

**Arnos Vale Cemetery,
Bristol, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



5358 CORPORAL

W. T. JOHNSON

25TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH NOVEMBER, 1918 Age 26

William Thornton JOHNSON

William Thornton Johnson was born in Brisbane, Queensland on 6th June, 1892. His mother was registered as Mary Christensen Johnson.

William Thornton Johnson attended the State School at Petrie, Queensland.

The 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Brisbane, subdivision of Toowong, Queensland recorded William Thornton Johnson, Commercial Traveller, care of A. Hamilton, Maryvale Street, Toowong.

William Thornton Johnson was a 23 year old, single, Commercial Traveller from Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 22nd November, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5358 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Mary Bisby, care of A. Hamilton, Maryvale Street, Toowong, Brisbane, Queensland. William Thornton Johnson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served for 3 months with R.A.F.A. in Brisbane.

Private William Thornton Johnson was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 18th January, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 14th Depot Battalion on 25th February, 1916 then transferred to 13th Reinforcements of 25th Battalion on 1st April, 1916. Private Johnson was transferred to Reserve Company on 2nd May, 1916 then transferred on 17th May, 1916 to 14th Reinforcements of 25th Battalion as Provisional Sergeant.

William Thornton Johnson embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Itonus* (A50) on 8th August, 1916 with the 7th Infantry Brigade, 25th Infantry Battalion, 14th Reinforcements. He was appointed as V.O. Sergeant (Voyage only) & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 18th October, 1916.

V.O. Sergeant William Thornton Johnson reverted to the rank of Private on 19th October, 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 William Thornton Johnson was marched in to 7th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire from Hurdcott Camp, Wiltshire on 1st November, 1916. He was appointed E.D.P. (extra duty Pay) Corporal on 1st November, 1916.

E.D.P. (extra duty Pay) Corporal William Thornton Johnson reverted to the rank of Private on 4th November, 1916.

Private William Thornton Johnson was to be Acting Sergeant with E.D.P. (extra duty Pay) from 18th November, 1916.

Acting Sergeant William Thornton Johnson was detached to Training Cadre on 1st December, 1916 & was to be T/Sergeant from that date.

[Acting Sergeant William Thornton Johnson was discharged from N.W. Hospital at Hampstead on 19th January, 1917.] *[unsure if this actually relates to Acting Sergeant Johnson or if recorded on his form in error.]*

William Thornton Johnson to be Corporal substantive from 24th January, 1917 while at Rollestone & to retain rank of T/Sergeant on permanent Cadre of 7th Training Battalion.

T/Sergeant William Thornton Johnson proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 19th June, 1917 from 7th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire. He reverted to permanent grade of Corporal on 19th June, 1917.

Corporal William Thornton Johnson joined 2nd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 20th June, 1917. He proceeded to join his Unit from 2nd A.D.B.D. on 22nd June, 1917 & was taken on strength of 25th Battalion in France on 25th June, 1917.

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was wounded in action on 4th October, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Field Ambulance on 5th October, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to head. Corporal Johnson was transferred to 17th Casualty

Clearing Station on 5th October, 1917 then transferred to Ambulance Train. He was admitted to 5th General Hospital on 6th October. Corporal Johnson was transferred to England on 2nd November, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Panama*.

25th Battalion

The 25th Battalion was raised at Enoggera in Queensland in March 1915 as part of the 7th Brigade. Although predominantly composed of men recruited in Queensland, the battalion also included a small contingent of men from Darwin....

Although it acted in a supporting role at the second battle of Bullecourt, the 25th Battalion did not carry out a major offensive role again until 20 September 1917, when it was part of the 2nd Division's first wave at the battle of Menin Road in Belgium. Victory here was followed up with the capture of Broodseinde Ridge on 4 October. The 25th reprised its role from Menin Road, in what was its last large-scale offensive action for the year.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was admitted to V.A.D. Hospital at Cheltenham (affiliated with 2nd Southern General Hospital) on 3rd November, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Head & left shoulder (slight).

The Medical Case Sheet for Corporal William Thornton Johnson records the following information: "GSW Head & left shoulder. Condition of admission – *Incontinence bladder & bowel.... Bullet to ____ ____ scapula & spine. Bullet removed. Xray shows fract 6th & 7th Dorsal. Operation – Removal of bullet. Progress – Very slow. Transfer – 22.5.18 2nd S.G. Hosp, Bristol.*"

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was transferred to 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol on 22nd May, 1918 from "Naunton, Cheltenham". The Hospital Admission Form recorded "Partial paraplegia..."

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was transferred to Bruce Cole Hospital (Auxiliary to Beaufort War Hospital), Bristol, England on 15th October, 1918 from 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England.

Corporal William Thornton Johnson died at 9.30 am on 8th November, 1918 at Bruce Cole Auxiliary Hospital, Whitehall, Bristol, England from Fractured spine (result of G.S.W) & Broncho Pneumonia. The Hospital Admissions Form recorded the following : "*Died of pneumonia following influenza.*"

A death for William T. Johnson, aged 26, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Bristol, Gloucestershire, England.

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was buried on 12th November, 1918 in Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol, Gloucestershire, England. His name is remembered on the CWGC Screen Wall & he has a flat Memorial Stone. Cemetery/Memorial reference Screen Wall 7. 714. From the burial report of Corporal William Thornton Johnson - *Coffin was Elm, good. The deceased was accorded a full Military Funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag and surmounted by several wreaths sent from friends and Hospital staff. The Rev. S. E. Sivan conducted the burial service and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected, by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of Relatives and Friends present at the Funeral – Mrs Melton, 55 Bath Bdgs, Montpellier, Bristol. Commandant & Sister & patients from Hospital.

Base Records forwarded on to Mrs Mary Bisby, C/- A. Hamilton Esq., Maryvale Street, Toowong, Queensland, mother of the late Corporal William Thornton Johnson, on 17th June, 1931 a copy of the "*Western Daily Press*" containing an article on the Anzac Day Pilgrimage and Memorial Service held at Arnos Vale Cemetery, where her son was interred. The Newspaper items had been sent from Mr Robert Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, England.

Base Records forwarded on to Mrs Mary Bisby, "Hollyrood", 16 Maryvale Street, Toowong, Queensland, mother of the late Corporal William Thornton Johnson, on 17th June, 1932 and 15th June, 1933 a copy of the "*Western Daily Press*" and "*Evening World*" featuring this year's Anzac Day Pilgrimage and Memorial Service held at Arnos Vale Cemetery, where the remains of her son were interred. The Newspaper items had been sent from Mr Robert Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, England.

Base Records forwarded on to Mrs Mary Bisby, "Hollyrood", 16 Maryvale Street, Toowong, Queensland, mother of the late Corporal William Thornton Johnson, on 28th June, 1935, 22nd June, 1936 & 12th August, 1937 copies of the "*Western Daily Press* and *Bristol Mirror*" featuring that year's Anzac Day Pilgrimage and Memorial Service held at Arnos Vale Cemetery, where the remains of her son were interred. The Newspaper items had been sent from Mr Robert Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, England.

Corporal William Thornton Johnson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Corporal Johnson's mother – Mrs M. Bisby, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal William T. Johnson – service number 5358, aged 26, of 25th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Neils Peter and Mary Bisby Johnson, of Maryvale St., Toowong, Brisbane, Queensland.

Corporal W. T. Johnson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 105.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(66 pages of Corporal William Thornton Johnson'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



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTY LIST No. 354

334 QUEENSLANDERS INCLUDED

Wounded

T/Sgt. W. T. Johnson, Toowong (dang.)

(*The Daily Mail*, Brisbane, Queensland – 20 November, 1917)

Personal Notes

Mrs Johnson, of Maryvale street, Toowong, has received another telegram regarding her son, William Thornton Johnson, previously reported dangerously wounded in head and chest, in hospital, Rouen, France. His condition was critical from the 6th October till the 23rd November, but now pronounced out of danger.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 29 November, 1917)

Roll of Honour

203 QUEENSLANDERS INCLUDED

Casualty lists Nos. 450a and 450 were issued from the censor's office last night....

DIED OF WOUNDS

Cpl. W. T. Johnson, Toowong, 8/11/18. p.r.w.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 7 December, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

JOHNSON – In sad but loving memory of my dearly beloved youngest son and brother, Sergeant William T. Johnson, 25th Battalion, A.I.F., who was dangerously wounded at Ypres on October 4th, 1917, and passed away at Bristol Hospital November 8th, 1918, age 26 years and 7 months.

To-day recalls sad memories of a dear one laid to rest.

Unknown to the world he stands by my side,

And whispers, "Dear mother, death cannot divide."

Some day I hope to meet you,

Some day, I know not when;

To meet in a better land,

Never to part again.

A hero he fought, a hero he fell,

His duty bravely done.

One great comfort in our sorrow to know that some gentle, kind friend in that distant land will plant some flowers and look after the grave where our loved one is laid, far across the sea.

Inserted by his loving mother, brother, and sister, Toowong.

JOHNSON – In memory of Sgt. W. T. Johnson, who passed away at Bristol Hospital, England on November 8, 1918.

When his life was brightest,
When his hopes were best,
His country called, he answered;
Now on God's hands he rests.

Inserted by Petersen family.

(*The Brisbane Courier*, Brisbane, Queensland – 8 November, 1919)

ROLL OF HONOUR

JOHNSON – In loving memory of my dearly beloved youngest son and brother, Sergeant William T. Johnson, 25th Battalion, A.I.F., who departed from this world at Bruce Cole Hospital, Bristol, England, November 8, 1918, aged 26 and 7 months, after being in hospital over 12 months, on account of wounds received in France.

A precious one from us is gone,
A voice we loved is stilled ;
A place is vacant in our home,
Which never can be filled.
He has borne his cross, he has gained his crown ;
Though the body lies in a far-off grave,
His soul is safe in Heaven,
At rest for ever with the Lord.
We think of his life, a duty done,
Manly, unselfish, and brave.
One of the best, loved by all.

Inserted by his loving mother, brother, and sister, Toowong.

(*The Brisbane Courier*, Brisbane, Queensland – 8 November, 1920)

ROLL OF HONOUR

JOHNSON – In loving memory of Sergeant William T. Johnson, 25th Battalion, who passed away at Bruce Cole Hospital, Bristol, England, November 8, 1918, aged 26 years.

A devoted son, a loving brother,
One of God's best towards his mother, He bravely answered his country's call,
Now God has taken him from us all.
But his soul so brave is beyond the grave,
For ever with the Lord.

Inserted by his loving mother, brother, and sister, Toowong.

JOHNSON – Sergeant William T. Johnson, wounded 4th October, 1917, died of pneumonic influenza, Bruce Cole Hospital, Bristol, 8th November, 1918.

Inserted by J. A. Hunter.

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JOHNSON – In loving memory of our dear friend, Sergeant William T. Johnson, 25th Battalion, A.I.F., who was wounded October 4th, 1917, and passed away at Bruce Cole Hospital, November the 8th, 1918, aged 26 years.

To memory dear.

Inserted by his loving friends.

(The Brisbane Courier, Brisbane, Queensland – 8 November, 1921)

Notices were also placed in the Brisbane papers in 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927

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.

Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol, Gloucestershire, England

The cemetery was established in 1837. During both wars, there were a number of military hospitals at Bristol and the city was the depot of the Gloucestershire Regiment. During the Second World War there were also a number of Royal Air Force stations and prisoner of war camps in the area. ARNOS VALE CEMETERY contains burials of both wars. Most of the 356 First World War burials were of men who died at the local hospitals, particularly the 2nd Southern General and the Beaufort, many of whom were landed at Avonmouth from hospital ships from the Mediterranean. Their graves can be found in the 'Soldiers Corner', a plot established by the British Red Cross, near the main entrance. The 238 casualties buried here are commemorated on a memorial at the rear of the plot. The rest of the graves are scattered throughout the cemetery. There are also special memorials to one casualty buried in the cemetery whose grave could not be located and another commemorating a casualty buried in Bedminster Church Cemetery whose grave could not be maintained. There are 149 burials from the Second World War, some forming a small plot in an area in the upper part of the cemetery set aside for burials from the Naval Hospital at Barrow Gurney; the rest are scattered. Those whose graves are not marked by headstones are named on a Screen Wall Memorial. BRISTOL (ARNOS VALE) CREMATORIUM stands within the cemetery. A memorial in front of the crematorium commemorates 68 servicemen and women of the Second World War whose remains were cremated there.

(Information from CWGC)



Arnos Vale Cemetery - Main Entrance on Bath Road (Photo by JohnM – Find a Grave)



(Photo from CWGC)

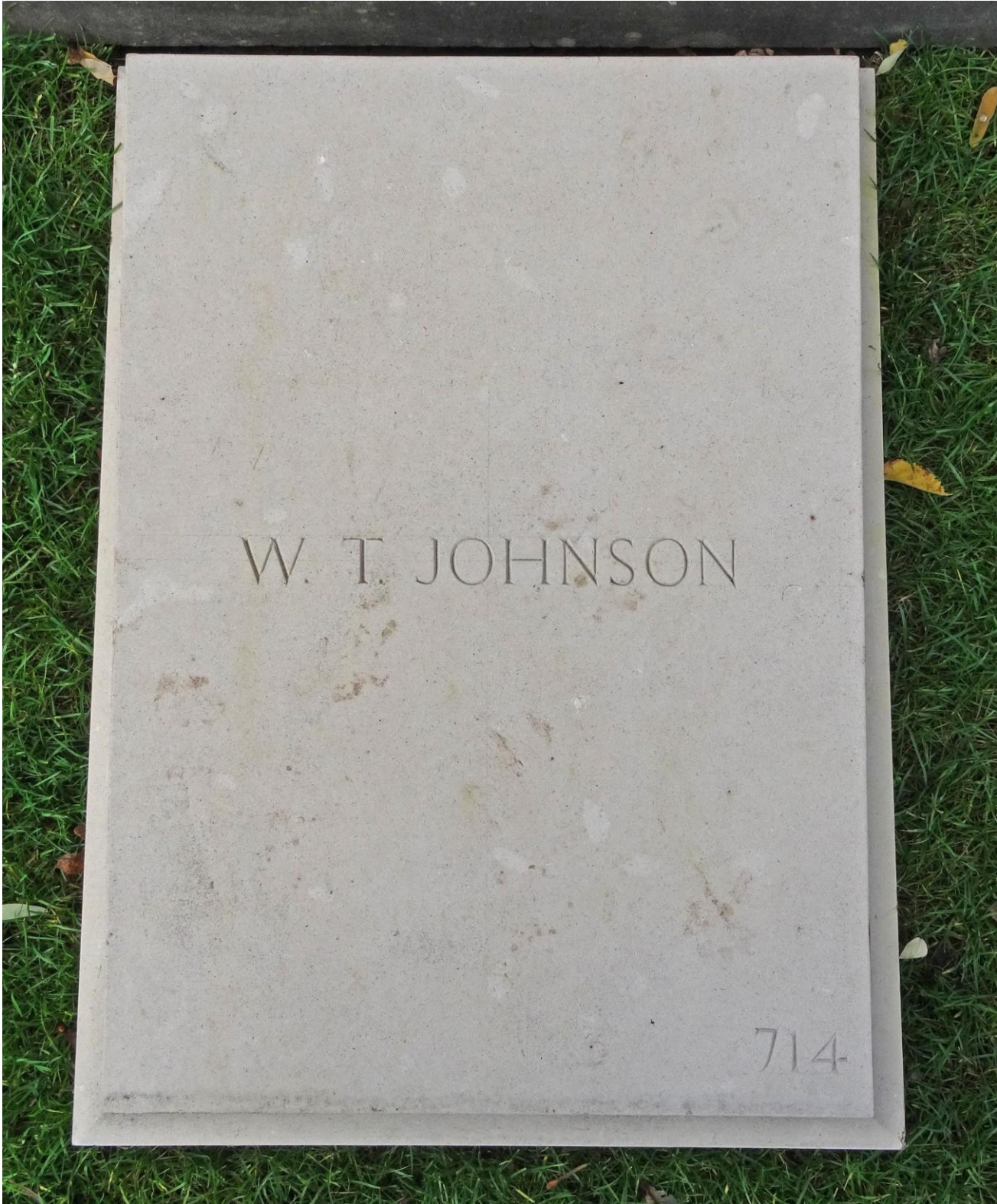


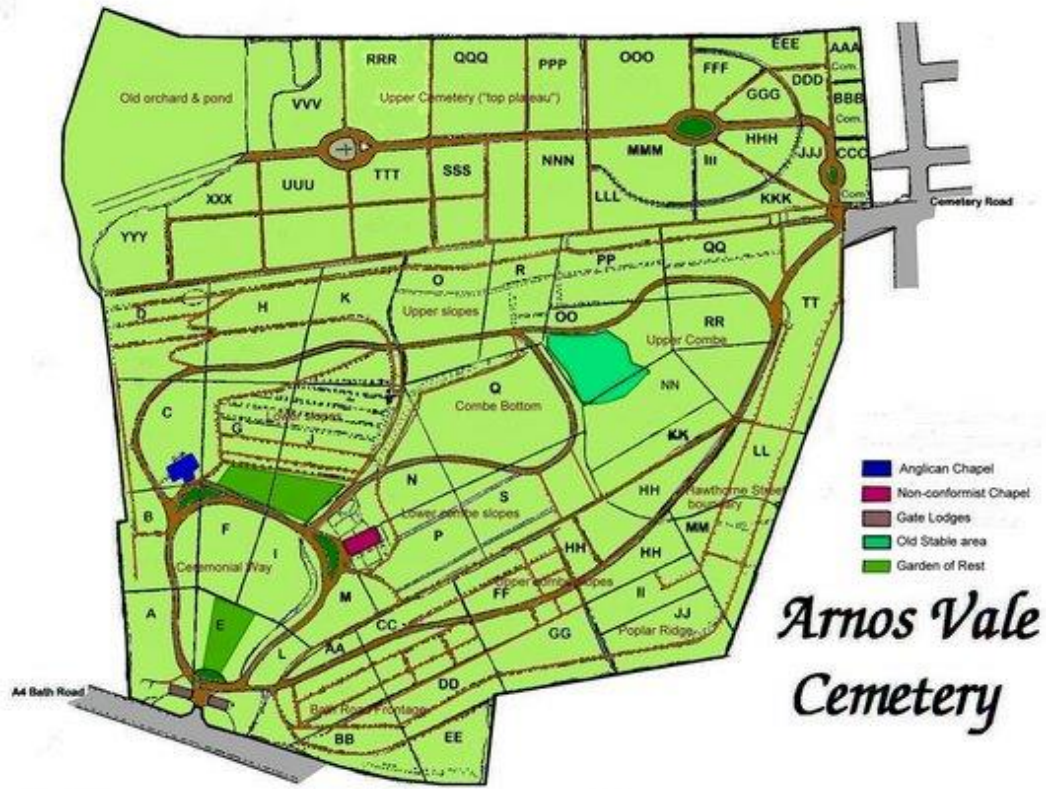
Soldiers' Corner – Arnos Vale Cemetery (Photo by JohnM – Find a Grave April, 2017)



New Memorial Stones (Photo by JohnM – Find a Grave November, 2018)

PTE. RICHARD COSSAGE 40 TH BATTN.
PTE. WILLIAM GREATHEAD 33 RD BATTN.
PTE. WILLIAM FRANCIS HAM 22 ND BATTN.
PTE. STANLEY L. JENKINS 11 TH BATTN.
PTE. THOMAS H. JACKSON 26 TH BATTN.
CPL. WILLIAM THORNTON JOHNSON 25 TH BATTN.
PTE. DONALD MORRISON





(Photo by Debra Polly – Find a Grave)