

Cheltenham Cemetery
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



5117 PRIVATE

A. R. CALLAGHAN

54TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

26TH APRIL, 1918 Age 29

Albert Ross CALLAGHAN

Albert Ross Callaghan was born in Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW on 21st July, 1887 to parents James and Emily Jane Callaghan (nee Vagg). He was baptised on 7th September, 1887 at St. David's Church, Arthur Street, Surry Hills, NSW. From the Baptism records – the family lived at Nixon Street & James Callaghan was a Baker.

Albert Ross Callaghan attended Public School at Rockdale, NSW.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of St. George, subdivision of Kogarah, NSW recorded Albert Ross Callaghan, Tailor, of Victoria Street. His Mother – Emily Jane Callaghan, domestic duties & his sister Clara May, domestic duties were also listed at Victoria Street.

Albert Ross Callaghan was a 28 year old, single, Tailor (listed on Embarkation Roll as Sailor) from Victoria Street, Kogarah, NSW when he enlisted in Kiama, NSW on 23rd December, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5117 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his widowed mother – Mrs E. J. Callaghan, Victoria Street, Kogarah, NSW. It was noted from his Medical Examination that Albert Ross Callaghan had a faint cardiac murmur over pulmonary area.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was posted to 12th Reinforcements of 17th Battalion on 19th January, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Signal School from 10th February, 1916 to 28th March, 1916 then transferred to 13th Reinforcements of 17th Battalion on 17th April, 1916.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Kyarra* (A55) on 5th June, 1916 with the 17th Infantry Battalion, 13th Reinforcements.

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 Albert Ross Callaghan proceeded overseas to France on 30th September, 1916 from 5th Training Battalion in England.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan joined 2 A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 2nd October, 1916.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was transferred to 54th Battalion on 12th October, 1916.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was on leave from France from 11th October, 1917 to 21st October, 1917.

On 26th December, 1917 an entry was placed on the "Casualty Form – Active Service: Army Form B. 103" which recorded "*Advises this man has never been absent from his Unit.*"

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was on leave to UK from 9th March, 1918 & rejoined his Unit from leave on 9th April, 1918 in France

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was written up for an Offence – on 29th March, 1918 he was absent from 2 pm Parade. He was awarded 1 day F. P. No. 2 (Field Punishment).

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was wounded in action (Gassed) in France on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 2/3 H. C. Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 then transferred & admitted to 12th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Callaghan was transferred to Ambulance Train on 18th April, 1918 then admitted to 9th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 19th April, 1918. Private Callaghan was invalided to England on Hospital Ship Grantully Castle on 21st April, 1918.

54th Battalion

The 54th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 16 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 2nd Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 2nd, the 54th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

After a freezing winter manning trenches in the Somme Valley, in early 1917 the 54th Battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. It was spared the assault but did, however, defend gains made during the second battle of Bullecourt. Later in the year, the AIF's focus of operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium. The 54th's major battle here was at Polygon Wood on 26 September.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This came in late March and the 5th Division moved to defend the sector around Corbie. The 14th Brigade took up positions to the north of Villers-Bretonneux and held these even when the village fell, threatening their flanks.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 54th Battalion

17th April, 1918:

The day was misty giving very poor observation. The wind was blowing from 5 to 8 miles per hour. At about 4 am the enemy commenced shelling C29B and D. and the village of VILLERS-BRITONNEUX with 8", 9.9, 4.2 and 77 gas shell. Yellow cross and green cross were used.

At about 10 am men began to feel the effects of the gas and by 5 pm every man in three platoons of D. Company (No. 13, 15, 16.) had been evacuated and the majority of Battalion Head Quarters as well. The Gas casualties included the C.O. – Major C. R. Lucas, M.C. – the Acting Adjutant-Lieut. __. Palmer, the Medical Officer – Captain C. H. Leedman, M.C. – the Officers of D. Company were also gassed (Lieut, Small, F. and 2nd Lieut. Reid __ has since died). Total casualties for to-day are 7 Officers, 104 other ranks, 2 of the other ranks being wounded by shell fire the remainder being gas casualties.

Captain J. H. Crombie took command at 3 pm and by 7.30 pm hand over to Major A.C.S. Holland who reported from the 55th Battalion to Command. During the previous day the relief was arranged with the 53rd battalion and all advance parties sent in. An Operation Order – No. 12 – was issued at 10 am to-day and forms Appendix L. Under instructions from Brigade Head Quarters this Order was cancelled at 6.30 pm.

At 5 pm a message was received from Captain Lindsay 53rd Battalion, who was Liaison Officer with the 174th Brigade to the effect that a prisoner captured by them had stated that the enemy intended to fill VILLERS-BRETONNEUX with Gas so as to make it untenable and then take it, avoiding the village itself in doing so. The tip was taken, the C.O. deciding to shift Head Quarters from the Chateau and the Engineers started digging a new Head Quarters in the sunken road at C29a3.6.

Lieut. Dickinson and Lieut, Wark came from AUBIGNY to act as Adjutant and Intelligence Officer respectively. 11 reinforcements also joined from rear Head Quarters. Capt. L. Soeuf 15th Field Ambulance, carried on as M. O. until Capt. Stewart, 14th Field Ambulance took over at 6 pm.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Albert Ross Callaghan died at 7.15 am (according to "Morning State of Sick" Army Form A. 27, however a Telegram to Admin Headquarters, A.I.F. has time of death as 7.45 am) on 26th April, 1918 at Cheltenham Area War Hospital from wounds – Gassed (mustard). (Note: being gassed was classed as wounded).

A death for Albert R. Callaghan, aged 30, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was buried at 4.30 pm on 29th April, 1918 in Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England – Plot number M. 9223 (Soldiers Plot) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. The Burial Report records that place of death as V.A.D. Hospital, Cheltenham. From the burial report of Private Albert Ross Callaghan - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag, and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths. Firing Party and Bugler were supplied by the Gloucester Volunteer Regiment. A party of 20 Australian patients followed the remains to the Cemetery. Prior to the interment a service was held in the Cemetery Chapel by the Rev. G. Boothroyd. The grave*

will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.

Two photographs of the grave of the late Private Albert Ross Callaghan were sent to his mother Mrs E. J. Callaghan, c/- R. G. Callaghan, "Borang" Strickland Avenue, Roseville, NSW, in March, 1919.

The personal effects of the late Private Albert Ross Callaghan were sent from Suffolk Hall Hospital, Cheltenham, England & received by his mother – Mrs E. J. Callaghan on 6th May, 1919.

A Telegram was sent by Victoria Barracks & received at Base Records on 7th May, 1918 "*Re A. R. Callaghan stop sister seriously ill please delete press.*" Base Records wrote to A.A.G. 2nd Military District on 8th May, 1918 "*with reference to your wire CY 236 concerning No. 5117, Private A. R. Callaghan, I beg to state that his name has been withheld from press copies of Casualty List 400, and will appear in official copies only.*"

A War Pension was granted to Emily Jane Callaghan, widowed mother of the late Private Albert Ross Callaghan, c/- Mrs V. H. Jones, Essex Street, Epping, NSW, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 30th June, 1918.

Private Albert Ross Callaghan was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Callaghan's widowed mother - Mrs E. J. Callaghan, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent April, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1922). The receipt for the Memorial Plaque recorded that Private Albert Ross Callaghan was with "D" Company, 54th Battalion.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Albert Ross Callaghan – service number 5117, aged 29, of 54th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of James & Emily Jane Callaghan.

Private A. R. Callaghan is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 158.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Kogarah War Memorial, located in English Street, Kogarah, NSW does not listed individual names.



Kogarah War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia – Peter F. Williams)

(52 pages of Pte Albert Ross Callaghan's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P07699.001

Private Albert Ross Callaghan



Newspaper Notices

FUNERAL OF AN AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER AT CHELTENHAM CEMETERY

(Newspaper item – courtesy of David Drinkwater)



(Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic, England – 4 May, 1918)

TOWN AND COUNTRY

The convoy of soldiers which arrived at Cheltenham recently included a number of men suffering from gas poisoning. Three of them have since succumbed – Pte Jerrom at St. John Hospital, Pte Albert Callaghan at Suffolk Hall Hospital and Pte Penketh at the Priory. All of them belonged to the Australian Imperial Force, and arrived in Cheltenham on the same day, namely, April 22nd.

(Cheltenham Chronicle, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England – 4 May, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

CALLAGHAN – Died of wounds in England, April 26, 1918, Signaller Ross Callaghan, late Victoria-street, Kogarah. Inserted by his mother.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 11 May, 1918)

407th CASUALTY LIST

Killed

Pte Albert Ross Callaghan, Kogarah

(The St. George Call, Kogarah, NSW – 15 June, 1918)

TRIBUTE TO "AUSSIES"

Anzac Day in Gloucester

The Gloucestershire Echo of May. 1 devotes a column to reports of the Anzac Day demonstrations, which were held the day before at Cheltenham, and in which Boy Scouts and Girl Guides took a prominent part. Beautiful wreaths were placed by the Scouts and Guides on the well-kept graves of 10 Australian soldiers, after the Deputy-Mayor gave a fervent address. The names of the 10 Australian were:— Pte. J. Warren, 5th Pioneer Battalion; Pte. S. G. Turner, 53rd Battalion; Pte. J. H. Fenton, 15th Field Ambulance; Sgt. W. R. B. Johnson, 15th Field Ambulance; **Pte. A. R. Callaghan, 54th Battalion**; Pte. W. R. Jerrom, 3rd Machine Gun Battalion; Pte. A. W. Stevens, 7th Battalion; Pte. R. W. Resso, 54th Battalion; Pte H. C. Vale, 3rd Pioneer Battalion; Lce.-Cpl. P. J. Penketh, 17th Battalion (the wreath of the last named was deposited by Miss Hattersley Smith). The following is a copy of a letter sent to the next-of-kin to those Australian soldiers by the Cheltenham Remembrance Day committee (represented in the signatures by Aid. C. H. Margret, Acting Mayor and Mr. T. H. Packer, acting Secretary: — We fell sure that you will be pleased to know that on Cheltenham's Anzac Day, the graves of the 10 Australian soldiers who died in Cheltenham from wounds and other, injuries received, in battle, and were buried in our beautiful cemetery, were visited and wreaths and flowers deposited thereon. In this way the memory of those sons of the Empire who have found a last resting place far from their homes, at the foot of the historic Cotswold Hills, will be kept fresh in the minds of Cheltonians. From our charmingly placed cemetery there are beautiful views of a long stretch of the hills and of the wide expanse of the vale of the Severn— indeed, there is no more charming or picturesque spot in the whole of the Western Shires. And bordering the cemetery are: — “A rise steeply sloping, a fence with stone coping, the last - we diverged round the base or the hill.”— The scene of Adam Lindsay Gordon's (a Cheltonion) famous poem "How We Beat the Favourite." Within sound are the “Chimes of sweet St. Mary's On far English ground,” and can be seen from it – “the mist of the Cotswold Hills Where I once heard the blast of the huntsman's horn, Not far from, the Seven rills.” —the source of the River Thames. The proceedings arranged by the Remembrance Day Committee commenced at the War Memorial — erected in memory of 1,400 men of Cheltenham, who, like their Australian comrades, “died that we might live.” To this spot were brought many wreaths and bouquets of flowers, which were conveyed to the cemetery — two miles away— by over 500 Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, a selected number of whom proudly carried large bouquets of red, white, and blue flowers— the national colours— and both wreaths and flowers were garnished with ribbons of the same colour, while a wreath sent by an Australian mother bore the black and green colours of the battalion to which her dead son belonged. The long procession headed by the bugle band of the scouts had a striking effect as it passed along the principal streets and timbered avenues, crowded by townsfolk, on its way to the cemetery. ... At the close of the proceedings the beautiful hymn, “Fight the good fight” was sung by the whole audience—more than 2,000 – the “Last Post” was sounded, and scarcely had its rallying echoes along the hillside died away when “God save the King” had been sung, and the simple, effective, yet reverent ceremony had come to an end, and the dead soldiers were “left alone in their glory.”

(*The Register*, Adelaide, South Australia – 19 July, 1922)

Pte A. R. Callaghan is remembered on his brother's headstone in Gore Hill Cemetery, St. Leonards, NSW, Australia
– Plot: Methodist 2, Section C, 199.



*In loving memory of
Reginald George
Beloved husband of Alice May Callaghan
Died 2nd Sept 1920, Aged 36 years*

*Also a tribute to the memory of
Pte. A R Callaghan, 54th Batt. A.I.F.
Died Cheltenham Hospital, Eng.
26th April 1918, Aged 30 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. 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)

Private A. R. Callaghan does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England

(Also known as Bouncer's Lance Cemetery and Prestbury Cemetery)

This cemetery contains burials of both wars. The 110 First World War graves are mainly of men who died in the local voluntary hospitals. The burials are scattered except for a small plot of 10 Australian graves. The Second World War burials number 71, half of them forming a war graves plot in the eastern part of the cemetery. There are 2 Polish war burials and a further 4 Non World War service burials within C.W.G.C. care in this cemetery. Cheltenham Crematorium is situated within the cemetery and 28 servicemen and women of the Second World War whose remains were cremated there are commemorated on bronze panels within the crematorium cloisters.

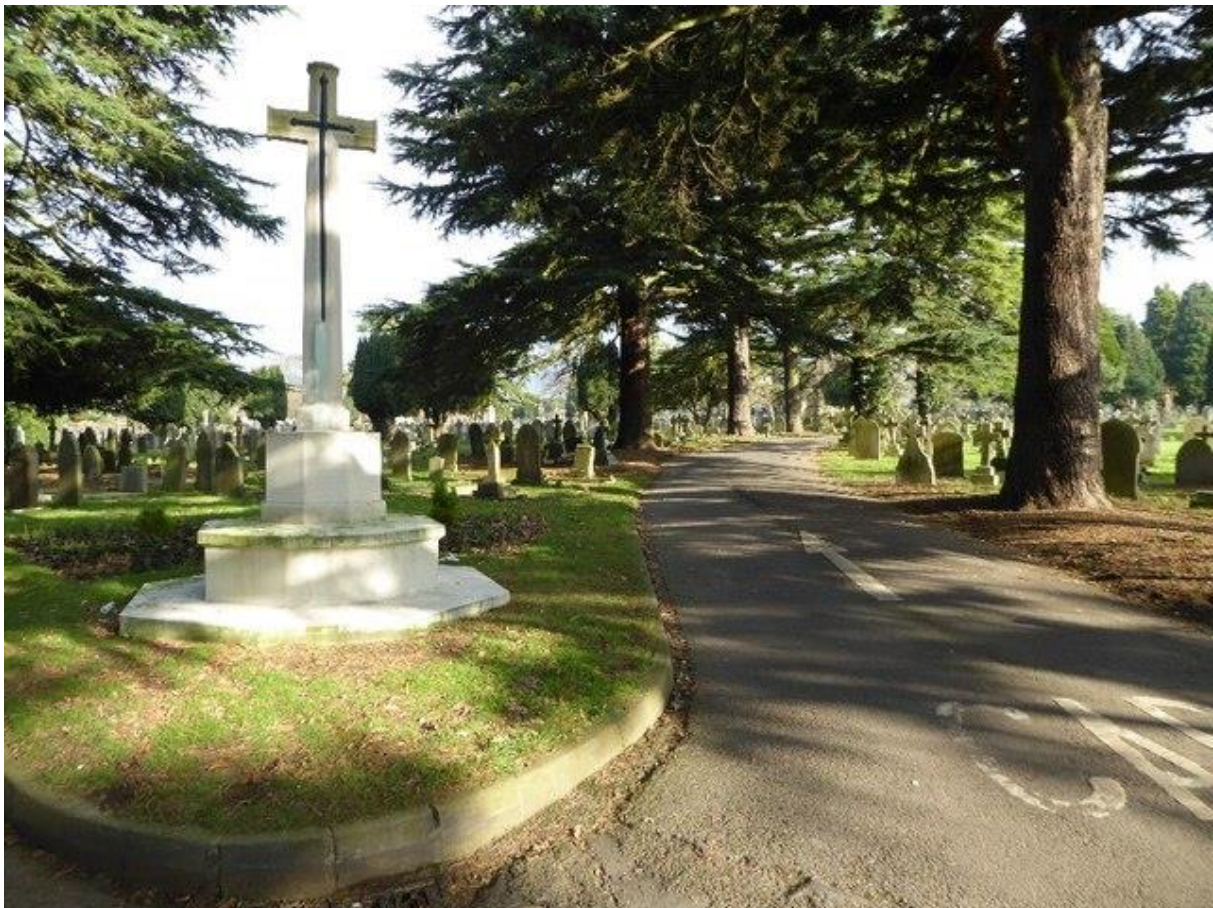
(Information from CWGC)



Entrance to Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire *(Photo by julia&keld – Find a Grave)*



War Graves in Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire *(Photo from CWGC)*

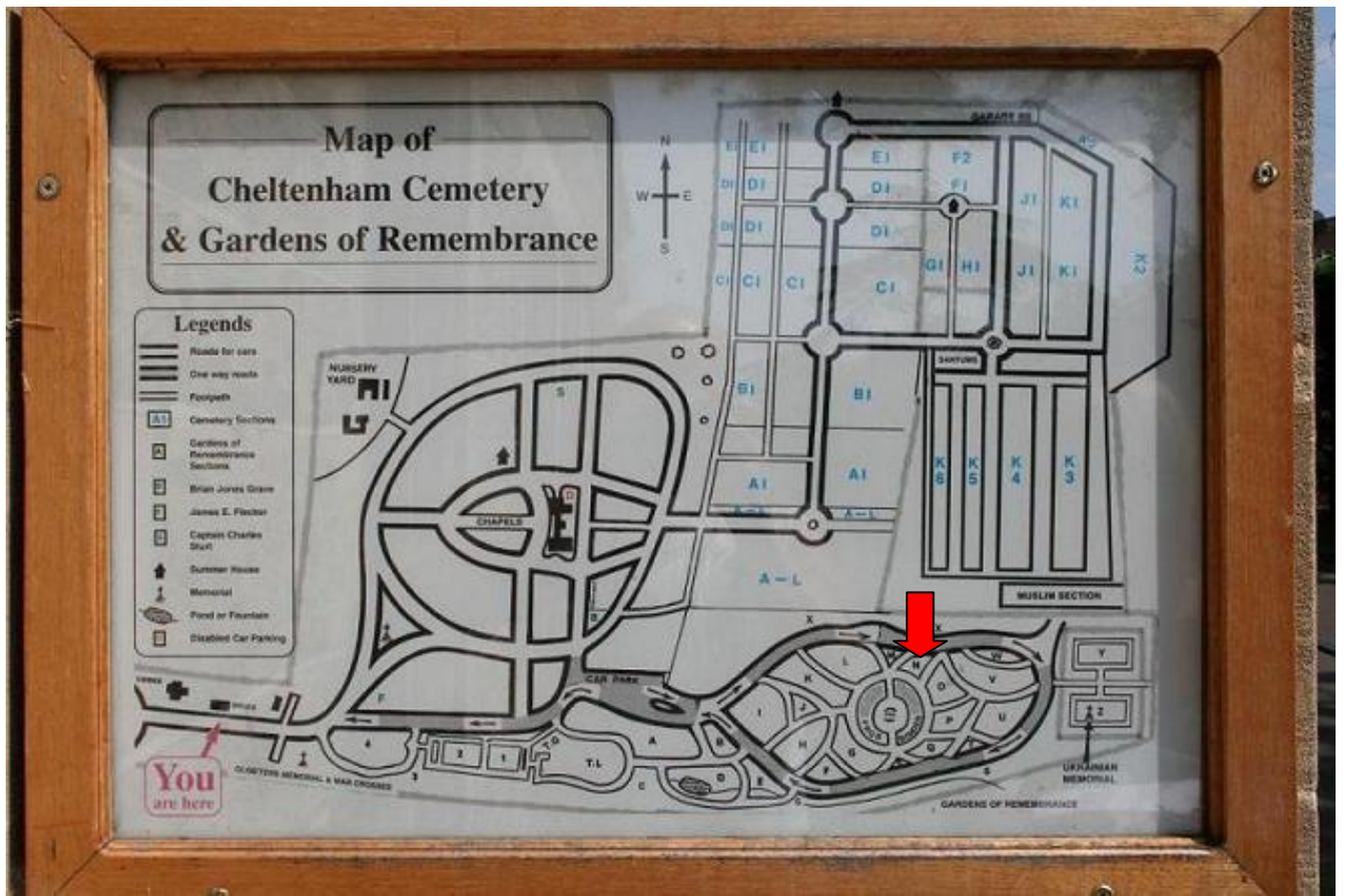


Cross of Sacrifice in Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire *(Photo by Philip Halling)*

Photo of Private A. R. Callaghan's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England.



(Photo by ColinA – Find a Grave)



Map of Cheltenham Cemetery, Gloucestershire (Photo by julia&keld – Find a Grave)