

**Key Hill Cemetery,
Birmingham, Warwickshire, England**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



CAPTAIN

G. W. GRIFFITH

RED CROSS

22ND MARCH, 1918

(Note: the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records Captain George Whitehouse Griffith of the Australian Red Cross Society whereas The Australian War Memorial records Honourary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith of British Red Cross – Australian Branch)

George Whitehouse GRIFFITH

George Whitehouse Griffith was born at Birmingham, Warwickshire, England on 12th December, 1861 to parents George Henry & Emma Mary Griffith (nee Whitehouse).

Emma Whitehouse Griffith, mother of George Whitehouse Griffith, died in 1862 at West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England.

George Henry Griffith married Esther Burnham in 1863. Their marriage was registered in the December quarter of 1863 in the district of Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, England.

The 1871 England Census recorded George Whitehouse Griffith as a 10 year old, living with his family at The Hollies, Handsworth, Staffordshire, England. His father was listed as a Jeweller & was away at the time of the Census. Esther Griffith was listed as his wife (aged 42, born Wycombe, Bucks). George was one of six children listed on this Census – Emma Mary Griffith (aged 23, born Birmingham), Henry Griffith (Jeweller, aged 20, born Birmingham), then George, Ettie Jane Griffith (aged 6, born Handsworth, Staff), Frederic Griffith (aged 5, born Handsworth, Staff) & Jessie Griffith (aged 3, born Handsworth, Staff). Also listed were 2 servants – Martha Elizabeth Cox (aged 23) & Francis Fanny Lewes (aged 20).

The 1881 England Census recorded George A. Griffith as a 20 year old Jeweller living with his family at Church Lane, Handsworth, Staffordshire, England. His father was listed as George H. Griffith (Master Jeweller, aged 55 born Birmingham) & his stepmother Esther Griffith (aged 52). George was the eldest of five children listed on this Census – George then Ettie Jane Griffith (Scholar, aged 16), Fred Griffith (Scholar, aged 15), Jessie Griffith (Scholar, aged 13), Sydney Griffith (Scholar, aged 4, born Handsworth, Staff). Also listed was Eleanor Griffith – Visitor (Manager of Pin Manufacturer) & 2 servants – Mary A. Fowler (aged 23) & Emma E. Davenport (aged 21).

According to information supplied for the Roll of Honour by his widow – Mrs Emma Jane Griffith, George Whitehouse Griffith came to Australia when he was 25 years of age. He had joined the Volunteers (Infantry) at Molong, NSW in 1886 under Major Claude Smith & rose to Sergeant.

George Whitehouse Griffith married Emma Jane Miller on 4th May, 1887. Their marriage was registered in the district of Molong, NSW, Australia.

George & Emma Griffith had the following children – their births all registered in the district of Molong, NSW: Jesse Maud Griffith (birth registered 1888), Ivy Beatrice Griffith (birth registered 1889), Hubert Henry Griffith (birth registered 1891), George Harold Griffith (birth registered 1893), Gladys Muriel Griffith (birth registered 1894) & Marjorie Emma Griffith (birth registered 1906).

Captain George Whitehouse Griffith of the Red Cross Enquiry Bureau embarked from Sydney, NSW on H.M.T. *Medic* (A7) on 1st August, 1917 & disembarked at Liverpool, England in early October, 1917.

George Whitehouse Griffith was gazetted as Honorary Lieutenant of the British Red Cross Society (Australian Branch) on 1st October, 1917. (*Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. 105 of 18.7.18 page 1535).

George Henry Griffith, father of George Whitehouse Griffith, died on 10th November, 1917 at Birmingham, England.

Captain / Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith died on 22nd March, 1918 at 33 Wellington Road, Handsworth, Birmingham from Chronic Nephritis, Acute Pneumonia & Cardiac Failure. From the Death Certificate - he was aged 57 & listed as a General Store Keeper. His niece - Muriel H. Green was present at the death.

A death for George W. Griffith, aged 57, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England.

Captain / Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith was buried on 26th March, 1918 in Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England – Screen Wall I. 383. He has a Private Headstone but his death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Civilian George Whitehouse Griffith contains a letter from the Red Cross to the O.C. Records Section, Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London stating that "*Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith was working as a searcher for our Wounded and Missing enquiry Bureau on Salisbury Plain, where he developed pneumonia with various complications, from which he subsequently died on the 22nd March, 1918, at the residence of his sister, Mrs Green, Handsworth, Birmingham.*"

Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) 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. Later the training units were combined to become training & convalescing units.

Newspaper item – *Birmingham Post*, England – 25 March, 1918:

OBITUARY

CAPTAIN G. W. GRIFFITH

Captain George Whitehouse Griffith, of Manildra, New South Wales, Australia, who died at the residence of his sister, Mrs W. Frank Green, "Glendale," Handsworth Wood, on Friday, was the second son of the late Mr Henry Griffith, Field House, Handsworth Wood. Captain Griffith came over as a voluntary worker with the Australian Red Cross last autumn, and the rigour of camp life in this country is supposed to have aggravated a complaint from which he had been suffering for some time. Captain Griffith went to Australia about thirty years ago, and established stores at Manildra and Sydney. He was a Justice of the Peace and an ex-president of the Baptist Church Association in Australia. His eldest son, Mr Hubert Griffith, and his youngest son, Mr Harold Griffith, also came over with Australian contingents. The former is now fighting in France, and the latter, who had his left hand shattered at Gallipoli, has been discharged and is now at home. Captain Griffith, who was in his 58th year, was a brother of Major S. Griffith, of the Soho Hill Works, and Mr F. Griffith, of the firm of H. Griffith and Sons, Warstone Lane.

Newspaper item – *Leader*, Orange, NSW, Australia – 3 April, 1918:

OBITUARY

G. W. GRIFFITH

On Tuesday, March 26th, Mrs. G. W. Griffith, of Manildra, received a cable conveying the news that Mr. Griffith passed away on March 22nd at his sister's home in Birmingham. Mr. Griffith was obliged to relinquish his service and took to his bed on January 4th, bronchitis, pneumonia, and pleurisy were followed by pericarditis, induced by abnormal strain upon the heart. On the doctor's third visit pneumonia was practically cleared up. The immediate cause of death was pericarditis, in conjunction with Bright's disease.

The services rendered the Manildra district (says Molong "Express") by Mr. Griffith in business, civic and religious connections are well-known and have been duly recognised on more than one occasion. The business established in Manildra is a monument to his integrity, business capacity and strenuous toil. The fact that in the years 1909-10 Mr. Griffith was President of the Baptist Union of N.S.W. is significant of the place he occupied in the regard of his brethren of this confraternity.

The proffering of his services, in an honorary capacity, to the Australian Red Cross Society for active service testifies to his fervent and patriotic spirit. The fact that he was selected for the position he occupied in England indicates the confidence reposed in him by those responsible in that connection.

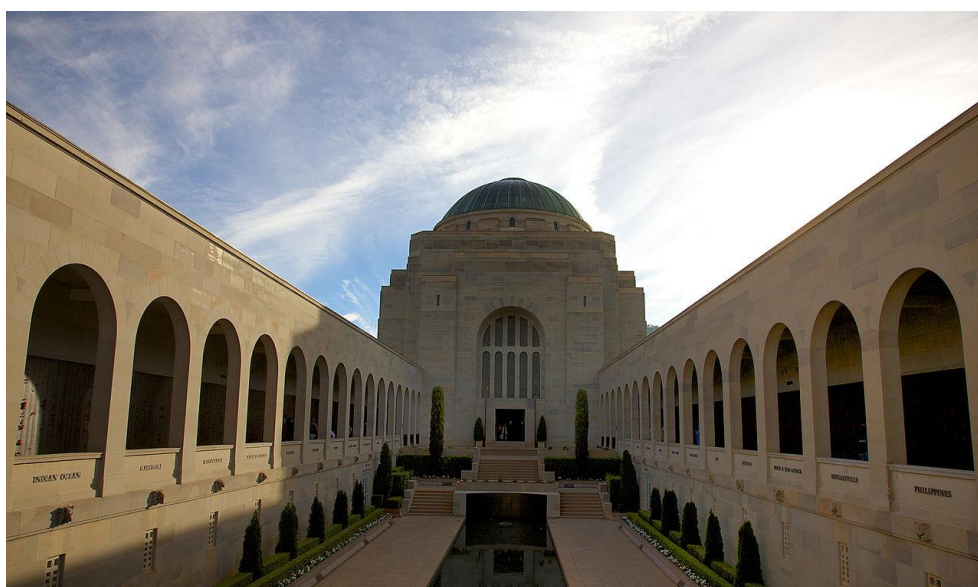
Mr. Griffiths was born in Birmingham in December of the year 1860. He came to Australia in 1885, and was married in 1887 to Miss E. Miller, of Manildra. Two years farming at Garra, prepared the way for a small business, which was eventually established in Manildra, where Mr. and Mrs. Griffith have for years displayed that public and humanitarian spirit which have earned for them universal recognition.

A letter from Base Records, Victoria, dated 30th August, 1918, to The Officer in Charge, Records Section, A.I.F. Headquarters, London regarding Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith reads: *“The abovenamed deceased, a Red Cross Commissioner, was on duty in the United Kingdom at the time of his death. Application has been made for a Certificate, but, though he was recognised as a member of the Australian Imperial Force, there is no record whatever here of his death. Will you kindly furnish either a certificate from the local Registrar where he died or an official account of his death so that a certificate may be issued by this office.”*

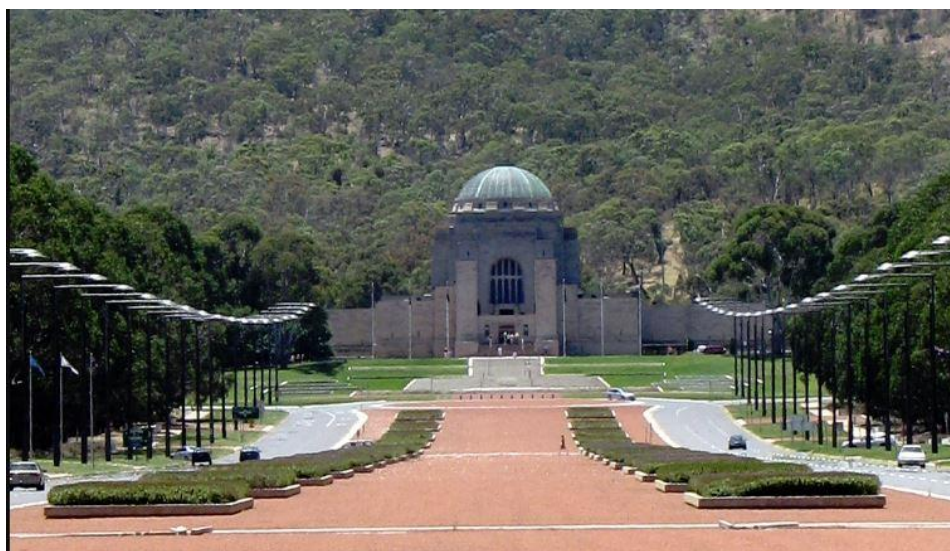
Captain / Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Captain / Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith’s widow –Mrs G. W. Griffith, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent February, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Captain George Whitehouse Griffith, aged 57, of Australian Red Cross Society. He was the son of Henry & Emma Whitehouse Griffith; husband of Emma Jane Griffith, of “Yamma”, via Forbes, New South Wales.

Honourary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial (Capital Photographer)



George W. Griffith is remembered on the Grand United Order of Oddfellows Roll of Honour, located in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, Kiewa Street (Orange Road), Manildra, NSW.



Soldiers Memorial Hall, Manildra (Photo from Monument Australia)



Grand United Order of Oddfellows Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Derek Gosper)

G. W. Griffith is remembered on the Manildra & District Roll of Honour, located in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, Kiewa Street (Orange Road), Manildra, NSW.



Manildra & District Roll of Honour (Photos from NSW War Memorial Register – Peter Levarre-Waters)



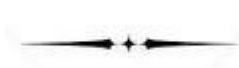
G. W. Griffith is remembered on the Manildra Rifle Club Honour Roll, located in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, Kiewa Street (Orange Road), Manildra, NSW.



Manildra Rifle Club Honour Roll (Photos from NSW War Memorial Register – Peter Levarre-Waters)

(59 pages of Honorary Lieutenant George Whitehouse Griffith's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Commemorative Roll & Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives





George Whitehouse Griffith



Newspaper Notices

New Magistrates

The following gentleman have been appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the Molong district:.....George Whitehouse Griffith, Manildra.....

(Molong Argus, NSW, Australia – 10 April, 1896)

MANILDRA

On Monday last Mrs G. W. Griffith received a cable conveying the news that Mr Griffith was suffering seriously from pneumonia. Two days later a more reassuring message was received. His condition was more hopeful. Since taking up the position he had been occupying officer's quarters in the military camp. His avocation gave him a very extensive field of service amongst the soldiers.

(Molong Express and Western District Advertiser, NSW, Australia – 26 January, 1918)

DEATHS

GRIFFITH – On the 22nd inst., at the house of his sister, Mrs W. Frank Green, "Glendale," Handsworth Wood, George Whitehouse Griffith, J.P., Captain, Australian Red Cross, of Manildra, NSW, second son of the late Henry Griffith, Field House, Handsworth Wood, in his 58th year. Service, Hamstead Road Baptist Church, on Tuesday, at 2.30 o'clock. Interment, Key Hill Cemetery, at 3.015. No flowers.

(The Birmingham Daily Post, England – 23, 25 & 26 March, 1918)

DEATHS

GRIFFITH – March 22, 1918, at his sister's residence, Glendale, Birmingham, England, of pneumonia, George Whitehouse Griffith, hon. captain Australian Red Cross, late of Manildra.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW, Australia – 29 March, 1918)

LATE CAPTAIN GRIFFITH

Probate has been granted of the will of the late Captain George Whitehouse Griffith, of the Australian Imperial Forces, formerly of Manildra and Walla Walla, general store- keeper, who died at Handsworth, England, on March 22 last. His estate is of the net value of £22,716, of which £12,621 is drapery and stock of a general store. Captain Griffith appointed as trustees of his estate his widow, Emma Jane Griffith, and his two sons, George Harold Griffith and Hubert Henry Griffith. The latter son is now on active service abroad. Testator bequeathed £200 to the Baptist Home Mission Society; £200 to the Baptist Foreign Mission Society; £50 each to the Pinecliff and Manildra Baptist Church funds. The residue of the estate is devised to testator's widow absolutely.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW, Australia – 15 August, 1918)

George W. Griffith is remembered on his wife's headstone in Meranburn Cemetery (also known as Manildra Cemetery), NSW.



In Loving Memory Of

Our Dear Mother

EMMA J. GRIFFITH

Died 29th May, 1944. Aged 77 Years

Also Of Our Dear Father

GEORGE W. GRIFFITH

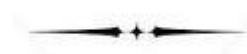
Aged 57 Years

Died In England 22nd March, 1918

While With Australian Red Cross

Buried in Handsworth Cemetery.

"Until The Day Break"



Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Captain G. W. Griffith has a Private Headstone as well as being named on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall in Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England.

Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England

The First World War saw four important hospitals - besides many smaller - posted at Birmingham: the 1st Southern General (3,500 beds) was in the university and other buildings, with a section at Stourbridge; the 2nd/1st Southern General (1,800 beds) in the Dudley Road Infirmary and in billets; the 1st Birmingham War Hospital (1,000 beds) at Rubery Hill Asylum and the 2nd Birmingham War Hospital (900 beds) at Hollymoor Asylum. Military hospitals were at Birmingham again during the Second World War, including No 7 Canadian Hospital at Marston Green. Birmingham and Coventry were among the chief manufacturing areas producing materials for the war effort and were subjected to many devastating air raids during the Blitz of 1940-41. Birmingham (Key Hill) Cemetery contains 38 burials of the First World War, most of them in Section L. None of these graves are individually marked, the casualties being commemorated by name on a Screen Wall. There are also eight burials of the Second World War.

(Information from CWGC)



Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham (Photos by julia&keld- Find a Grave)





Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall (Photo by Rob Farrow)

Photo of Captain G. W. Griffith's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall in Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)

Photo of Captain G. W. Griffith's Private Headstone in Key Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England.



(Private Headstone photos courtesy of Steve - WW1 Family Inscriptions on Twitter)





In
Loving Memory Of
GEORGE WHITEHOUSE GRIFFITH J.P.
Of Manildra, N.S.W.
CAPTAIN AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS
Son Of Henry and Emma Mary Griffith
Died March 22ND 1918
Aged 57 Years
For Me To Live Is Christ
And To Die Gain.