

**Cheriton Road Cemetery,
Folkestone, Kent, England**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



J. H. G. BENSON

S.S. NIZAM

26TH AUGUST, 1918

John Horace Gloster BENSON

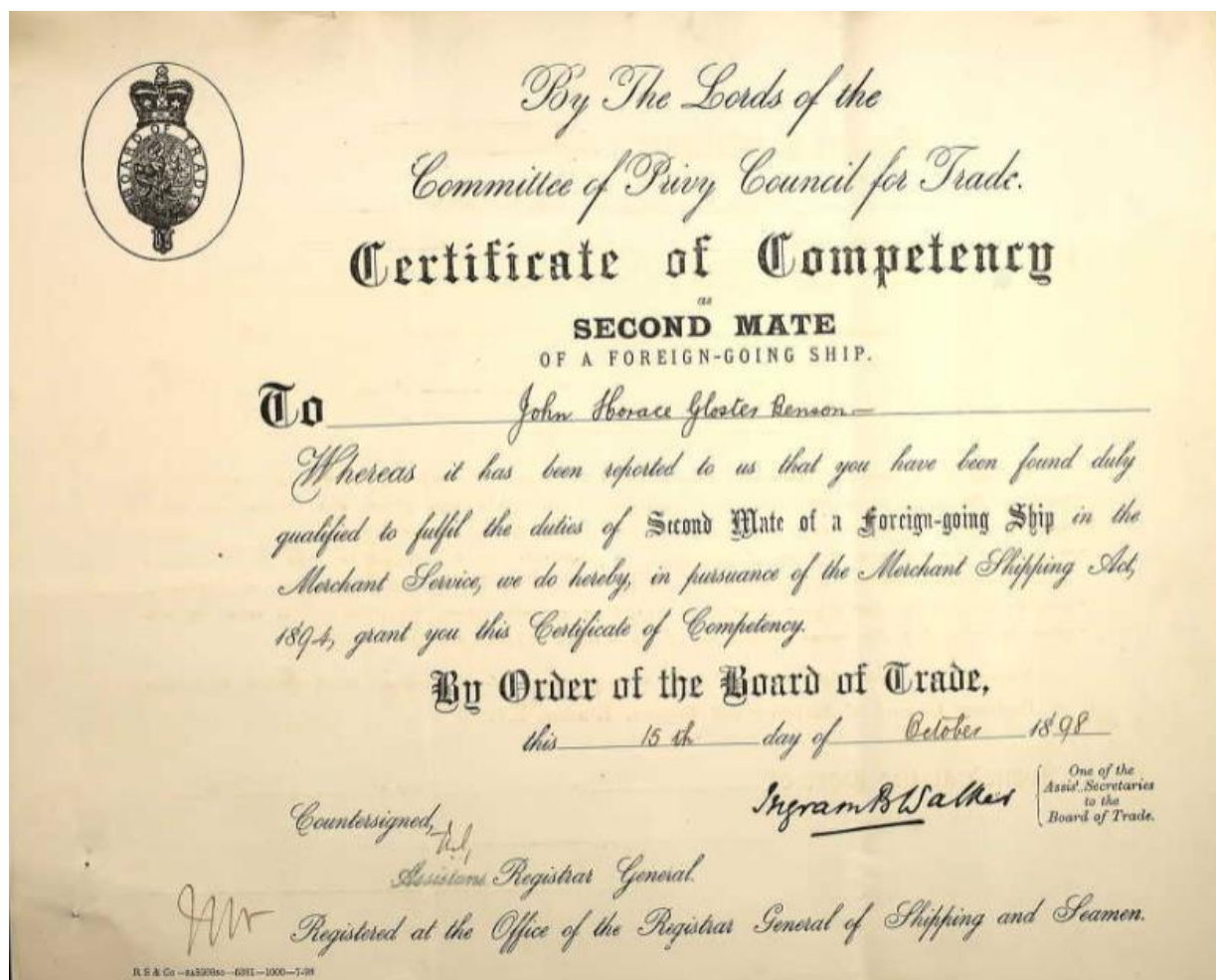
[Note: There are different spellings of his second middle name – Gloster, Gloucester & Gloucester. They have been listed below as found in the record concerned]

John Horace Gloster Benson was born at Norwood, South Australia on 31st July, 1877 to parents John & Charlotte Deborah Benson (nee Fitzgibbon). His birth was registered in the district of Norwood, South Australia. John Horace Glocester Benson was baptised in St. Bartholomew's Church, Norwood, South Australia.

Dr John Benson, father of John Horace Gloster Benson, died on 8th July, 1877 at Kensington, South Australia.

John Horace Gloster Benson was indentured into the Merchant Navy on 17th August, 1892 in London, England, aged 15.

John Horace Gloster Benson gained his Certificate of Competency as Second Mate on a Foreign-Going Ship on 15th October, 1898.



John Horace Gloucester Benson married Amy Florence Higginson on 4th May, 1904 in Office of the Senior Marriage Registrar of Calcutta, West Bengal, India. John Benson was recorded as a 26 year old Mercantile Marine residing at 12 Hastings Street, Calcutta & Amy Florence Higginson was a widow, aged 41, residing at 292 Circular Road, Calcutta.

A son – Hawtrey Cyril Benson was born on 1st July, 1904 at Calcutta, India. He was baptised on 7th August, 1904 at the Church of St. James, Calcutta. According to the Baptism Register his parents resided at Calcutta & John Horace Gloucester Benson was listed as a Mercantile Marine.

Mercantile Marine:

During the First World War, the Merchant Navy - the Mercantile Marine - was thrust into the conflict, becoming the supply service of the Royal Navy.

It carried troops, shipped raw materials, and delivered armaments and supplies to the armed forces. To keep the country from starvation, it transported food to Britain's home front and coal, iron, and other essential goods to keep factories in production.

(Information from Historic England)

The British Merchant Navy is the collective name given to British civilian ships and their associated crews, including officers and ratings. In the UK, it is simply referred to as the Merchant Navy or MN.

King George V bestowed the title of "Merchant Navy" on the British merchant shipping fleets following their service in the First World War; Previously it had been known as the Mercantile Marine or Merchant Service, although the term "Merchant Navy" was already informally used from the 19th century.

The British Merchant Navy was historically one of the largest ship registries and source of crew in the world, with 33% of global tonnage registered in 1939. However, since the mid 20th century, the number of shipowners, ships, officers and crew have declined dramatically as a result of globalisation and the rise of flags of convenience. As of 2023, the British Merchant Navy numbered 1,054 ships.

(Information from Wikipedia)

The Absent Voters List for Hastings, East Sussex 1917 – 1918 recorded Benson, John Horace, 24 Upper Park Road, Commander, H.M.S. "Nizan" M.M.

The 1918 Electoral Register for Hastings, East Sussex recorded John Horace Benson & Amy Florence Benson of 24 Upper Park Road.

John Horace Gloster Benson died on 26th August, 1918 at Leas Hotel, Clifton Gardens, Folkestone, Kent, England.

A death for John H. Benson, aged 41, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Elham, Kent, England.

John Horace Benson was buried on 30th August, 1918 in Cheriton Road Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England – Section A Grave 689 (as listed in Burial Register). His body was brought from The Mortuary at Folkestone. He was a Captain in Merchant Service & was aged 41 years.

John Horace Benson	#1	Captain Merchant Service	1918 Aug: 26	Leas Hotel, Clifton Gardens, Folkestone,	The Mortuary, Folkestone.
No. 1667					

Entry in Cheriton Road Cemetery, Folkestone Burial Register

John Horace Benson's Grave position is now recorded as Plot 17 Grave 689 – unmarked grave.

Newspaper item – Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate And Cheriton Herald, England – 31 August, 1918:

SEA CAPTAIN'S DEATH

FIRST LOCAL INQUEST WITHOUT A JURY

The first inquest in Folkestone without a jury was held by the Coroner (Mr G. W. Haines) on Wednesday at the Town Hall. Deceased was Mr John Horace Bedson, a captain in the Mercantile Marine, then residing at the Leas Hotel.

Mr E. J. Chadwick, Coroner's Officer, said the body was identified in his presence by Mrs Vinnicombe as that of John Horace Bedson, aged 41, who had resided at the Leas Hotel.

Mr T. H. Vinnicombe, proprietor of the Leas Hotel, said he had known deceased about eight years. His home was in Adelaide, Australia. Witness did not know if he was married. He was a captain in the Mercantile Marine, employed by Messrs Turner and Co., London, and was master of the S. S. Nizan. He came to stay at the Leas Hotel on sick leave on June 17th, and left on July 2nd. On July 23rd he returned, and told witness that when he was at Bournemouth his dog was fighting with another dog, and in parting the, the strange dog bit him on the leg. He dressed the leg himself and did not then go to the doctor. About ten days ago he sent down a message asking for a doctor. Dr Streatfeild was sent for and came the same day. When deceased returned in July he seemed run down, and said he had had an awful time. He also told witness that he himself injected something into his leg to cure the bite.

Nurse Bingham 141, Sandgate-rd., said she had nursed deceased since August 16th. He told her he had been in the water and thought he had caught a chill. She noticed that there was a wound between the toes, from which inflammation was spreading. He died on the night of August 26th. He did not tell witness he had cut himself.

Dr Streatfeild said he first saw deceased on August 16th. He was in bed with a severe shivering fit and a temperature of 102. His pulse was very bad. He found he had a wound in the right calf, which deceased said was caused by a dog bite some five weeks before. It was not looking well, but was fairly healed. There was also an unhealthy-looking wound on one of the toes of the right foot. The inflammation from the toe spread up his leg and arm of the opposite side. He had also a patch of inflammation over the right elbow. Late he developed symptoms of pleurisy and congestion of the lungs, and finally died on August 26th.

A post-mortem examination showed death to be due to septic poisoning of the blood, followed by septic pleurisy and congestion of the lungs. He should think the infection came from the wound on the toe, and not from the dog bite.

The Coroner found that deceased died from septic pleurisy arising from septic poisoning of the blood.

England & Wales National Probate Calendar:

BENSON John Horace Gloucester of 24 Upper Park-road St. Leonards-on-Sea, master and commander of s.s. Nigara died 26 August 1918 at the Leas Hotel Folkestone. Administration (with Will) London 28 September to Amy Florence Benson widow. Effects £1813 19s. 10d.

Registers of seamen

Without some reliable facts to use as a starting point, it is usually difficult to trace the career of a merchant seafarer during the First World War. Civilians employed at sea didn't get an official service record and in the period 1857-1913 the Board of Trade didn't maintain a central register of seamen.

The Central Indexed Register of Merchant Seamen (Fourth Register of Seamen) entries for 1913-1917 have not survived, but the original registry cards for 1918-1941 are held by Southampton Archives.

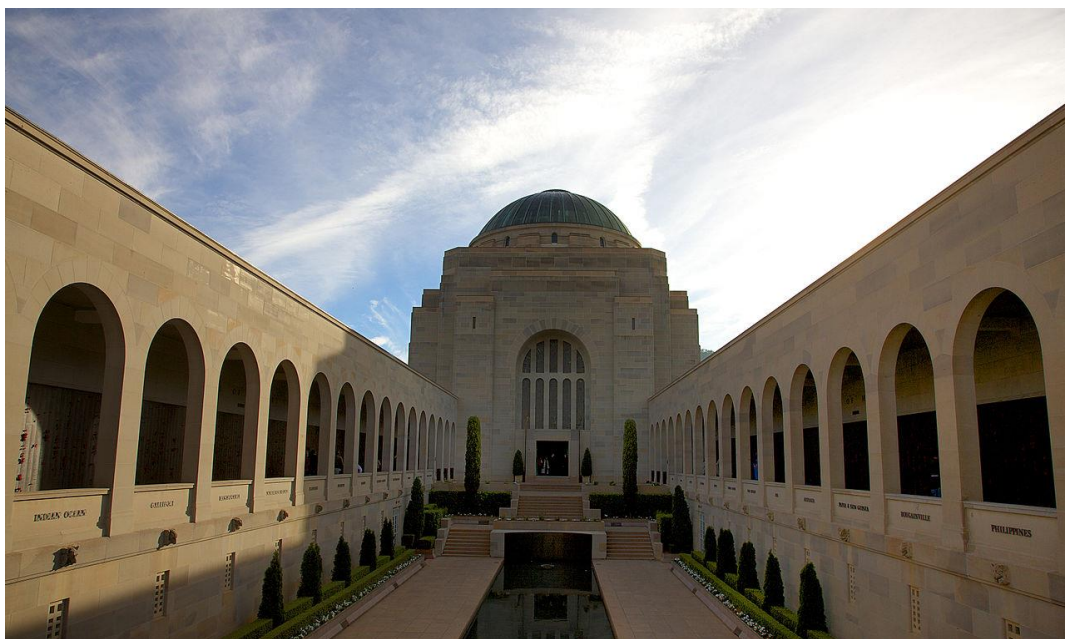
(Information from Royal Museums Greenwich)

John Horace Gloster Benson is not listed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

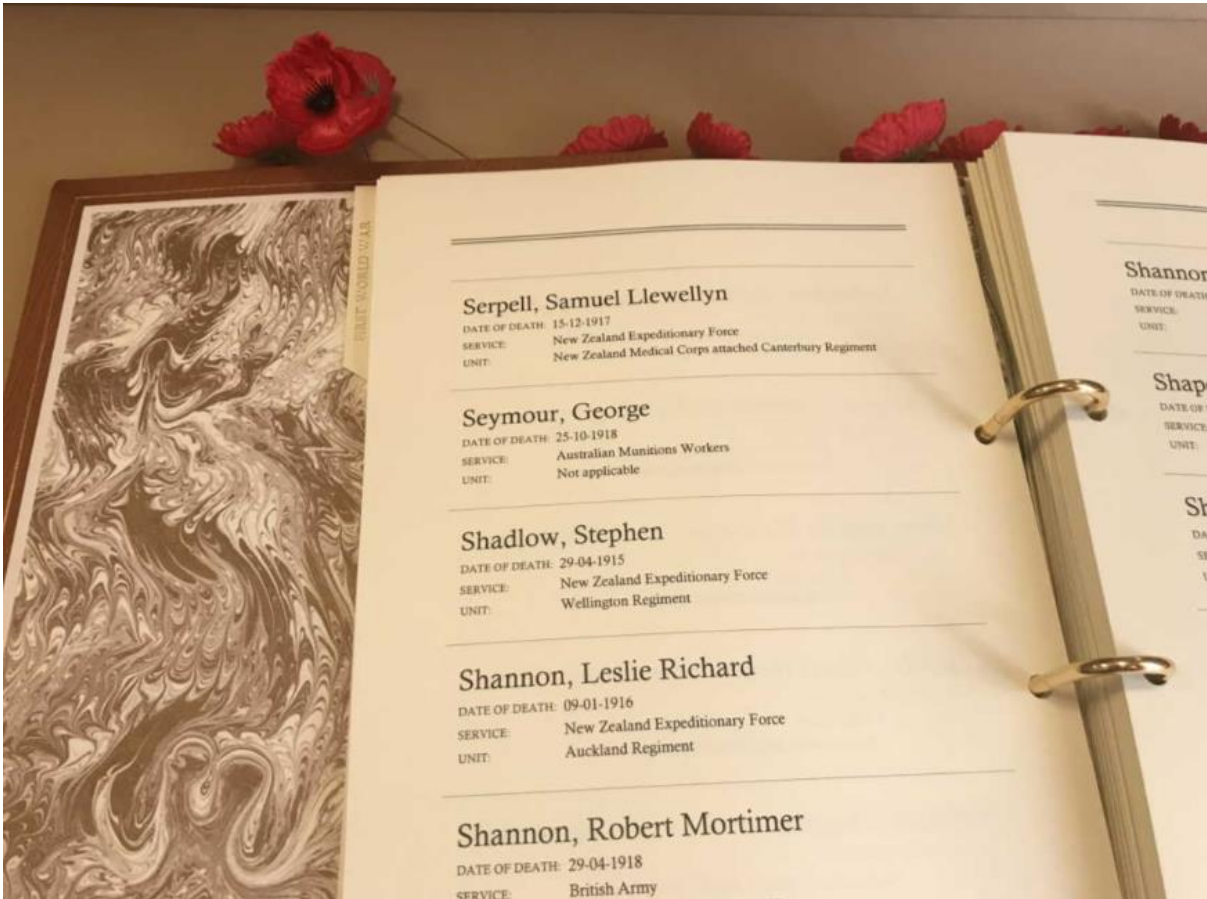
John Horace Gloster Benson, Transport Service, Allied Forces, is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians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



Commemorative Roll (Photo from AWM)



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial (Capital Photographer)



Example of names in Commemorative Roll Book

J. H. G. Benson is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)



Newspaper Items

CAPTAIN JOHN HORACE BENSON,
deceased.

ALL persons having any Claims
against the Estate of Captain John
Horace Benson, S.S. "Nizam," late of
the Leas Hotel, Folkestone, Kent who
died on the 26th day of August, 1918,
are requested forthwith to send particu-
lars thereof to us, on behalf of the Per-
sonal Representative.

Dated this 30th day of August, 1918.

ATKINSON AND STAINER,
Solicitors

Radnor Chambers,
Folkestone.

(Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald, England – 31 August 1918)

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**ATKINSON & STAINER,
Solicitors,
Radnor Chambers, Folkestone.**

11493

(Folkestone Express, Sandgate, Shorncliffe and Hythe Advertiser, England – 7 September, 1918)

DEATHS

BENSON – In England, on the 26th August, on active service, Gloucester, Commander H. M. transport Nizam, youngest son of the late Dr Benson, of Kensington, Adelaide.

(*The Register*, Adelaide, South Australia – 9 September, 1918) & (*The Journal*, Adelaide, South Australia – 9 September, 1918) & (*The Express and Telegraph*, Adelaide, Sth Aust – 9 September, 1918) & (*Observer*, Adelaide, Sth Aust – 14 September, 1918)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Captain John Horace G. Benson is not commemorated by CWGC

Cheriton Road Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England

Folkestone (Cheriton Road) Cemetery contains 45 First World War burials scattered throughout the cemetery grounds.

(*Information from CWGC*)





Entrance to Cheriton Road Cemetery, Folkestone (Photos by James Sutcliffe)



<http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/default>

© Historic England

Photo of Captain John Horace G. Benson's unmarked Grave in Cheriton Road Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England.



(Photos from Find a Grave - FOFC)

