

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,  
Brookwood, Surrey  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT**

**D. A. FERGUSON**

**AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS**

**18TH AUGUST, 1918 Age 29**

*A Gallant Soldier*

*And A Gentleman*

## Douglas Abbott FERGUSON

Douglas Abbott Ferguson was born at South Brisbane, Queensland on 11th March, 1889 to parents James & Eliza Jane (Jeannie) Ferguson (nee Abbott).

Douglas Abbott Ferguson attended Brisbane Grammar School in 1905 & Southport High School, Queensland.

The 1912 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Oxley, subdivision of Enoggera, Queensland recorded Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Engineer, Abbotsford, Enoggera. His parents James Ferguson, Merchant & Jane Abbott Ferguson, Home duties were listed at Abbotsford, Samford Rd.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Lilley, subdivision of Enoggera, Queensland recorded Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Engineer, Abbotsford, Enoggera. His parents James Ferguson, Merchant & Jane Abbott Ferguson, Home duties were listed at Abbotsford, Samford Rd.

The 1915 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Lilley, subdivision of Enoggera, Queensland recorded Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Engineer, Abbotsford, Enoggera. His parents James Ferguson, Merchant & Jane Abbott Ferguson, Home duties were listed at Abbotsford, Samford Rd & brother Hector James Abbott Ferguson, Engineer was listed at Abbotsford, Enoggera.

Douglas Abbott Ferguson was a 26 year old, single, Engineer from Abbotsford, Enoggera, Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 20th August, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 7305 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr James Ferguson, Abbotsford, Enoggera, Brisbane, Queensland. Douglas Ferguson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 2 years with Senior Cadets. He also stated he had been apprenticed with James Wilson, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane for 5 years.

Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson was posted to 5th Field Artillery Brigade, 13th Battery on 8th October, 1915 (date as per Statement of Service form) for recruit training.

Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Persic (A34)* on 18th November, 1915 with the 5th Field Artillery Brigade, 13th Battery. He disembarked at Suez on 21st December, 1915 & proceeded to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force). Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson's younger brother – Bombardier Malcolm Abbott Ferguson also embarked the same day on HMAT *Persic (A34)*.

Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson proceeded from Alexandria on 18th March, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th March, 1916.

Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson was transferred to Australian Flying Corps on 8th July, 1917 from 5th Field Artillery Brigade. He was marched in from France ex Administrative Headquarters to Australian Flying Corps Details at Farnborough, England on 4th August, 1917.

Gunner Douglas Abbott Ferguson was taken on strength of Australian Flying Corps (A.F.C.) Details on 27th August, 1917 with the rank of 2nd Air Mechanic – 2/AM.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was written up for an Offence while at Farnborough – A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from 11 pm on 3rd September, 1917 to 11 pm on 4th September, 1917. This was admonished & he forfeited 1 days' pay.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was marched out of A.F.C. Details at Farnborough on 3rd September, 1917 to Halton Camp East, Wendover.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was written up for an offence on 9th October, 1917 at Halton Camp – Inattention on Parade at 2 pm on 6th October, 1917. He was awarded 5 days confined to Camp by Major Brown.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was marched out from A.F.C. Depot on 4th January, 1918 & joined No. 2 joined No. 2 R.F.C. (Royal Flying Corps) School of Military Aeronautics at Oxford, England on the same day to qualify as Flying Officer (Pilot) & was appointed Cadet.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was marched into A.F.C. Training Depot at Wendover on 26th February, 1918 from No. 2 School of Military Aeronautics, Oxford, England.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson was marched out to No. 8 Training Squadron on 4th May, 1918 from A.F.C. Depot. He was taken on strength of 8th Training Squadron at Leighterton on 5th May, 1918 from A.F.C. Depot, Wendover. The period of the Course ran from 4th May, 1918 to 5th July, 1918. The Officers Record form recorded Douglas Abbott Ferguson's date of birth as 11/3/91.

2/AM Douglas Abbott Ferguson having graduated as Cadet was appointed Flying Officer (Pilot) on 7th July, 1918 & was to be Second Lieutenant in the Australian Imperial Force.

On 18th August, 1918 at approximately 18.00 hours Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson was piloting a Sopwith Camel C6746 which collided head on with Lieutenant Harry Taylor, MC, MM, who was piloting a Sopwith Scout D4170 while conducting dogfight training at Shipton Moyne, Gloucestershire, out of No. 8 Training Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, Leighterton.

Lieutenant Harry Taylor, aged 30, died as a result of the aero accident & was buried in Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, England.

Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson died on 18th August, 1918 at Leighterton as a result of an aeroplane accident. The Report of Accident to a Flying Officer recorded that 2nd Lieutenant D. A. Ferguson, of A.F.C. was attached to 8 TS (Training Squadron) was piloting a Sopwith Camel on 18th August, 1918 in the locality of Shipton Moyne. The aircraft was involved in an aerial collision but did not catch fire. Second Lieutenant Ferguson had flown for 63 hours & 5 minutes & was wearing an ordinary Helmet with goggles & R.A.F. belt which gave way. He had a fractured skull, left leg, abdominal & thoracic (probably ribs fractured) injuries. His condition after the accident was "unconscious almost dead" & he died of a fractured skull.

A death for Douglas A. Ferguson, aged 27, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Tetbury, Gloucestershire, England.

Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson was buried at 1.30 pm on 22nd August, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 181 413.

From the burial report of Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson - *Coffin was good. Polished Elm. The deceased Officer was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party, Band, Pallbearers and 2 Buglers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths sent by the following:- Ferguson Family, Queenslanders Swansmead, Roy Paterson, Mr & Mrs Watson Gray & Officers of 8th Squadron, A.F.C. Leighterton. Chaplain the Rev. Wray, A.I.F. London conducted the service, and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside by 2 Buglers of the South African Regiment. An oak cross has been erected on the grave. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

*Names of relatives or friends present at Funeral –*

*BROTHERS – No. 35681 Gnr Norman Ferguson, 4th Bty, R.B.A.A. Heytesbury, No. 7471 Sgt M. A. Ferguson, 2nd Bty, R.B.A.A.*

*Mr Watson Gray, Rood Lance, Fenchurch St., London and Lieut G. Walker, 7th Square, A.F.C. Leighterton, Gloucester.*

Base Records wrote to J. Ferguson, Esq, c/o Messrs Watson, Ferguson & Co. Ltd, South Brisbane, Queensland on 27th March, 1923 stating that the site of his son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row B Grave 9.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference –IV. B. 9. Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Second Lieutenant Ferguson's father – Mr J. Ferguson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, aged 29, of Australian Flying Corps. He was the son of James I. and Eliza Jane Ferguson, of Abbotsford, Enoggera, Brisbane, Queensland.

D. A. Ferguson & his brother – H. J. A. Ferguson, are both remembered on the Brisbane Grammar School WW1 Honour Board 1, located in Brisbane Grammar School Memorial Library, 24 Gregory Terrace, Spring Hill, Queensland.



**Brisbane Grammar School WW1 Honour Board**  
(Photo from Queensland War Memorial Register – Lesley McBurney)



Ferguson, Douglas Abbott.

Born at South Brisbane March 11<sup>th</sup> 1889.

Attended B. G. S. 1905.

Occupation Mining and Mechanical Engineer.

Enlisted August 12<sup>th</sup> 1915. No 7305 - 13<sup>th</sup> Battery 5<sup>th</sup> F. A. B.  
Gunner.

Service in France and Belgium.

Engaged at Armentières, Somme (2) Lozières, Mouquet  
Farm, Hamel, German retreat from Bapaume and  
Bullecourt.

In July 1917 transferred to A. F. C. promoted Lieutenant in  
January 1918.

Killed as the result of a flying accident through collision with  
another plane. This was during the final test before  
going with plane to the front.

Flight Lieut. Douglas A. Ferguson & his brother Lieut. H. J. A. Ferguson, M.C. with Bar, are both remembered on the St. Andrews Presbyterian 1914 – 1919 Honour Roll (3), located in St. Andrews Uniting Church, Ann and Creek Streets, Brisbane, Queensland.



St. Andrews Presbyterian 1914 – 1919 Honour Roll (3)  
 (Photo from Queensland War Memorial Register – Matt Smith)



D. A. Ferguson & his brother – H. J. A. Ferguson, are both remembered on the St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Organ Honour Roll located in St. Andrews Uniting Church, Ann and Creek Streets, Brisbane, Queensland.



### St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Organ Honour Roll

(Photo from Queensland War Memorial Register – Matt Smith)

Second Lieutenant D. A. Ferguson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 187.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(71 pages of Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson'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 Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson:**

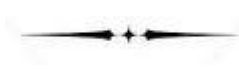
Older brother – Gunner Norman Abbott Ferguson (born 12th February, 1881) – Enlisted 15th December, 1916 as a 35 year old, single, Planter. Embarked from Sydney, NSW on 2nd August, 1917 on HMAT *Miltiades* (A28) with Field Artillery Brigade – May 1917 Reinforcements. Later attached to 13th Field Artillery Brigade Returned to Australia 24th July, 1919.

Older brother – Lieutenant Hector James Abbott Ferguson (born 14th December, 1886) –Enlisted 21st August, 1914 as a 29 year old, single. Mechanical Engineer. Embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on 20th October, 1914 on HMAT *Karoo* (A10) with 1st Divisional Signal Company as Sapper, Service number 87. Awarded Military Cross & Bar. Killed in action 21st October, 1917. Buried Reninghelst New Cemetery, Reninghelst, Flanders, Belgium.



Younger brother – Sergeant Malcolm Abbott Ferguson (born 17th March, 1892) – Enlisted 17th June, 1915 as a 23 year old, Wool Classer. Embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Persic* on 18th November, 1915 with 5th Field Artillery Brigade as Bombardier 7471. Returned to Australia 21st December, 1918.

Their mother - Eliza Jane Abbott Ferguson died on 11th October, 1917 in Brisbane, Queensland.







**Douglas Abbott Ferguson**



## **LAST POST CEREMONY**

Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson was remembered in the Last Post Ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on 16th December, 2016.

Commencing at approximately 4.55 pm AEST, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony in the Commemorative Courtyard. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the [Roll of Honour](#).

The ceremony begins with the Australian national anthem followed by the piper's lament. Visitors are invited to lay wreaths and floral tributes beside the Pool of Reflection. An individual's story is told, and the Ode is recited by Australian Defence Force personnel. The ceremony ends with the sounding of the Last Post.

*(Information from The Australian War Memorial)*



### **Speech transcript**

Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps  
Accidentally killed, aged 29  
No photograph in collection

Story delivered 16 December 2016

Today, we remember and pay tribute to Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson.

Douglas Ferguson was born on 11 March 1889 to James and Eliza Ferguson of Brisbane. Nine children were born to the couple, with three sons dying in infancy. Douglas's father was a Scotsman who came to Australia in 1863 and, after initially settling in Sydney, moved to Brisbane, where he became the principal partner in an eminent printing and stationery house. As well as providing a privileged home for his family, James was a philanthropist who founded the first boys' home in Brisbane, taking homeless boys and getting them suitable employment. Hector's mother Eliza was from the well-known Abbott family of Dungog, New South Wales.

Abbotsford, the Ferguson family's home in Enoggera, was known as a centre of hospitality. Douglas attended the Brisbane Grammar School, and later undertook a five-year apprenticeship with Wilson Engineering Works to become a mechanical engineer.

Four of the Ferguson boys enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force, while the eldest brother, Eric, stayed home to continue his father's business. Their mother, too, did her part by engaging in Red Cross work, holding fundraising fetes in the grounds of Abbotsford, and hosting parties for soldiers training at Enoggera. Hector was the first of her sons to enlist, doing so within weeks of the outbreak of war. Douglas followed his elder brother in August 1915, but unlike Hector, who became a signaller, he joined the Field Artillery.

Douglas Ferguson passed his training with the rank of gunner, but in July 1917 he transferred from the artillery to the Australian Flying Corps as a mechanic. In October of that year his mother died suddenly, and a week later his brother Hector was killed in action on the Ypres Salient.

In early 1918 Ferguson began training to qualify as a pilot. He showed promise, and passed instruction courses with the 8th Training Squadron. On 18 August he was involved in a collision while flying a Sopwith Camel near Leighterton in Gloucestershire. During the incident his belt gave way, and he was thrown from the plane. When rescuers reached him he was unconscious, and he died shortly afterwards. He was 29 years old.

Douglas Ferguson was buried at Brookwood Cemetery with full military honours. The ceremony included a firing party, band, and two buglers. His brothers Norman and Malcolm, both of whom were serving with the artillery, were in attendance.

His name is listed on the Roll of Honour on my right, among more than 60,000 Australians who died during the First World War.

This is but one of the many stories of service and sacrifice told here at the Australian War Memorial. We now remember Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, who gave his life for us, for our freedoms, and in the hope of a better world.

Dr Meleah Hampton  
Historian, Military History Section

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## **Newspaper Notices**

### **Personal Notes**

Mr James Ferguson (Watson, Ferguson and Co., Limited), has just received a cablegram from London, notifying him that his son, Flight Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson was killed a few days ago in a flying accident.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 23 August, 1918) & (*The Brisbane Courier*, Queensland – 23 August, 1918) & (*The Week*, Brisbane, Queensland – 30 August, 1918) & (*The Queenslander*, Brisbane, Queensland – 31 August, 1918)

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### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

FERGUSON – Killed in a flying accident, on the 18th inst., Flight-Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, son of James Ferguson and the late Mrs James Ferguson, of Abbotsford, Enoggera, aged 28.

(*The Brisbane Courier*, Queensland – 23 August, 1918) & (*Daily Mail*, Brisbane, Queensland – 23 August, 1918) & (*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 23 August, 1918) & (*The Week*, Brisbane, Queensland – 30 August, 1918)

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### **TWO AUSTRALIAN AIRMEN KILLED**

On Wednesday at the Tetbury Cottage Hospital an inquiry was held touching the deaths of two Australian Flying Corps pilots. Coroner Forrester, of North Wilts, conducted the inquiry, and a verdict of accidental death was returned in both cases.

The deceased airmen were Lieut. Harry Taylor, M.C., M.M., Australian Air Force, aged 30 years, and 2nd Lieut. Douglas Abbott Ferguson, A.F.C., aged 27 years. Both men were experienced pilots, and on Sunday were carrying out manoeuvres and sham fighting, and while flying over the church at Shipton Moyne they crashed in mid-air, with the result that the wing of Lieut. Taylor's machine was torn off and the aeroplane dropped nose down to the ground. The unfortunate pilot was dead when recovered from the wreckage. Medical aid was soon on the spot and Lieut. Ferguson, whose machine seemed to right itself for a moment before crashing, was picked up and was found to be just alive, although terribly injured. It was not long before the ambulance arrived and the injured man placed inside and driven with all possible speed to the hospital, but unfortunately, as with a similar case in the previous week, the injured pilot expired before reaching hospital.

Both bodies rested in the mortuary attached to the hospital and after the inquest the body of Lieut. Ferguson was removed by rail to Birmingham for interment; the body of Lieut. Taylor being taken to Cirencester, where the deceased had friends.

(*Gloucester Chronicle*, England – 24 August, 1918)

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LIST No. 428

198 QUEENSLANDERS

KILLED ACCIDENTALLY

2nd Lieut. Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Enoggera, 18/8/18

(*The Queenslander*, Brisbane, Queensland – 14 September, 1918)

Flight Lieut. Douglas Abbott Ferguson is remembered on his parents' headstone in St. Matthew's Anglican Cemetery (also known as Grovely Cemetery), Mitchelton, Brisbane, Queensland.



Ferguson Family Headstone (Photo from Find a Grave – Keith Harrison)

In Memory of  
JEANNIE ABBOTT FERGUSON  
WIFE OF  
JAMES FERGUSON,  
OF ABBOTSFORD, ENOCGERA,  
WHO DIED 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 1917,  
AGED 60 YEARS.

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AND OF THE ABOVE  
JAMES FERGUSON,  
WHO DIED 24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1926,  
AGED 87 YEARS.

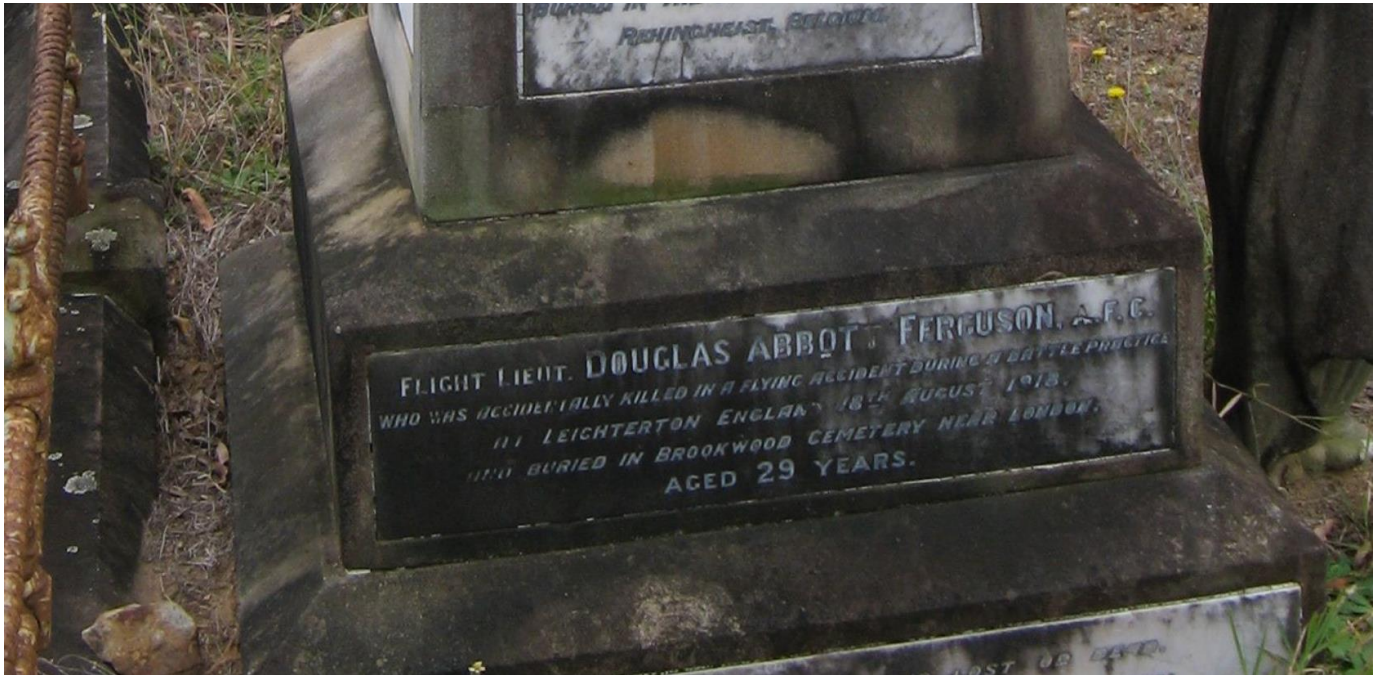
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AGED 87 YEARS.

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AND IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON,  
LIEUT NECTOR JAMES ABBOTT  
FERGUSON, M.C. WITH BAR,  
SIGNALLING CORPS (ENGINEERS) A.I.F.  
WHO WAS KILLED IN ACTION IN BELGIUM  
21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 1917,  
AGED 30 YEARS.  
BURIED IN THE MILITARY CEMETERY,  
RISHINGHEIST, BELGIUM.





*Flight Lieut. DOUGLAS ABBOTT FERGUSON, A.F.C.*

*Who Was Accidentally Killed In a Flying Accident During A Battle Practice*

*At Leighterton England 18TH August 1918*

*And Buried In Brookwood Cemetery Near London*

*Aged 29 Years*

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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)*

Second Lieutenant D. A. Ferguson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*A Gallant Soldier And A Gentleman*

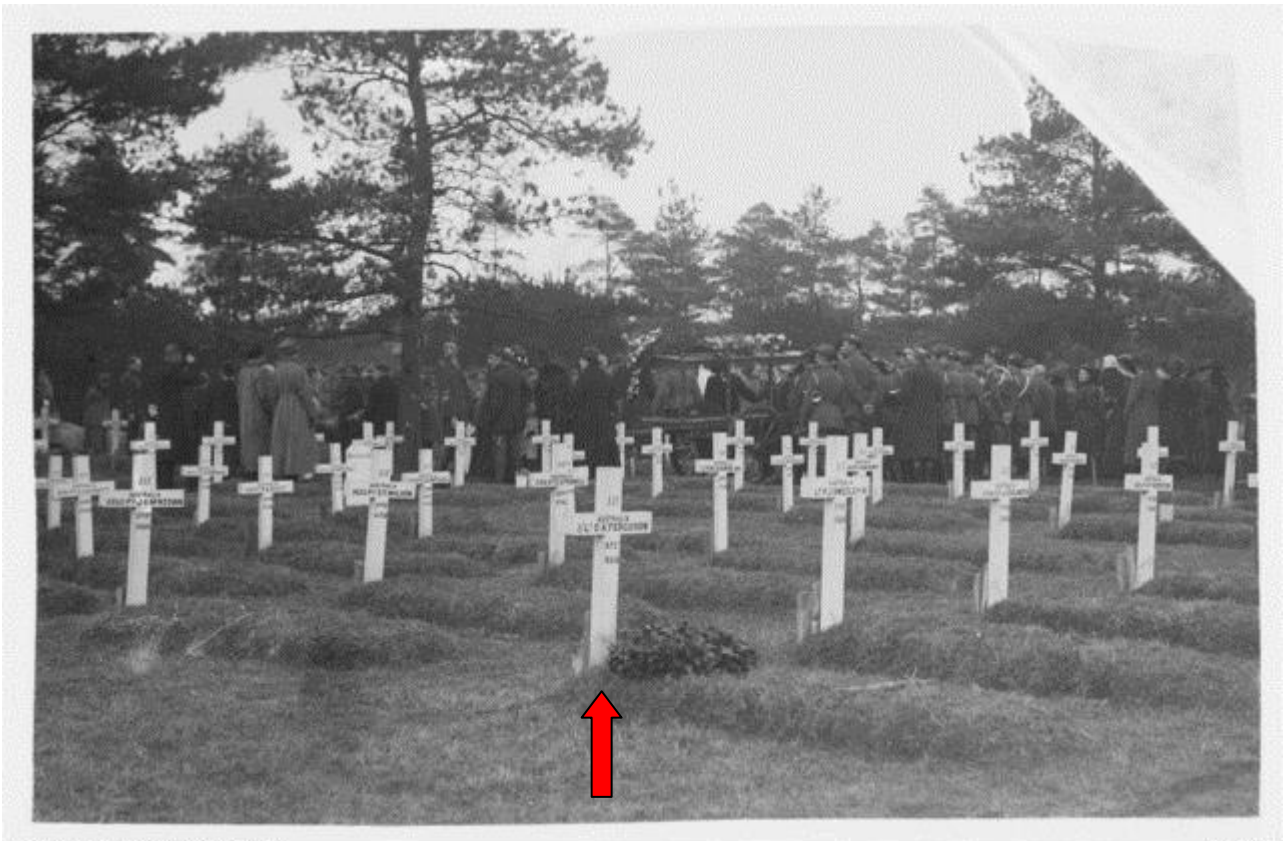


## Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

*A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)*

*Identified: Front row, left to right: **Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918**; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.*

*Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.*





**Brookwood Military Cemetery** (Photo from CWGC)



**Brookwood Military Cemetery** (Photos by Magicfingers)





**Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery** (Photos by Magicfingers)







*(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)*



**Australian War Graves** *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*



Photo of Second Lieutenant D. A. Ferguson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



*(Photo courtesy Ian Fletcher - 2021)*





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

