

**Netley Military Cemetery,
Hampshire, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3550 PRIVATE

A. A. DUNCAN

AUST. MACHINE GUN CORPS

3RD MAY, 1918

The Lord Gave

And The Lord Hath Taken Away

Alexander Arthur DUNCAN

Alexander Arthur Duncan was born at Pimpama, Queensland on 22nd July, 1891 to parents John William and Elizabeth Mary Duncan (nee Mayes).

Alexander Arthur Duncan attended Canungra State School, Queensland.

The 1913, 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Moreton, subdivision of Beaudesert, Queensland, listed Alexander Arthur Duncan, Labourer, of Canungra.

Alexander Arthur Duncan was a 24 year old, single, Sawyer, from Canungra, Queensland when he enlisted in Brisbane, Queensland on 8th January, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3550 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Elizabeth Mary Duncan, of Canungra, Queensland.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 25th January, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 8th Reinforcements of 31st Battalion on 1st April, 1916.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Boorara (A42)* on 16th August, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 31st Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 13th October, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Wool, Dorset, England from Australia on 20th October, 1916.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on Golden Eagle on 17th December, 1916 from 8th Training Battalion. He was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 18th December, 1916. Pte Duncan was marched out to 31st Battalion from 5th A.D.B.D. on 23rd December, 1916 & was taken on strength of 31st Battalion in the Field on 26th December, 1916.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was sent to Hospital sick on 21st January, 1917. He was admitted to 38th Casualty Clearing Station on 22nd January, 1917 with Trench feet then transferred to No. 25 Ambulance Train on 23rd January, 1917. Pte Duncan was admitted to 10th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 24th January, 1917. He embarked for England from Havre on the Hospital Ship *Glenart Castle* on 25th January, 1917 with trench feet.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was admitted to 1st Southern General Hospital at Edgbaston on 26th January, 1917 with Trench feet. Pte Duncan was discharged to Furlo on 5th June, 1917 & was then to report to Weymouth.

Convalescing was completed at Command Depots which were set up for training & convalescence. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire, England.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset, England from furlo on 20th June, 1917.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 29th June, 1917 from No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was medically classified at Hurdcott on 1st July, 1917 as B1 A3 (fit for overseas camp in two to three weeks). He was classified on 9th July, 1917 as B1 A4 (fit for overseas training camp when passed dentally fit).

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was marched in to Overseas Training Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire from No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 12th July, 1917.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 30th July, 1917 from Overseas Training Depot at Perham Downs. Pte Duncan was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at

Havre, France on 31st July, 1917. He was marched out to his Unit on 16th August, 1917 & rejoined his Unit in the Field in 18th August, 1917.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was detached to 8th Machine Gun Company as a Carrier on 30th August, 1917 from 31st Battalion.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan ceased to be detached to 8th Brigade Machine Gun Company on 4th April, 1918 & was transferred to 5th Australian Machine Gun Battalion. He was taken on strength of 5th Australian Machine Gun Battalion on 4th April, 1918 in the Field.

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was wounded in action (Gassed) in France on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 55th Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 then transferred to Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Pte Duncan was transferred & admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Rouen, France on 18th April, 1918 suffering the effects of Gas. He was transferred to England on Hospital Ship on 25th April, 1918.

War Diary – 5th Australian Machine Gun Battalion

12th – 15th April, 1918 – Fouilloy - Four Companies holding the line as per their Diaries attached. Disposition unchanged. Increased Artillery activity on both sides. Nothing further of interest to report.

16th April, 1918 – Fouilloy - Disposition unchanged. Lieut. M. A. Scouler killed in action

17th April, 1918 – Fouilloy - Disposition unchanged. 8th Machine Gun Company's Headquarters in the neighbourhood of VILLERS-BRETONNEAUX, heavily bombarded with Gas of all natures, evidently prior to the Enemy making an attack on VILLERS-BRETONNEAUX. Total casualties as a result of the bombardment were 8 Officers and 28 Other Ranks.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire, England on 26th April, 1918 – dangerously ill from effects of Gas (shell).



Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan died at 10.30 am on 3rd May, 1918 at Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire, England from Gas Shell poisoning received in action. (The Medical History form states that Private Alexander Arthur Duncan died from gas burns (by shell). (The Admissions to Hospital form states the "patient died 10.30 am of Acute Bronchitis & Odema).

A death for Alexander Duncan, aged 37, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of South Stoneham, Hampshire, England. (age should be 27).

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was buried at 2.30 pm on 6th May, 1918 in Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England – Plot number C.E. 1947 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Alexander Arthur Duncan - *Coffin was good Elm with brass furnishings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin draped with the Union Jack was carried by 6 bearers to the Hospital SHapel where a short service was held. The remains were then transferred to a Gun Carriage supplied by the A.S.C., and the cortege moved on to the graveside and here the Bugler sounded the "Last Post". A wreath from "Anonymously sent" was placed on the grave. The grave will be immediately turfed and temporary cross erected. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Duncan's father – Mr J. W. Duncan, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alexander Arthur Duncan – service number 3550, of 5th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps. He was the son of John William and Elizabeth Mary Duncan, of Canungra, Queensland.

Private A. A. Duncan 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.

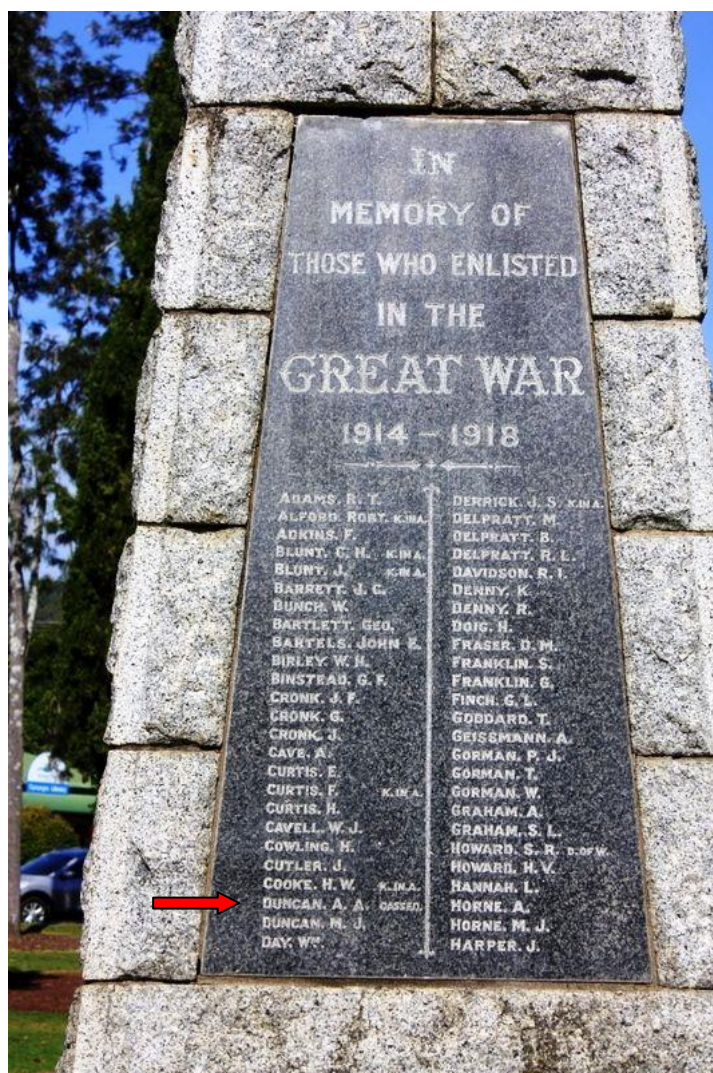


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. A. Duncan is remembered on the Canungra War Memorial, located in D. J. Smith Memorial Park, Christie & Kidston Streets, Canungra, Queensland.



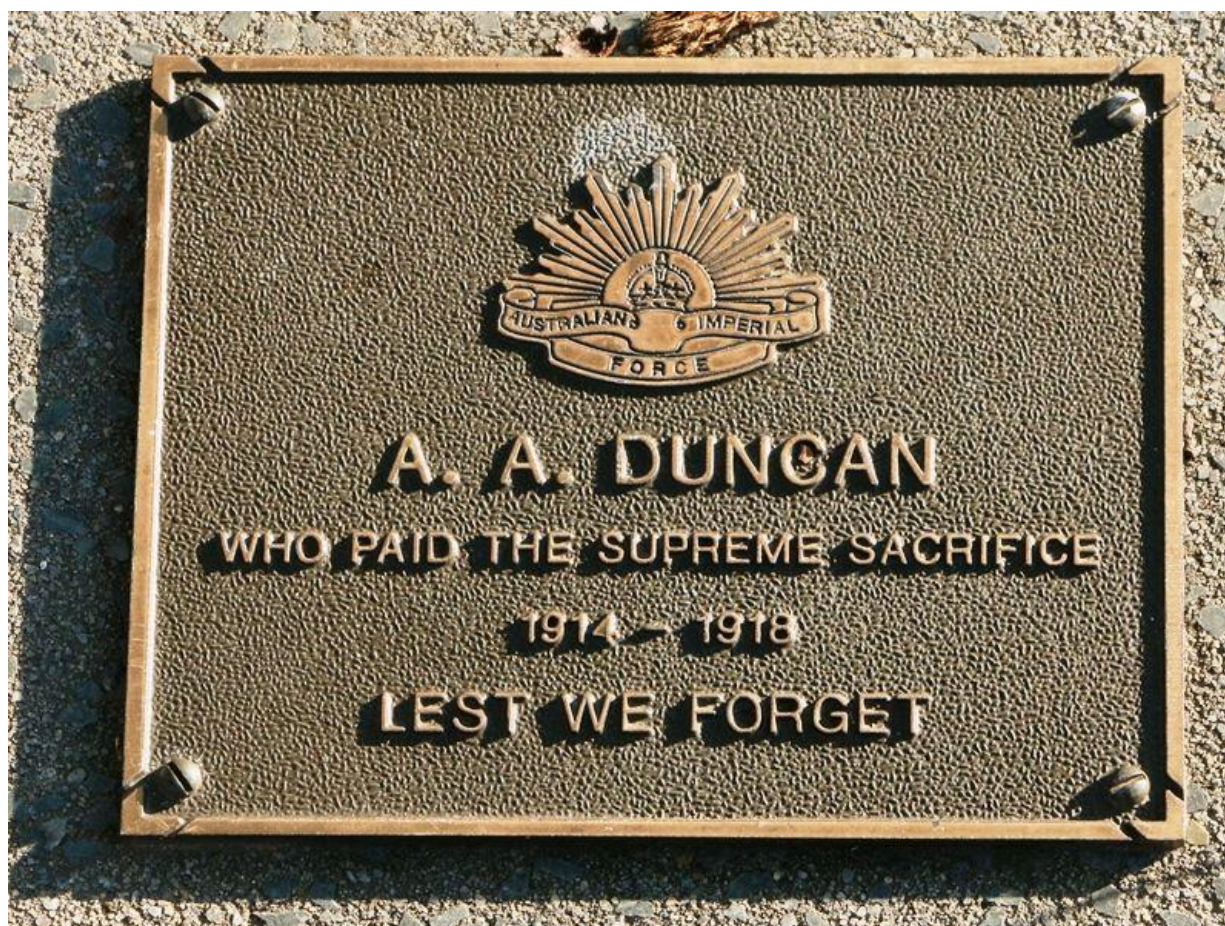
Canungra War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Fred Brunings)



A. A. Duncan is remembered with a tree & plaque on the Memorial Avenue – Christie, Pine & Kidston Streets, Canungra, Queensland. A tree has been planted to commemorate every serviceman from the Canungra District who died in service or killed in action during World Wars One and Two. A memorial plaque resides next to the tree, individually recognising the person.



Canungra Memorial Avenue (Photos from Monument Australia – John Huth)



A tree was planted in 1918 at Canungra State School in memory of the late Private Alexander Arthur Duncan.



Newspaper item – *The Beaudesert Times*, Queensland – 27 September, 1918:

Canungra

STATE SCHOOL ARBOR DAY

Arbor Day in connection with the above school was held on Saturday, September 21st, when a large number of children and parents were present. Occasion was taken to plant trees in the school grounds, kindly donated by Mr David Lahey. One tree was planted in honour of Alexander Arthur Duncan, who was killed in action in France; the Rev. Carson Flint dedicated this tree to his memory, and it was planted by Mrs Duncan, deceased's grandmother. Three other trees were planted; one by Mr J. T. Lawton, who has two sons at the front; one by Mrs G. Howard, who also has two sons, one returned severely wounded, the other a teacher from the State school; the third tree being planted by Mr Angus Murray, a returned soldier.....

Private Alexander Arthur Duncan & his brother Milton John Duncan are both remembered by the Logan Village Museum, Queensland as their family were part of "Kingston Pioneer Family" – Mayes.

(46 pages of Private Alexander Arthur Duncan'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



Connected to Private Alexander Arthur Duncan

Younger brother – Private Milton John Duncan, 5012, 26th Battalion. Enlisted 8th January, 1916, embarked 4th May, 1916. Transferred to 49th Battalion. Wounded in action on 7th June, 1917 Returned to Australia 31st March, 1919. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. Died 19th November, 1943 at Canungra.



QUEENSLAND HEROES



PRIVATE A. A. DUNCAN,
Son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Duncan,
Cairngra, returned to duty in France.



PRIVATE M. J. DUNCAN,
Son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Duncan,
Cairngra, wounded and returned to
duty in France.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 27 April, 1918)



Private Alexander Arthur Duncan

(The Queenslander Pictorial, 12 August, 1916)



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL NOTES

Mr and Mrs G. W. Duncan, of Canungra, have been advised that their eldest son, Private A. A. Duncan, of a machine gun company, who left for the Front on August 8, 1916, died through being gassed on May 3, 1918. Private A. A. Duncan was a grandson of Mrs C. Duncan, of Canungra, and Mr R. Mayes, of Southport.

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 17 May, 1918) & (Cairns Post, Queensland – 23 May, 1918)

& a similar report in *(The Daily Mail, Brisbane, Queensland – 17 May, 1918)*

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

CASUALTY LIST NO. 400

DIED OF WOUNDS

Alexander Arthur Duncan, Canungra, 3/5/18 (gas, prev. rep. ill).

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 18 May, 1918)

BEREAVEMENT NOTICE

DUNCAN – Mr and Mrs J. W. Duncan, wish to THANK their many kind Friends for their kind sympathy in their sad bereavement of the loss of their eldest son, while fighting in France.

(The Daily Mail, Brisbane, Queensland – 20 May, 1918)

CABLE NEWS

GASSED

Pte A. A. Duncan, Canungra (died through effects)

(National Leader, Brisbane, Queensland – 20 May, 1918)

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. A. Duncan does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away

Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England

Netley Military Cemetery is a permanent military cemetery, the property of the Ministry of Defence. The cemetery was at the back of the Royal Victoria Military Hospital and was used during both wars for burials from the hospital. The cemetery contains 637 First World War burials but only 35 from the Second World War. In addition to the Commonwealth graves, there are a number of war graves of other nationalities including 69 German graves dating from the First World War.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire





Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire (Photo above - Andrea Charlesworth; below - darealjolo)



Photo of Private A. A. Duncan's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England



(Photo by Andrea Charlesworth)



Original Cross markers – Netley Military Cemetery