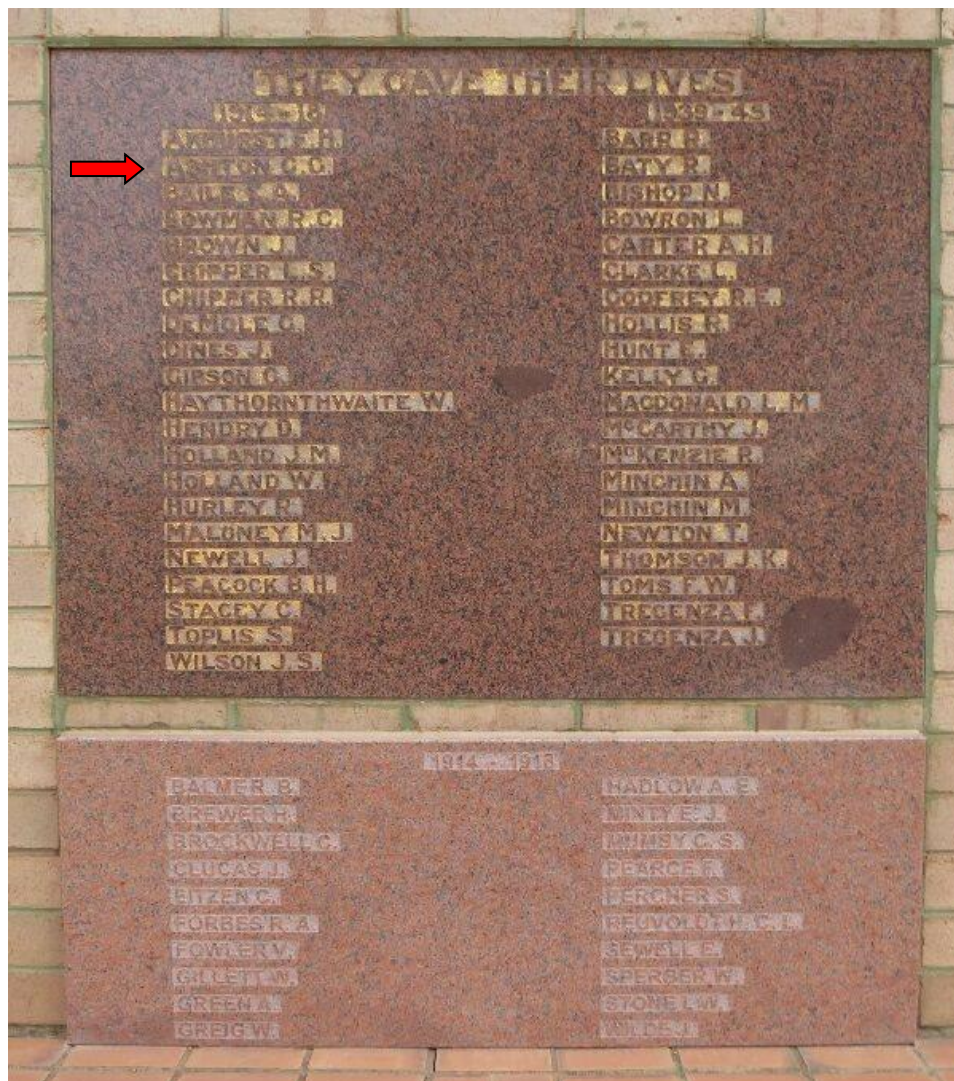


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Corporal C. G. Ashton is remembered on the Entrance to Quairading Memorial Pool, McLennan Street, Quairading, Western Australia. 61 names from WW1 & WW2 are listed on this memorial.



Quairading Memorial Pool, McLennan Street, Quairading, Western Australia.



(Photo from Monument Australia)

C. G. Ashton is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

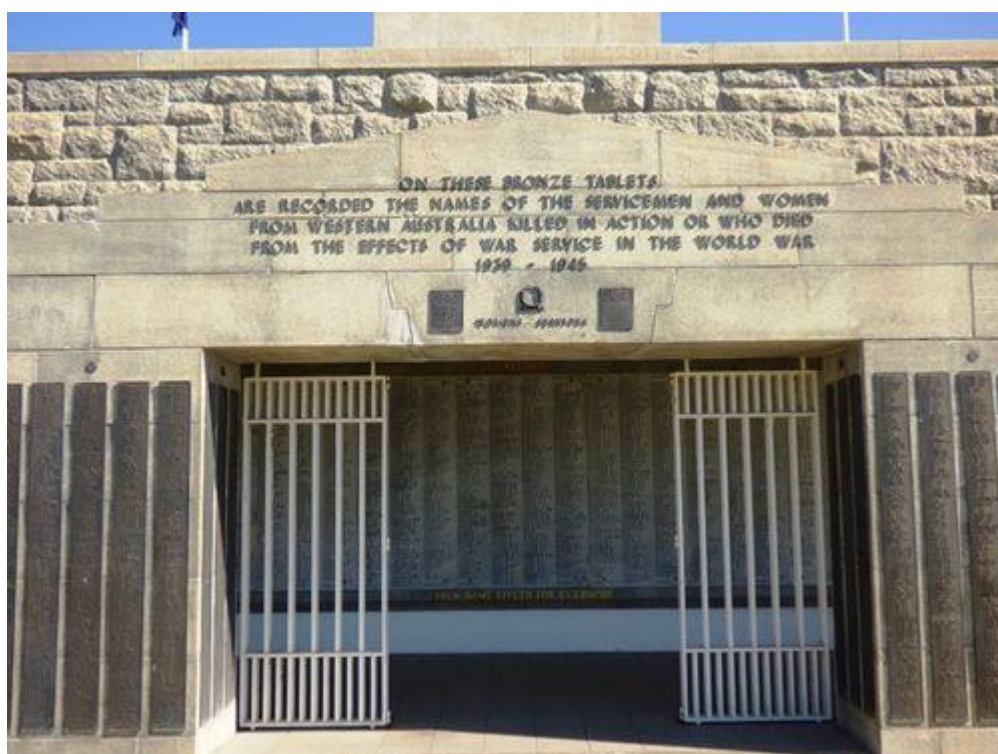
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)

& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)





Corps of Engineers Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

(94 pages of Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives.

Newspaper Reports

ROLL OF HONOUR

460th CASUALTY LIST

Died Other Causes

Cpl. Ashton, Chas. Gerald (Quairading)

(*Western Mail*, Perth, WA – Friday 21 March 1919)

MISSING NEXT-OF-KIN

The military authorities wish to communicate with the next-of-kin of No. 5974 Charles Gerald Ashton, 3rd Light Railway-building Corps, late 11th Battalion whose wife, Mrs E. M. Ashton, was stated by him to be residing at Quairading.

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 30 April, 1919)

Cpl. Charles G. Ashton is also remembered on a joint “open book” headstone that he shares with his 9 month old son – Peter, in Quairading Cemetery, Western Australia.



Headstone of Cpl. Charles G. Ashton & his 9 month old son Peter



(Photos courtesy of [Lorraine's Cemetery Records](#) – photo by Phil Cooper)

In Loving Memory of Peter, son of C. G. and E.M. Ashton . 1 December 1915 . Aged 9 months

Also Cpl. Charles G. Ashton, died in England February 11th 1919 . Aged 36 years.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone at St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

A letter dated 1st July, 1921 was sent from Base Records to Mrs Weaver (Cpl. Ashton's remarried widow), 154 Wattle Street, Bendigo, Victoria stating that a form enabling the next-of-kin to submit an inscription on the headstone had not been answered. Non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would be accepted as indicating that no further action be taken. Another letter dated 26th August, 1921 was sent from Base Records to Mrs Weaver Post Office, Soldiers Settlement, Stanhope, Branxton, NSW. This was also unanswered. (A letter was written dated 11 May, 1921 from Stanhope by James G. H. Weaver to Officer in Charge asking – *"Please inform me where I am to apply for war medals now available for myself 3376 Tpr. J. G. H. Weaver of 10th Light Horse, also my wife who was the widow of the Late Cpl. C. G. Ashton, 5974 3rd L.R.O.C."*)

Corporal Charles Gerald Ashton does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards. The 26th Division was concentrated at Sutton Veny in April 1915 and No 1 Australian Command was there from the end of 1916 to October 1919. There was also a hutted military hospital of more than 1200 beds at Sutton Veny for much of the war and No 1 Australian General Hospital was stationed there after the Armistice. Sutton Veny (St John) Churchyard contains 168 First World War burials, 167 of them in a plot at the north west corner of the church. Of these, 143 are Australian. There is only one Second World War burial in the churchyard.

(Information & colour photos from CWGC)





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00376



Photo of Corporal C. G. Ashton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Andrea Charlesworth 2012)