

**London Road Cemetery,
Salisbury, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1851 LANCE CPL

C. W. JOHNSTON

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

12TH SEPTEMBER, 1918 Age 23

Charles William JOHNSTON

Charles William Johnston was born at Rockhampton, Queensland on 2nd April, 1895 to parents John & Margaret Johnson (nee Carmichael).

Charles William Johnston attended Christian Brothers for his education.

Charles William Johnston was a 21 year old, single, Fitter (listed as a Mechanical Engineer in information provided by his father for the Roll of Honour) from Rockhampton, Queensland when he enlisted on 10th January, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1851 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Miss Elizabeth Carson, George Street, Rockhampton, Queensland. Charles Johnston stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Citizen Forces (1 copy recorded 2 years; another copy recorded 3 years).

Private Charles William Johnston was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 12th January, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to Field Engineers on 12th February, 1916 with the rank of Sapper. Sapper Johnston was transferred to 2nd Reinforcements of 41st Battalion on 22nd June, 1916 with the rank of Private.

Private Charles William Johnston embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Boorara (A42)* on 16th August, 1916 with the 41st Infantry Battalion, 2nd Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 13th 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 & also in the county of Dorset.

Private Charles William Johnston was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot in England on 14th October, 1916.

Private Charles William Johnston was marched out to Bulford Hospital, Wiltshire on 27th October, 1916 (V.D.) from No. 3 Command Depot at Wool, Dorset. He was discharged on 20th December, 1916 (Days = 55).

Private Charles William Johnston was marched in to 11th Training Battalion, Durrington, Wiltshire from Hospital on 20th December, 1916.

Private Charles William Johnston proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 4th February, 1917 on S.S. *Invicta*. He was marched in to 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 4th February, 1917. He was marched out to his Unit on 6th February, 1917 & was taken on strength of 41st Battalion in the Field on 7th February, 1917.

Private Charles William Johnston was appointed Lance Corporal on 7th August, 1917 while posted with 41st Battalion.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was appointed Temporary Corporal on 8th October, 1917 – vice Lance Sergeant Seon (?) evacuated.

Temporary Corporal Charles William Johnston was wounded in action on 16th October, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 16th October, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to thigh then transferred the same day to 7th Casualty Clearing Station. Temporary Corporal Johnston reverted to the rank of Lance Corporal on 16th October, 1917. He was transferred & admitted to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 7th October, 1917. Lance Corporal Johnston was invalided to England on 21st October, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen*.

41st Battalion

The 41st Battalion was raised at Bell's Paddock Camp in Brisbane in February 1916 with recruits from Brisbane, northern Queensland and the northern rivers district of New South Wales. It formed part of the 11th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division..... spent the bleak winter of 1916-17 alternating between service in the front line, and training and labouring in the rear areas.

Compared to some AIF battalions, the 41st's experience of the battles in Belgium during 1917 was relatively

straightforward. It had a supporting role at Messines on 7 June, captured its objectives at Broodseinde on 4 October with little difficulty, and was spared the carnage of Passchendaele on 12 October. It was some of the battalion's more "routine" tasks that proved its most trying experiences. At the end of June 1917, the 11th Brigade was ordered to establish a new front line west of Warneton, in full view of the Germans. Work carried on night and day under heavy shellfire and the period became known to the battalion as "the 18 days". The start of August found the 41st holding ground captured by two of its sister battalions in a feint attack on 31 July. Enduring continual rain, flooded trenches and heavy shelling many of the battalion's platoons dwindled from 35 men to less than ten.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 41st Battalion:

Hill 40 16-10-1917:

41st Battalion relieved by 34th Battalion relief completed by 6 am with slight casualties.

Position. Battalion took up its position in reserve behind VAN ISACKERE FARM (D.20a.D21b.) in ground vacated by 36th Battalion wni cn (? as typed) moved up in close support to the 34th. Weather –slightly improved. Artillery on both sides very active.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was admitted to Military Hospital at Colchester, England on 22nd October, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to thigh – severe. He was transferred & admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford, Kent on 16th November, 1917. Lance Corporal Johnston was discharged to Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 27th November, 1917.

Mrs E. Carson, George Street, North Rockhampton, Queensland, listed as next-of-kin of Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston, was advised on 1st November, 1917 by Base Records that Private Charles Johnston had been wounded. Another advice was sent the same day stating that Private Charles Johnston had been admitted to Colchester Military Hospital, England on 22nd October with gunshot wounds to right thigh – severe.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 27th November, 1917. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Deep gaping wound below & behind Gt Trochanter...*" He was transferred to No. 3 Command Depot & Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 7th January, 1918 with "*Wound not quite healed*".

Miss E. Carson, George Street, North Rockhampton, Queensland was advised by Base Records on 26th December, 1917 that Private Charles Johnston was convalescent.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was sent sick to Brigade Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 9th February, 1918 with Mumps. He was discharged & marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 4th March, 1918.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 7th March, 1918. He was discharged to Convalescent Training Depot at Parkhouse, Wiltshire on 10th May, 1918. Total V.D. period – 65 days.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was marched in to Convalescent Training Depot at Parkhouse, Wiltshire on 10th May, 1918. He was marched out to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 21st May, 1918.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was marched out from No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 6th June, 1918 & marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire the same day. He was medically classified as B1A3 (fit for overseas training camp in 2 – 3 weeks). Lance Corporal Johnston was passed dentally fit on 20th June, 1918.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was marched out from No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 20th June, 1918 & marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on the same day.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was marched out from Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill on 5th July, 1918 & marched in to 2nd Training Brigade at Fovant, Wiltshire the same day.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was written up on 15th August, 1918 while posted at Fovant – “*Conduct to the prejudice of good order & military discipline in that he was wandering around the Officers’ Mess at 12.5 am*”. He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was sent sick to Fovant Hospital on 7th September, 1918 from 9th Training Battalion. He was admitted to Fovant Hospital in 8th September, 1918 seriously ill with Appendicitis. The Hospital Admissions form recorded “*Appendicitis 2 days. Operation: Appendix removed & drained. Peritonitis abdomen drained. Died.*”

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston died at 6.20 am on 12th September, 1918 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Appendicitis. The Report of Death by Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire to Officer i/c Records, A.I.F. London, recorded his religion as “R.C.” (Roman Catholic).

A death for Charles W. Johnston, aged 24, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was buried on 16th September, 1918 in London Road Cemetery, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England – Plot number R. 14 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston - *Coffin was good. Polished Elm. Brass Mountings. Deceased was buried with full Military honours, the body being conveyed to the graveside on a Gun carriage, preceded by a Firing Party and a band. Six of deceased’s comrades acted as Pallbearers. The funeral was attended by Mr & Mrs P. S. Haig, 39 Sydney Road, Torpoint, Cornwall, and a number of deceased’s comrades. A floral wreath from the nursing staff of Fovant Military Hospital was placed on the grave after the “Last Post” had been sounded. Headquarters, A.I.F. Depots in the U.K. were represented at the funeral.*

Miss E. Carson, George Street, North Rockhampton, Queensland was advised by Base Records on 17th September, 1918 that Lance Corporal Charles Johnston was seriously ill. A follow up advice the same day stated that Lance Corporal Charles Johnston had been admitted to Fovant Military Hospital, Salisbury, England on 8th September, with Appendicitis – seriously ill.

Joseph T. J. Whyte, Presbyterian Minister, John Knox Manse, Talford Street, Rockhampton, wrote to Base Records on 11th October, 1918 with the following letter: “*The other day I had a visit at my Manse from a young woman Miss E. Carson, who was engaged to be married to Charles William Johnston, 1851 Lance Corporal 2nd Reinforcements 41st Batt. 11th Infantry Brigade A.I.F. and concerning who you reported that he died in Military Hospital Salisbury England on 11th Sept 1918. This young woman drew that pay of the said C W Johnston as duly arranged by him, and was looking forward to a happy married life, but alas ! her hopes are shattered by his death. At her request I would like to know on her behalf if you could get particulars of his death. Second, if he left a will as he said he would in her favour. Third, as to his personal belonging & deferred pay. On behalf of Miss E. Carson I will thank you for information that may serve for guidance re these matters.*”

Base Records replied to Rev. J. T. J. Whyte on 23rd October, 1918 stating “*.... the only information at present available regarding the report of the regrettable loss of the late No. 1851 Lance Corporal C. W. Johnston, 41st Battalion, is to the effect that he was admitted on 8-9-18, suffering appendicitis to the Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire, England, where he succumbed to his illness on 12-9-18. Later official advice coming to hand by mail, will, it is anticipated, give further particulars, and these, on receipt, will be promptly transmitted to the recorded next-of-kin, Miss E. Carson. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed for his personal effects to have been returned to this office....*”

An inventory of Effects of the late No. 1851 Johnston, C.W. was forwarded to “*Sec: Dep of Defence Melbourne*” for N.O.K. (Friend) Mr Carson, George Street, Rockhampton, Queensland (no date) from “*Coo-ee*”.

Another inventory of Effects of the late No. 1851 Johnston, C.W. was forwarded to Secretary, Department of Defence , Melbourne, for N.O.K. (Friend) Mr Carson, George Street, Rockhampton, Queensland (no date) from “*Bulla*”.

A package of the personal effects of the late Lance Corporal C. W. Johnston from the "Bulla" were signed for on 25th August, 1919 by John Johnston, father of the late Lance Corporal C. W. Johnston. Another package from "Coo-ee" was signed for on 10th February, 1920 by Margaret Johnston.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Lance Corporal Charles William Johnstone contains a request from the Red Cross from the Brisbane Bureau to obtain the details of the illness, death and burial of 1851, Pte C. W. Johnston, 41st Battalion. Laura Fyans, "The Bungalow" Fovant, Wilshire replied with the following letter: "*Re 1851, Pte C. W. Johnston. He came into this Hospital on the 7th September – being operated on the same afternoon – when he was found to be suffering from a very bad abscess on the appendix which was perforated. He was very ill, very restless and vomited a great deal – having also a bad troublesome cough – and complained of a severe pain in the side. The Matron assured me everything possible that could be done, was done for him. He had another slight operation in a few days. He was quite conscious the night before he died and on the Matron asking had he had any friend he would like to send for, he took the pen and wrote the address of an old lady friend who was sent for and came to his funeral. He died at 6.20 am on the 12th September and was buried in the R.C. Section of the Cemetery in Salisbury in the London Road on the 16th September. The Nurse that attended to him spoke to me also and told me that the affected part was gangrenous when the poor lad was operated on. Though he told her he had only felt really ill about two days before he came to Hospital. She spoke in the highest terms of the lad. It is very sad for his people. At any time will only be too pleased to get you any information that you may require here – as am generally at the Hospital there from times each week – and getting to know the Nurses. The address of the Lady is :- Mrs Haig, 39 Sydney Road, Torpoint, R.S.O. Cornwall and think all the poor fellow's papers were sent to this lady friend.*"

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Johnston's father – Mr J, Johnston, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston – service number 1851, aged 23, of 41st Battalion, Australian Infantry. Son of John and Margaret Johnston.

Lance Corporal C. W. 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 134.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Rockhampton War Memorial, located in Botanic Gardens, 100 Spencer Street, Rockhampton, Queensland, does not list individual names.



Rockhampton War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia – Diane Watson)

(58 pages of Lance Corporal Charles William 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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTIES

358th LIST

WOUNDED

C. W. Johnston, North Rockhampton (sev.)

(*Daily Standard*, Brisbane, Queensland – 27 November, 1917)

LOCAL AND GENERAL NEWS

Mr. J. Johnston, lighting engineer, Alma-street, between Denham and Fitzroy streets, received the sad news yesterday of the death of his eldest son, Corporal C. W. Johnston. Corporal Johnston, who was twenty-three years of age, was wounded at the front on the 7th of October last and did not recover sufficiently from the effects of the injuries he received on that occasion to be able to return to the firing line. The immediate cause of death, however, was appendicitis. Corporal Johnston volunteered for service abroad two days after the outbreak of war, but being under age, was not accepted. Twelve months later, however, he again volunteered, and this time he was successful. Prior to his enlistment he was in the employ of Messrs. Burns and Twigg as a fitter. In fact, he served his apprenticeship with that firm. This is the second bereavement Mr. Johnston has sustained recently, another of his sons having passed away a little over twelve months ago, and the sympathy of his many friends will be extended to him in the death of so promising a young man and soldier as Corporal Johnston.

(*Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, Queensland – 18 September, 1918) & (*The Capricornian*, Rockhampton, Queensland – 21 September, 1918)

LOCAL AND GENERAL NEWS

.... The Mayor, Alderman C. O. Gough, has been officially advised of the death, on the 12th of September, from appendicitis, of Lance-corporal Charles William Johnston, son of Mr J. Johnston, Alma-street, between Denham and Fitzroy streets.

(*The Capricornian*, Rockhampton, Queensland – 5 October, 1918)

TOLL OF WAR

QUEENSLAND CASUALTIES

Casualty List No. 438, which was issued late last night, contains the following particulars of Queensland soldiers:-

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

L.Cpl. C W. Johnston, N. Rockhampton, 12/9/18, illness (p.r.w.)

(*The Daily Mail*, Brisbane, Queensland – 31 October, 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*)

Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

London Road Cemetery, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England

London Road Cemetery, Salisbury contains 52 World War 1 burials & 52 World War 2 burials. There are 9 Australian WW1 War Graves & 1 WW2 Australian War Grave in this Cemetery.



(Photos by julia&keld – Find a Grave)





(Photos from CWGC)



Photo of Lance Corporal Charles William Johnston's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in London Road Cemetery, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Helen Roberts)