

**Compton Chamberlayne  
War Graves Cemetery,  
Wiltshire, England**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3058 PRIVATE**

**W. R. FINN**

**33RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**13TH MAY, 1918 Age 22**

*ONE OF THE BEST  
GOD COULD SEND  
BELOVED BY ALL  
A FAITHFUL FRIEND*

## Walter Richard FINN

Walter Richard Finn was born in 1895 at Little Plains, Inverell, NSW to parents Richard Francis & Jane Finn (nee Wilkins). Walter was the second youngest of 6 males born to Richard & Jane Finn. (The first son died in infancy in 1887).

Walter Richard Finn was a 21 year old, single, Farmer when he enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) on 28th November, 1916 at Liverpool, NSW. His Service Number was 3058 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father, Richard Francis Finn of Little Plains, Inverell, NSW. It was noted in the Medical examination that Walter Finn's trigger finger was deformed.

Private Walter Richard Finn was posted to "C" Company, 3rd Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 28th November, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 24th Reinforcements of 1st Battalion on 6th January, 1917 then transferred to 33rd Battalion on 17th January, 1917.

Private Walter Richard Finn embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Anchises (A68)* on 24th January, 1917 with the 33rd Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 27th March, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain area, in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Walter Richard Finn was marched in to Australian Details at Fovant, Wiltshire, on 2nd April, 1917 from Australia.

Private Walter Richard Finn was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire on 7th April, 1917.

Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 9th April, 1917 with Mumps. He was discharged to Depot on 25th April, 1917.

Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to Parkhouse Hospital, Wiltshire on 26th April, 1917 from 9th Training Battalion.

Private Walter Richard Finn was transferred to 62nd Battalion from 33rd Battalion on 28th April, 1917.

On 25th April, 1917 Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to Military Hospital, Parkhouse with mumps.

On 17th May, 1917 Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to 2nd Scottish General Hospital with Pharyngitis. He was transferred to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield on 27th June, 1917. Private Finn was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 2nd July, 1917 from Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield.

Private Walter Richard Finn was transferred back to 33rd Battalion while posted at No. 2 Command Depot, Weymouth, Dorset, England on 19th September, 1917.

Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to Sutton Veny Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 17th October, 1917 with Tonsillitis. He was discharged on 20th October, 1917.

Private Walter Richard Finn was written up for a Crime at Trowbridge, Wiltshire - A.W.L. (absent without leave) from 24.00 on 21st November, 1917 until apprehended by Military Police at Trowbridge at 07.05 on 1st December, 1917. He had also neglected to obey A.I.F. standing orders No. 2626 on 13th November, 1917 regarding railway travel. Private Finn was awarded 28 days F. P. (Field Punishment) No. 2 & was in custody awaiting trial for 1 day. He also forfeited 39 days' pay.

Private Walter Richard Finn was admitted to Hurdcott Group Hospital, Wiltshire on 26th January, 1918 with influenza & transferred on 28th February, 1918 to Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire with pneumonia & cardiac failure – seriously ill.

Private Walter Finn died at 9.20 p.m. on 13th May, 1918 of Bronchitis Purulent at the Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire, England.

A death for Walter R. Finn, aged 22, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Private Walter Richard Finn was buried in in Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire, England on 16th May, 1918 – Back Row, Grave Plot # 10.

From the burial report of Private Walter Richard Finn – Coffin was good, Polished Elm with Brass Mountings – *Deceased was accorded a full Military funeral. The band of a Training Brigade preceded the funeral. Firing Party, pallbearers and a company of N.C.O.'s and men were in attendance.*

*Deceased's cousin – Mr H. E. Smith of Herwain, near Aberdare, Glamoraganshire, was chief mourner.*

*The late Pte Finn was very popular with all ranks of his unit and always proved himself a keen soldier and a good comrade.*

Private Walter Richard Finn was entitled to British War Medal only as he did not enter a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque (October, 1922) were sent to Private Finn's father – Mr Richard Francis Finn of Little Plains, Inverell, NSW.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Walter Richard Finn – service number 3058, aged 22, of 33rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Richard Francis and Jane Finn, of Little Plain, New South Wales.

Private W. R. Finn is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 122.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. Finn is remembered on the Inverell War Memorial, located on the corner of Lawrence & Evans Streets, Inverell, NSW.



**Inverell War Memorial** (Photos from Monument Australia)

(77 pages of Private Walter Richard Finn's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives.*



## **Newspaper Reports**

### **407th CASUALTY LIST**

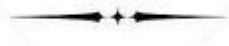
#### **New South Wales – Died – Cause Not Stated**

Pte Walter Richard Finn, Inverell

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – Monday 10th June, 1918)



**Private Walter Richard Finn**



### 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 at Compton Chamberlayne Cemetery. 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 W. R. Finn does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

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### **Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire, England**

Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery contains 34 Commonwealth War Graves all from World War 1. Of these 28 are of Australian Soldiers.



*(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)*



**Compton Chamberlayne War Graves – showing left & right of Plinth**

*(Photos by Andrew Stacey 2012)*



**Photo taken from back of Cemetery looking towards the Entrance** *(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)*

© Cathy Sedgwick/2012

Photo of Private W. R. Finn's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at Compton Chamberlayne War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)*





*Original Grave Marker*



Compton Chamberlayne War Graves (Photo from CWGC)

### Compton Chamberlayne War Grave Locations



British Soldier



Irish Soldier



Australian Soldier

Front Row	Grave		Middle Row	Grave		Back Row	Grave
<i>Public</i>	1		Oliver	1			1
<i>Public</i>	2		Knowles	2		<i>Public</i>	2
	Haywood	3		Skipper	3		Turner
	Gilbert	4		Wehrmann	4		Evans
	Le Tisser	5		Park	5		Dreckow
	Jones	6		Riley	6		Cass
	Cook	7		Turnbull	7		Arnold
	Pairman	8		White	8		Sillar
		9		Howard	9		Ross
	Norris	10		Tull	10		Finn
	Lintott	11		Snell	11		McCarthy
	Redman	12		Ferrow	12		Trengove
<i>Public</i>			<i>Public</i>				13
<i>Public</i>			<i>Public</i>				14
<i>Public</i>						Walsh	15
							16
						Hooper	17
							18
						Larkin	19



*(Photo taken c March, 1919)*

Graves of Australian soldiers in the cemetery at Compton-Chamberlyne, each marked by a cross.

*Back row, left to right:* 55821 Private (Pte) Alfred Alwin Dreckow, 32nd Battalion (Bn), died 19 October 1918; 3712 Pte Thomas Cass, 10th Bn, died 17 August 1918; 3764 Pte William Joseph Arnold, 31st Bn, died 2 July 1918; Captain Roy Allan Sillar, Australian Army Medical Corps, died 30 June 1918; 1993A Pte Sydney Ross, 18th Bn, died 31 May 1918.

*Front row:* 1666 Sergeant Percy Robert Knowles, 9th Australian Light TM Battery, died 30 January 1918; 1995 Pte Thomas James Skipper, 51st Bn, died Fovant Military Hospital 7 January 1918; 687 Pte John Thomas Wehrmann, 32nd Bn, died 3 November 1917; 3462 Pte William Joseph Park, 60th Bn, died 23rd September 1917; 1725 Pte William Ernest Riley, 60th Bn, died 22 May 1917.