

**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard,
Harefield, Middlesex, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



12307 PRIVATE

MELVILLE ADRIAN GRAHAM

10TH FIELD AMBULANCE, A.I.F.

9TH MARCH, 1917 Age 25

In Life We Love Him Dearly

In Death We Do The Same

Melville Adrian GRAHAM

Melville Adrian Graham was born at Cobram, Victoria in 1889 to parents John Alexander Graham & Annie Graham (nee Fields) (Melville stated on his Attestation Papers that he was born near the town of Numurkah, Victoria)

Melville Adrian Graham attended school at Yarroweyah, Victoria.

The 1912, 1913, 1914, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Echuca, subdivision of Strathmerton, recorded Melville Adrian Graham, Farmer from Yarroweyah, Victoria. His parents – John Alexander Graham, Farmer & Annie Graham, Home Duties were also listed at Yarroweyah.

Melville Adrian Graham was a 25 year old, single, Farmer (as listed on Embarkation Roll, however on “Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force” form he recorded his occupation as Farm Labourer) from Yarroweyah South, Victoria when he enlisted on 25th February, 1916 in Melbourne, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Presbyterian & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr John Graham, Yarroweyah South, Victoria.

Private Melville Adrian Graham was posted to 10th Field Ambulance on 25th February, 1916 for recruit training.

Private Melville Adrian Graham, Service number 12307, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Wandilla* (A62) on 6th June, 1916 with the 10th Field Ambulance, A.M.C. (Army Medical Corps). He was admitted to Ship’s Hospital on 14th June, 1916 with Measles & was discharged on 23rd June, 1916. Private Graham was re-admitted to Ship’s Hospital on 8th July, 1916 with Influenza & was discharged on 13th July, 1916. He disembarked at Plymouth, England on 27th July, 1916.

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 Melville Adrian Graham was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital, Bulford, Wiltshire on 16th November, 1916 with V.D. He was discharged on 15th January, 1917. Total Days V.D. 61.

Private Melville Adrian Graham was admitted to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield on 22nd February, 1917 – seriously ill.

Base Records advised Mr J. Graham, Yarroweyah, Victoria, father of Private Melville Adrian Graham, that Private M. A. Graham had been admitted to 1st Auxiliary Hospital on 22nd February, 1917 suffering from a severe illness.

Private Melville Adrian Graham died on morning of 9th March, 1917 at 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from Pleurisy and Complications (as listed on Field Service – Report of Death of a Solder – Army Form B 2090, however another Report of Death of a Solder – Army Form B 2090 (Not for Field Service) recorded the death as “*Primary Tubercle Lung & Peritoneum. Secondary, Exhaustion & Heart Failure*”).

A death for Melville A. Graham, aged 26, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private Melville Adrian Graham was buried on 12th March, 1917 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Plot number Aust. 15 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private Melville Adrian Graham - *Coffin was good. Elm. The deceased soldier was buried with full Military honours. The Staff Band of the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, was in attendance. Gun-carriage and firing party (Royal Fusiliers) were present. The “Last Post” was sounded at the grave side by a Bugler of the A.I.F. Members of the Staff and patients of the Harefield Hospital, under the command of Captain Morgan marched in the Funeral Procession. Prior to the interment of the deceased soldier’s remains a Memorial Service was held by Chaplain Gregg-MacGregor in the Parish Church, Harefield, A member of the A.I.F. officiated at the organ. No relatives were present at the Funeral.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for contains a request from the Red Cross to obtain particulars of the illness, death & burial of No. 12307 Private Melville Adrian Graham.

- The following report reads: *"In 1st Australian Hospital, Harefield, 9.2.17, with tubercle of lung. Our representative when at Hqrs on 10.3.17 was informed by them that the above cabled on 8.3.14 to his mother as follows:- "Doing well – returning home by hospital boat shortly" Unfortunately he died suddenly 9.3.17 and Hqrs were not sure of the cable went through or not."*
- The Registrar, No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, wrote the following report: *"With reference to your letter of 21st inst., I have to advise that the Sister in charge of the Ward in which Pte M. A. Graham died, had already written fully to the deceased man's mother in Australia. If, however you still desire information we shall be pleased to furnish same to you."*

John A. Graham, Yarroweyah South, via Katinga, father of the late Private Melville Adrian Graham, wrote to Base Records on 8th March, 1917 requesting any further information regarding the illness of Private M. A. Graham, No. 12307, 10th Australian Field Ambulance, to be forwarded to John A. Graham, C of G. P. Heard, Ryan, via Henty, NSW.

John A. Graham, father of the late Private Melville Adrian Graham, wrote to Base Records on 23rd April, 1917 advising any information concerning the death or effects of Private M. A. Graham, No. 12307, 10th Australian Field Ambulance, *"would be gratefully received at the above address"* - 197 Highett St, Richmond, Melbourne.

John A. Graham & Annie Graham, parents of the late Private Melville Adrian Graham, wrote to Base Records (letter received 2nd March, 1920) advising their new fixed address for the future was Albert, Spray St, Elwood.

Private Melville Adrian Graham was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Graham's father – Mr J. A. Graham, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent April, 1922 & Plaque sent March, 1922).

The National Trustees, Executors & Agency Co. of Australasia Ltd wrote to Base Records on 17th July, 1944 requesting a "Certificate of Death of Melville Graham, believed to have died of wounds in England in 1917. His parents' names were John Alexander Graham and Annie Graham, nee Fields. Postal note for 2/6 to cover the cost of the Certificate is enclosed.

Base Records replied to The Manager, National Trustees, Executors & Agency Co. of Australasia Ltd., on 20th July, 1944 enclosing *"a Certificate of report of Death of No. 12307 Private Melville Adrian Graham, 10th Field Ambulance, A.I.F., 1914 -1918, together with our official receipt for 2/6."*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Melville Adrian Graham – service number 12307, aged 27, of 10th Field Amb., Australian Army Medical Corps. He was the son of John & Annie Graham, of 17 Spray St., Elwood, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

M. Graham is remembered on Cobram – Barooga RSL War Memorial, located at Barooga Sports Club, Burkinshaw Street, Barooga, New South Wales.



Cobram Honour Roll (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)



M. Graham is remembered on the Yarroweyah Presbyterian Church Honor Roll, now located in Cobram Uniting Church, 10 Hay Avenue, Cobram, Victoria.



Yarroweyah Presbyterian Church Honor Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

Private M. A. Graham is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 182.

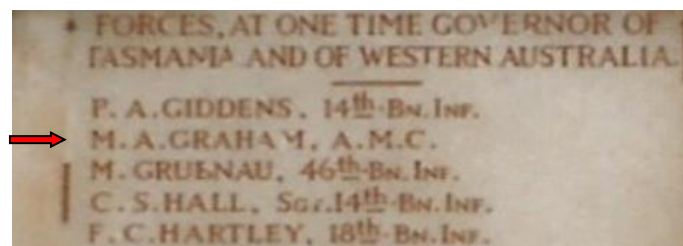


Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

M. A. Graham is remembered on the Australian Soldiers' Memorial in St. Mary the Virgin Church, Church Hill, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield (Photo from War Memorials Online – B. Wood)



(55 pages of Private Melville Adrian Graham'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

DACS0935

Portrait of Mal Graham copied for the Cobram Honour Roll.

The soldier is probably 12307 Private (Pte) Melville Adrian Graham, a farmer from Yarroweyah South, Victoria, prior to enlistment. Pte Graham embarked from Melbourne with the 10th Field Artillery, aboard HMAT Runic (A54) on 20 Juen 1916. He died of pleurisy and complications on 9 March 1917 at the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, England. During the First World War the Cobram and District Soldiers Fund initiated a project to create a Cobram Honour Roll. It was to include portraits of servicemen who had links to the Cobram area. The Fund arranged for portraits to be copied by the Darge Photographic Company at its Collins Street Studio, Melbourne. Around 100 copy prints were supplied by the Darge company but it is not known if the roll was ever constructed. In the 1930s, the Australian War Memorial purchased original glass negatives from Algernon Darge, along with the photographers' notebooks. The notebooks contain brief details, usually a surname or unit name, for each negative. The names are transcribed as they appear in the notebooks.

Newspaper Notices

Our Soldiers' Column

The regrettable news came through recently that Private Mel. Graham, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Graham, of Yarroweyah South, had died in an English hospital from pneumonia. It was only about a fortnight previous that a cable was received stating Melville was to be invalided back to Australia, and therefore the subsequent news of his death came as a shock to his parents and friends, for it was thought that his sturdy physique and fine constitution would pull him safely through. In private life, as well as on the football field, he was a straight goer, and commanded the respect of everyone. Melville had a big list of friends and acquaintances in this district, who join in extending sincere sympathy to the bereaved parents and family.

(Cobram Courier, Victoria – 22 March, 1917) & (*Tungamah and Lake Rowan Express and St. James Gazette*, Victoria – 29 March, 1917)

OUR BOYS ON ACTIVE SERVICE

News has been received that Private Mel. Graham, son of Mr and Mrs J. A. Graham, of Yarroweyah South, has died in an English hospital from pneumonia.

(*Shepparton News*, Victoria – 26 March, 1917)

PERSONAL

The afflicting intelligence has been conveyed to Mr and Mrs J. A. Graham, of Ganmain, NSW (formerly of Yarroweyah South), that their solidier son Melville has died of illness in England. A few weeks ago Mr Graham received word from his son that he expected to be sent back to Australia, and the family was looking forward to a happy reunion. Great sympathy is felt towards them at the sudden shattering of their hopes.

(*Numurkah Leader*, Victoria – 30 March, 1917)

DEATH

GRAHAM – On the 9th March, of illness, in 1st Auxiliary Hospital, England, Melville Adrian Graham, much beloved youngest son of John A. and Annie Graham, late of Yarroweyah South. Aged 27 years.

-Inserted by his sorrowing Mother, Father, sisters and brothers.

(*Numurkah Leader*, Victoria – 30 March, 1917)

DIED ON SERVICE

GRAHAM – On the 9th March, of illness, in First Auxiliary Hospital, England, Melville Adrian Graham, dearly beloved youngest son of John A. and Annie Graham, late of Yarroweyah South, also dearly loved brother of Mrs Heard (Culcairn), A. A. Graham (Ganmain), Mrs Chapman (Ganmain), P. F. Graham (Katamatite), Doris and Myrtle, aged 27 years.

“One of Australia’s noble sons.”

“Greater love than this hath no man.”

-(Inserted by his sorrowing parents, brothers, and sisters.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 9 April, 1917)

AUSTRALIA’S ROLL OF HONOR

279th CASUALTY LIST

SERIOUSLY ILL

Victoria

M. A. Graham, South Yarroweyah

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 9 April, 1917)

In Memoriam

GRAHAM – In sad and loving memory of our dear brother – MELVILLE ADRIAN (Mel.) – who died of illness in England, 9th March, 1917.

A year has passed since that sad day,
When our dear brother was called away;
He is remembered the same to-day,
As in the hour he passed away.

-Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law, Percy and Bessie Graham.

(*Numurkah Leader*, Victoria – 8 March, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 13th July, 1921, to Mr J. Graham, "Albert", Stray Street, Elwood, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late No. 12307 Private M. A. Graham, 10th Australian Field Ambulance, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Private Melville Adrian Graham does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Life We Loved Him Dearly

In Death We Do The Same

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield contains 126 Commonwealth War Graves.

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Harefield (St. Mary) Churchyard contains war graves from both world wars. There are 120 First World War graves, mostly those of Australians who died in No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park. Uniquely, their graves are marked by scroll shaped headstones, chosen by the staff and patients at the hospital. In the centre of the Australian plot stands a memorial obelisk which was erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, late Governor of Tasmania and of Western Australia, and Mr. C.A.M. Billyard-Leake, of Harefield Park. The churchyard also contains six graves of the Second World War.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard

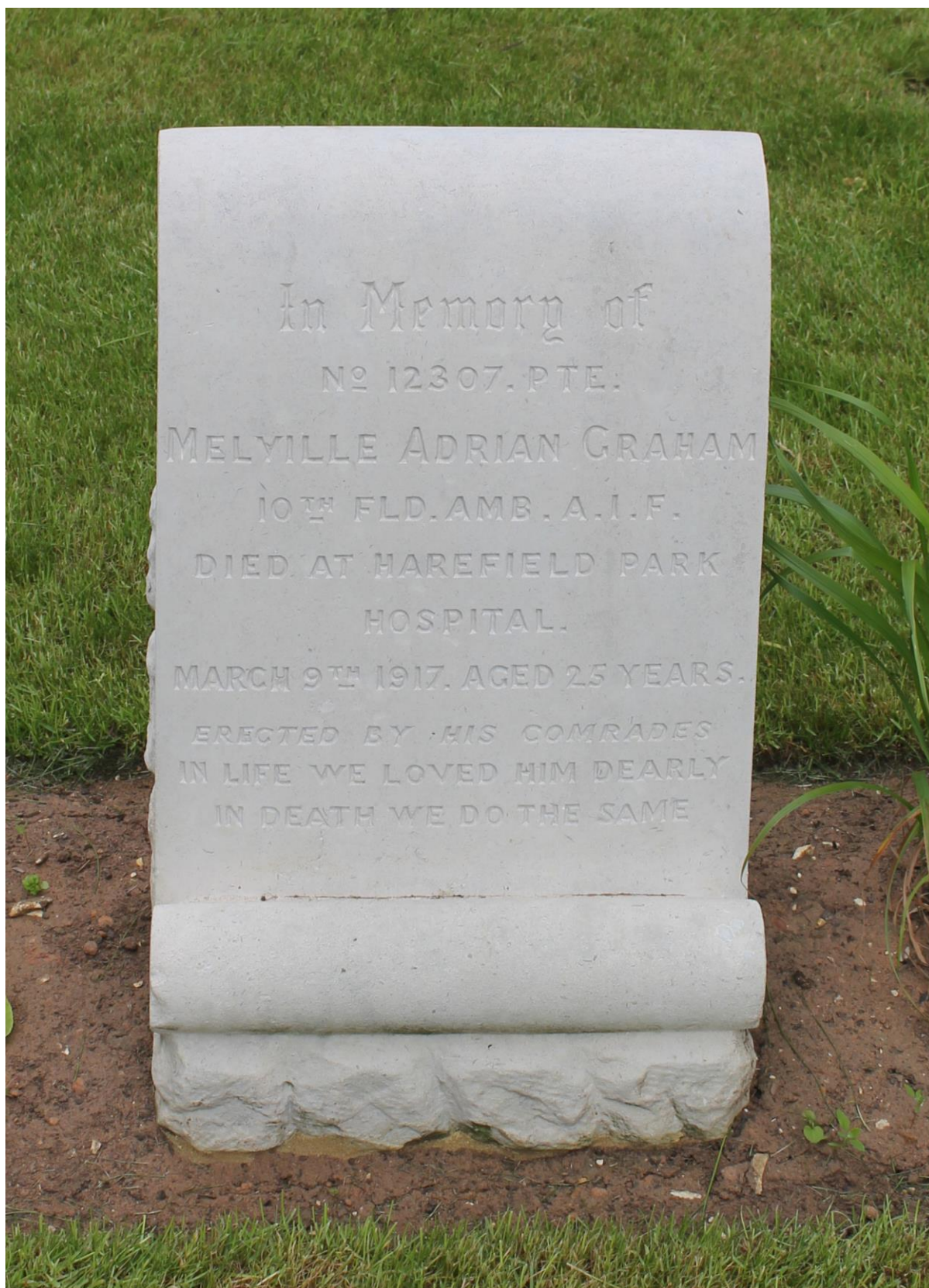




St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard



Photo of Private Melville Adrian Graham's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St Mary the Virgin Church, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photos courtesy of Peter Bennett)

