

**West Hill (Old) Cemetery,
Winchester, Hampshire**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2704 CADET

G. R. JOHNSTON

AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

24TH MARCH, 1918 Age 22

The Lord Gave

And The Lord Hath Taken Away

George Robinson JOHNSTON

George Robinson Johnston was born at Lake Rowan, Victoria on 6th November, 1895 to parents Rev. Robinson Johnston and Jane Kennedy Johnston (nee Muir)

George Robinson Johnston attended Scotch College, Melbourne, Victoria from 1910 to 1914.

George Robinson Johnston was a 19 year old, single, Clerk (in Iron Foundry) from Lake Rowan, Victoria when he enlisted on 19th June, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2704 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – The Rev. Johnston, The Manse, Lake Rowan, Victoria. As George Robinson Johnston was under the age of 21, his parents both signed their consent for their son to serve at the front.

George Robinson Johnston was posted to Depot Battalion as Private on 30th June, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 8th Reinforcements of 6th Battalion on 18th July, 1915.

Private George Robinson Johnston embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Anchises (A68)* on 26th August, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 26th September, 1915.

Private George Robinson Johnston joined his Unit at Lemnos on 31st October, 1915.

Private George Robinson Johnston embarked on Ship *Dongola* from Anzac on 30th November, 1915. He was admitted to 19th General Hospital at Alexandria on 5th December, 1915 with Dysentery. Pte Johnston was transferred & admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Cairo on 18th January, 1916.

A Medical Report was completed on Pte George Robinson Johnston on 1st February, 1916 while admitted to No. 1 Australian General Hospital. His disability was listed as "following Enteric Fever" which had first originated at Anzac on the 1st December, 1915 where he "*went direct from Anzac to Alexandria, was in bed there 2 weeks & then when up & on more food relapsed & was diagnosed Enteric Fever.*" Pte Johnston's present condition was listed as "*Is convalescent, feeling well, has been up about 1 week. Organs sound.*" The Medical Board advised that the infection was attributed to Active Service & recommended that Pte Johnston would be affected for 3 months & should be returned to Australia but was not permanently unfit.

Private George Robinson Johnston was transferred & admitted to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital at Cairo on 11th February, 1916 with Enteric. He was transferred & admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Cairo on 29th February, 1916 & discharged to duty on 3rd March, 1916.

Private George Robinson Johnston rejoined his Unit from Base at Serapeum on 11th March, 1916.

Private George Robinson Johnston proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on *Briton* on 25th March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th March, 1916.

Private George Robinson Johnston was reported to be with his Battalion in the field on 5th January, 1917.

Private George Robinson Johnston was wounded in action on 23rd April, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 23rd April, 1917 with gunshot wounds to thigh then transferred to No. 9 Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Pte Johnston was transferred to No. 16 Ambulance Train on 27th April, 1917 & admitted to No. 3 Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 28th April, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right thigh. Pte Johnston embarked from Havre, France on 29th April, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Warilda*.

6th Battalion

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion was heavily involved in operations against the German Army. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres the battalion fought near Ypres, in Flanders, returning to the Somme for winter. In 1917, the battalion participated in the operations that followed-up the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line, and then returned to Belgium to join the great offensive launched to the east of Ypres. During the battle of Menin Road in September 1917.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

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Private George Robinson Johnston was admitted to 5th Southern General Hospital on 30th April, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right thigh – slight. He was transferred to Auxiliary Hospital on 25th May, 1917 then discharged to furlough from 27th July, 1917 to 10th August, 1917 & was to then report to Training Depot at Perham Downs.

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. Convalescent Camps were also located in Wiltshire.

Private George Robinson Johnston was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 10th August, 1917 & medically classified as B1 A4 (medically fit, awaiting dental completion).

Private George Robinson Johnston was temporarily attached for duty to Pay Corps at Tidworth, Wiltshire from 6th Battalion ex No. 1 Command Depot from 14th August, 1917.

Private George Robinson Johnston ceased duty with Army Pay Corps on 12th December, 1917 & was marched in to A.F.C. Depot at Wendover from 6th Battalion at Tidworth the same day.

Private George Robinson Johnston was taken on strength at A.F.C. (Australian Flying Corps) Details at Wendover & mustered as 2nd Air Mechanic from 15th December, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic was on command at R.F.C. (Royal Flying Corps) Observer School, Worcester from 1st February, 1918.

2nd Air Mechanic George Robinson Johnston joined R.F.C. (Royal Flying Corps) Observers School at Worcester to qualify for appointment as Flying Officer (Observer) & was appointed Cadet from 1st February, 1918.

Cadet George Robinson Johnston & Lieut. James Leslie Cumming, from No 64 Training Sqn, R.F.C., were flying a Royal Aircraft Factory R.E.8, serial A4493 on 24th March, 1918 from R.F.C. Winchester.

Cadet George Robinson Johnston died on 24th March, 1918 as a result of injuries received in an aeroplane accident at Worthy Down Aerodrome, north west of Winchester, Hampshire, England. Lieutenant J. L. Cumming, aged 19, also died in the aeroplane accident. He was buried in Arbroath Western Cemetery, Arbroath, Angus, Scotland.

A Court of Inquiry was held at Worthy Down Aerodrome on 19th March, 1918 (Note – Casualty Form – Active Service records incorrectly the date of the Court of Inquiry as 19/3/18) *“inquiring into the death of Cadet Johnston. Fractured Jaw, fractured thigh, injuries to the skull. The Court finds that the Pilot either stalled on the turn or fainted in the Air, falling on the elevator control. He was on duty at the time and was killed as the result of the crash.”* The Casualty Card for Cadet G. R., Johnston records the nature & cause of the accident – *“flying straight, dived steeply.”* There are 3 Casualty Cards for Cadet G. R. Johnston – one has the date of death as 25th March, 1918, another has the 25th crossed out & marked 24th & the last card has the date of death as 24th March, 1918.

A death for George R. Johnston, aged 24, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Winchester, Hampshire, England.

Cadet George Robinson Johnston was buried on 28th March, 1918 in West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester, Hampshire, England – Plot number 34. 1926 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Cadet George Robinson Johnston – *Military Funeral. Coffin was polished Elm. A letter has been written by Colonel Chamin, D.S.O., giving full particulars of the accident, and also photographs were sent of the grave, and the memorial which we erected. This letter was sent in triplicate to the Rev. Johnstone (father) so that in the event of enemy action, it is hope that at least one may arrived.*

Private George Robinson Johnston requested in his Will, dated 14th August, 1917, that all his real and personal estate be bequeathed to his mother – Mrs Robinson Johnston, of “Lisburn”, Ranfurlie Crescent, East Malvern, Victoria.

Cadet George Robinson Johnston was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Cadet Johnston's father –Rev. R. Johnston, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent September, 1921 & Plaque sent April, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Cadet George Robinson Johnston – service number 2704, aged 22, of Australian Flying Corps. He was the son of the Rev. Robinson Johnston and Jane Kennedy Johnston, of "Lisburn", Ranfurly Crescent, East Malvern, Victoria. Born at Lake Rowan, Victoria.

Cadet G. R. Johnston 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.



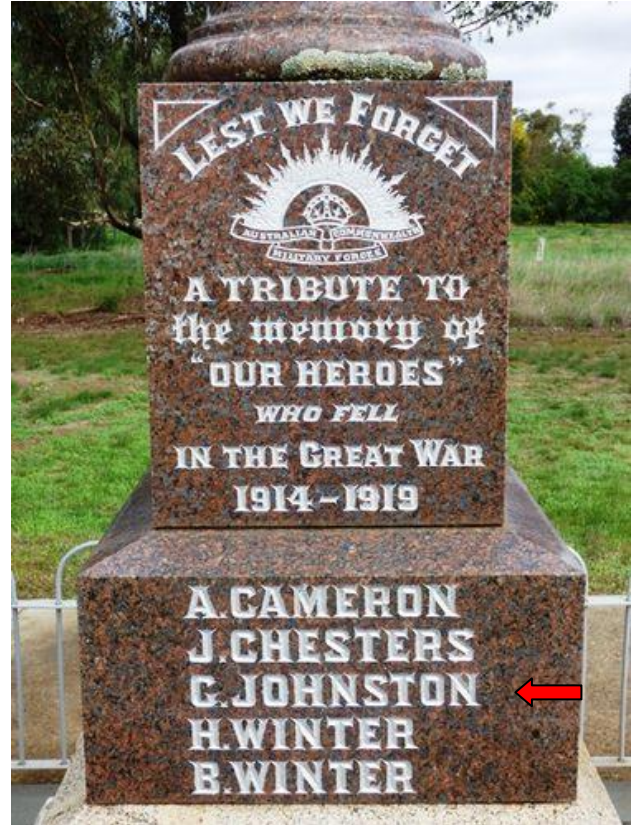
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

G. R. Johnston is remembered on the Scotch College Honour Board for World War 1, located in the Memorial Hall.



Memorial Hall at Scotch College, Melbourne (Photo by Seqlder 2010)

G. Johnston is remembered on the Lake Rowan War Memorial, located on Yarrawonga-Benalla Road & Swamp Road, Lake Rowan, Victoria.



Lake Rowan War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Graeme Saunders)

(104 pages of Cadet George Robinson Johnston'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

DIED ON SERVICE

JOHNSTON. - Killed on 24th March, as the result of an aeroplane accident at Worthing Downs, England, Cadet George Robinson Johnston, Flying Corp. late Private 6th Battalion, younger son of Rev. Robinson and Jean K. Johnston, "Lisburn," Ranfurlie crescent, East Malvern, late the Manse, Lake Rowan, aged 22 years.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 4 April, 1918) & (*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 4 April, 1918)

& (*Tungamah and Lake Rowan Express and St. James Gazette*, Victoria – 11 April, 1918)

ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR

389TH OFFICIAL LIST

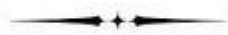
ACCIDENTALLY KILLED

Cadet G. R. Johnston, East Malvern

(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 16 April, 1918)



George Robinson Johnston



George Robinson Johnston is remembered on his parents' headstone in Brighton General Cemetery, Victoria.



Johnston Family Headstone (Photos courtesy of www.brightoncemetery.com)



Also Their Son

GEORGE ROBINSON

Killed on Active Service

24TH March 1918

Aged 22 Years

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)

Cadet G. R. Johnston does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away

West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester, Hampshire, England

West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester contains 120 Commonwealth War Graves – 116 from World War 1 & 4 from World War 2.



West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester *(Photo from CWGC)*

Photo of Cadet G. R. Johnston's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester, Hampshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Mary & Colin Seivwright)



West Hill (Old) Cemetery, Winchester *(Photo by Chris Talbot)*