

**St. George's Churchyard,  
Fovant, Wiltshire  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**235 PRIVATE**

**J. H. E. COBBING**

**AUST. MACHINE GUN CORPS**

**16TH FEBRUARY, 1919 Age 25**

## John Herbert Edward COBBING

John Herbert Edward Cobbing was born at Tottenham, Middlesex, England in 1893 to parents James & Martha Cobbing (nee Jennings).

[The 1891 England Census recorded the Cobbing family living at 16 Summerhill Terrace (Commerce Road) Tottenham, Middlesex in a 2 roomed dwelling. The Williams family & Armstrong family were also listed at the same address and living in a 2 roomed dwelling. James Cobbing (Shoemaker, aged 37, born Southware, Surrey) & his wife Martha Cobbing (aged 37, born Purleigh, Essex) lived with their 7 children (all born Tottenham, Middlesex) - Elizabeth (aged 14), James (Scholar, aged 12), William (Scholar, aged 10), Caroline (Scholar, aged 8), Edith (Scholar, aged 6), Margaret (aged 4) & Martha (aged 5 months).]

A death was registered in June quarter 1895 for Martha Ann Cobbing, aged 43, in the district of Edmonton, Middlesex (mother of John Herbert Edward Cobbing).

The 1901 England Census recorded John Cobbing as a 7 year old Scholar at District Chase Farm School, Enfield, Middlesex. His 2 older sisters were also listed – Margaret Cobbing (aged 14, born Wood Green, Middlesex) & Martha Cobbing (aged 10, born Tottenham, Middlesex).

[The 1901 England Census recorded James Cobbing (Widower, Boot Maker, aged 46) living with his daughter - Elizabeth Priest (aged 24) & her husband – Charles Priest (Grocers Warehouse, aged 25) at 12 Manby Rd, Walthamstow, Essex. Also listed was James Cobbing's daughter – Caroline (Cigarette Box Maker, aged 18).]

A death was registered in September quarter, 1908 for James William Cobbing, aged 53, in the district of West Ham, Essex. (father of John Herbert Edward Cobbing).

The 1911 England Census recorded John Cobbing as a 17 year old Servant - Pawnbroker's Assistant living with George Young (Pawnbroker & Clothier, aged 36) & his wife Nellie Young (aged 36) in a 6 roomed dwelling at 295 Highham Hill Road. Walthamstow, Essex. Also listed was another Servant – Pawnbroker's Assistant – Fred Bailey (aged 17).

According to information supplied by his sister for the Roll of Honour - John Herbert Edward Cobbing came to Australia when he was 20 years old. A "John H. Cobbing" arrived on *Roscommon* in Queensland on 19th March, 1913.

The 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Moreton, subdivision of Southport, Queensland listed John Herbert Edward Cobbing, Labourer of Oxenford.

John Herbert Edward Cobbing was a 22 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 3rd January, 1916 with the 3rd Machine Gun Company, 2nd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 235 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs Margaret Tuffery, of 33 Cottage Grove, Southsea, Portsmouth, England. John Cobbing stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to his chest measurement.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 7th January, 1916. He was transferred to 35th Battalion on 8th February, 1916 then transferred to 2nd Reinforcements of 41st Battalion on 22nd February, 1916. Pte Cobbing was transferred to 2nd Reinforcements of 3rd Machine Gun Company on 27th March, 1916.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing embarked from Sydney on RMS *Mooltan* on 12th April, 1916 & disembarked at Suez on 18th May, 1916.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was taken on strength of 12th Machine Gun Company, 4th Machine Gun Battery from Base Depot) in France on 23rd August, 1916.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was on leave from France from 17th August, 1917 to 27th August, 1917.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was on leave from France from 15th September, 1918 & rejoined his Unit on 3rd October, 1918.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was placed on the list ready for return to Australia (RTA 1915 Personnel) on 29th January, 1919. Pte Cobbing was marched out from A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Havre, France on 10th February, 1919 & marched in to No. 3 Training Brigade at Hurdcott, Wiltshire, England on 11th February, 1919.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was sent sick to No. 2 G. C. Hospital on 11th February, 1919 with Influenza & then transferred & admitted to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire on 12th February, 1919 with pneumonia.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing died at 22.50 hrs on 16th February, 1919 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Pneumonia.

A death for John H. E. Cobbing, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

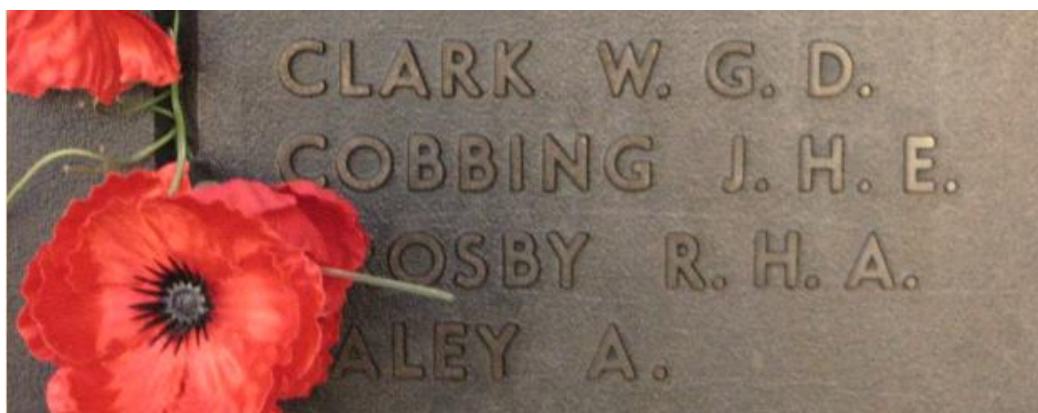
Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was buried on 21st February, 1919 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England – Plot number I. D. 4. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Cobbing - *Coffin was Elm with brass mounts. Deceased was buried with full Military Honors. The coffin draped with the Australian flag being borne to the graveside on a Gun-carriage preceeded by a Firing Party from 3rd Australian Training Brigade, Hurdcott. Six Australians supported the Pall. The "Last Post" was sounded and volleys fired over the grave. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

In attendance at the funeral – Friend – Mrs Curtis of 60 Rancaster Road, Higham Hill, Walthamstow, London.

Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Cobbing's sister - Mrs M. Tuffery. (Scroll & Plaque sent to England in November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Herbert Edward Cobbing – service number 235, aged 25, of 4th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps. No family details are listed.

Private J. H. E. Cobbing is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 176.



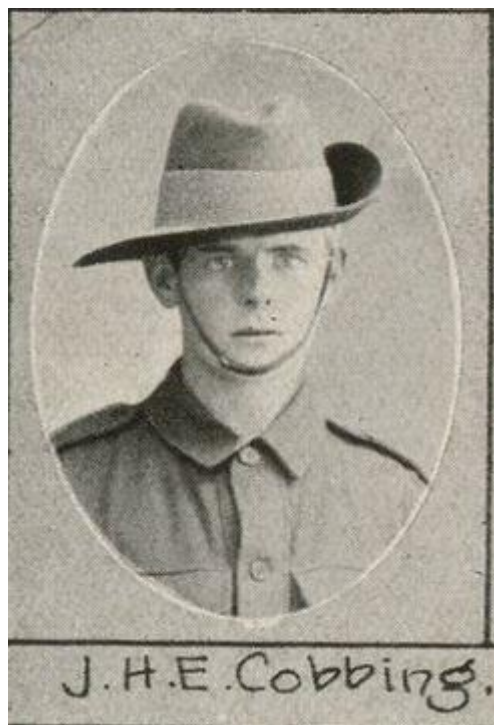
(Photos Cathy Sedgwick)



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

(43 pages of Pte John Herbert Edward Cobbing'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) & National Archives*



## Newspaper Notices

### ROLL OF HONOUR

#### CASUALTY IST No. 462

#### DIED, OTHER CAUSES

J. H. E. Cobbing, England, 16/2/19 (illness)

*(The Telegraph, Brisbane Queensland – 1 April, 1919)*

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### 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 J. H. E. Cobbing does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

### **St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England**

There was a 600 bed hutted military hospital at Fovant during the First World War, and the concentration of Australian depots and training camps in the area is reflected in the 63 First World War burials in this churchyard. The war graves form two groups, one west of the church and the other at the east end. There is also one burial of the Second World War. There are 44 War Graves belonging to those who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1.

*(Information from CWGC)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00442

*The guard of honour formed up, the bearer party carry the coffin into the cemetery at the funeral of an Australian soldier at St George's Churchyard. Possibly the funeral of 235 Private (Pte) John Herbert Edward Cobbing, 4th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps, who died 16 February 1919. A colour patch can be seen on the left shoulder of the bugler standing at right. A white cross marks the grave of 5403 Pte Thomas Jones, 7th Battalion, who died Saturday 2 November 1918.*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00454

*The burial party resting at arms reversed as the coffin is lowered into the grave during the funeral of an Australian soldier in St. George's churchyard. Possibly the funeral of 235 Pte John Herbert Edward Cobbing, 4th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps, who died 16 February 1919. At left is a cross marking the grave of 7179 Pte Frank Leslie Gardner, 17th Battalion, who died of sickness 7 March 1918.*





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00299

*(Photo c 1919)*





**St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at front & rear** (*Churchyard photos courtesy of Andrew Stacey*)





Photo of Private J. H. E. Cobbing's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.





**Cross of Sacrifice** (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)