

**Mill Road Cemetery,
Cambridge, Cambridgeshire
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



J. E. LANGWORTHY

AUSTRALIAN MUNITION WORKER

30TH JULY, 1918

John Edward (Jack) LANGWORTHY

John Edward Langworthy was born on 28th December, 1896 in Sydney, New South Wales to parents Arthur & Ellen Mary Langworthy (nee Spooner). His birth was registered in 1897 in the district of Annandale, Sydney, NSW.

John Edward Langworthy applied for enrolment as a Volunteer for Manufacture of Munitions in Great Britain. He was given a Muniton Worker number of 2400.

J. E. Langworthy, aged 20, was one of 359 passengers listed as "*Muniton Workers c/o High Commission for Australia*" on board *Beltana* which embarked from Sydney, Australia & arrived at the port of Plymouth, England on 25th August, 1917.

Munitions Worker John Edward Langworthy died on 30th July, 1918 at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

[From information listed on WikiTree – "*According to his family the cause of death was pneumonia or dysentery, which in turn resulted in malnutrition. (The official cause of death was given as "Morbis Cordis, Organic Valvular Heart Disease".)*]

A death for John E. Langworthy, aged 21, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

Munitions Worker John Edward Langworthy was buried in Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England – Plot number VIII.49 & has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

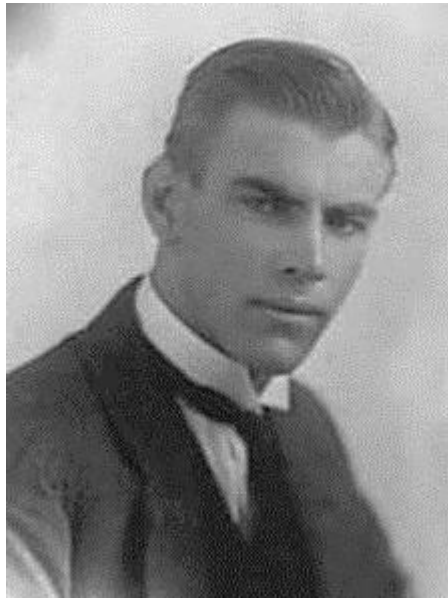
[From information listed on Mill Road Cemetery website – "*His funeral in Cambridge was attended by one of his brothers, Arthur Langworthy, who had fought at Gallipoli and in France with the 18th Bttn (5th Machine Gun) and their uncle, Arthur William Ethric Spooner.*"]

Newspaper item – *Dungog Chronicle & Durham and Gloucester Advertiser*, NSW – 13 August, 1918:

DEATH

Mrs Chas. Robertson, Dungog, has received word that her brother, John Langworthy, a muniton worker, has died of illness. He is a son of Mr and Mrs Langworthy, of Auburn, and left Australia some twelve months ago. He endeavored to enlist three times, but failed, and being determined to go over, volunteered as a muniton worker. Soon after arrival in England he volunteered to go to France and work in the factories there. He returned to England later, where he died. The first news of his illness was received by the family a couple of months ago in a letter from his brother, who is on service in France. The next news was that of his death. Deceased was only 21 years of age. Deepest sympathy is felt for the bereaved family.

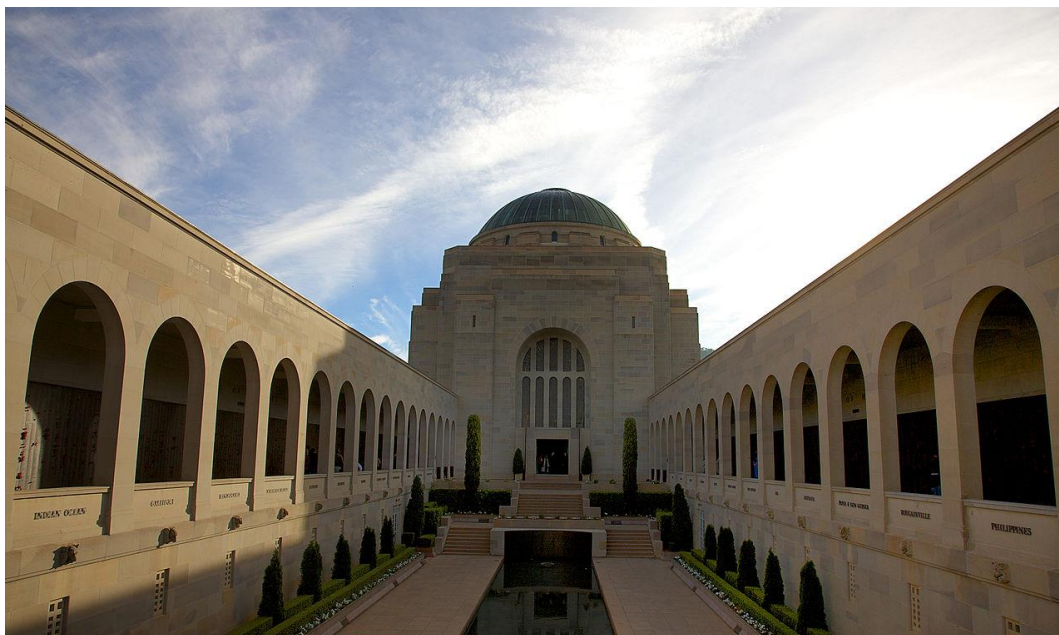
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Worker J. E. Langworthy – service number 2400, Australian Muniton Worker. No family details are listed.



John Edward Langworthy & his mother Ellen Mary Langworthy

(Photos with permission from www.millroadcemetery.org.uk)

Australian Mmunition Worker John Edward Langworthy 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*)

Australian Munitions Workers

Men enlisted under a joint Australian Commonwealth - Imperial Government scheme for providing skilled Australian workers to British war industries during the First World War. Under this scheme the volunteers would receive free passage to Great Britain, an allowance for travel time, a special allowance for the duration of service, and eventual repatriation to Australia. Married men also received a separation allowance, but were required to allot a portion of all their earnings to dependants. The men were expected to work in whatever industries they were directed to by the British Board of Trade, and under the prevailing conditions and wages for the duration of hostilities.

Government newspaper adverts appeared in August, 1916, and the first party of 76 workers departed Australia in September. Groups continued to be recruited and sent at intervals, with the eventual number of workers under the scheme totalling just over 5,000. Almost 1,000 of these had already been working in Britain under private agreements with large firms such as Vickers, and were brought under the conditions of the scheme. An additional 200 former AIF soldiers were also recruited in Britain. Initially only skilled workers were sought, however at the request of the British Government later groups included large numbers of navvies for general labouring.

These men were not members of the Australian Imperial Forces and did not serve in combat units, but were recruited to meet the shortfall in skilled labour that threatened many of Britain's key wartime industries including munitions.

(Source: Australian War Memorial)



*** Note – The Service Record file for John Edward Langworthy, Australian Munition Worker No. 2400 had not been purchased at the time of researching from National Archives, Australia. Once the file is purchased it is then open for all to view on-line.*



Newspaper Notices

The newspapers at the time were encouraged not to report munition explosions or deaths through TNT poisoning as it would affect the morale of the civilian population and so reports in newspapers are virtually non-existent. When the war ended the Australians returned home and life moved on.

MUNITION WORKERS

AUSTRALIANS IN GREAT BRITAIN

Melbourne, Thursday.

The Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) announces that during the period from the inception of the schemes for the despatch of munition workers and navvies to Great Britain up to June 30 last, 2662 munition workers had been disembarked in England for employment on munition and war work. There had also been enrolled under the munition workers' scheme 124 men who had been discharged from the A.I.F. in England for that purpose, and two discharged A.I.F. men had enrolled under the navvies' agreement, making the total number of men engaged in work in Great Britain under both these schemes 4,998. Of this number 384 men had returned to Australia – the majority on account of ill-health. There had been 23 deaths. The agreement of 38 men had been cancelled for disciplinary and other reasons. Six of the men had enlisted in the A.I.F., in England, five men had enlisted in the Royal Navy, and nine men had enlisted in the British Army, leaving the total number of men still in England under the Commonwealth agreement as 4,533. In addition these men were registered on the index held in Australia House 674 Australian

munition workers who proceeded to Great Britain under private contract prior to the inauguration of the Commonwealth scheme. Of the men still in England on June 30, 1918, 87 were waiting return up to that date, 152 men had proceeded to France to engage in special work, and 107 of them had returned again to England. Australian munition workers were employed at 409 different firms or centres, and navvies at 192, and the value of the output produced by the labour of these men was estimated at £6,000,000.

Provision for the payment of munition workers and navvies who proceeded to Great Britain on war work under the agreement with the Commonwealth Government is made in an amendment to the war financial regulations issued today. Munition workers and navvies are to be provided with a free passage from Australia to Great Britain and back. In the case of munition workers a dependants' allowance of 25s a week, with allowances for children, will be made for the first eight weeks after embarkation. Subsequently the allowance will be 20s. Separation allowances equal to that paid in the case of a private in the A.I.F. will be paid to dependants.

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 30 August, 1918)

DEATHS

LANGWORTHY – At Addenbrooks Hospital, Cambridge, John Edward (munition worker), third son of Mr and Mrs Langworthy, of "Boxted", Adderly Street, Auburn, aged 21 years 7 months.

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 10 August, 1918)

DEATHS

LANGWORTHY – July 30, at Addenbrooks Hospital, Cambridge, John Edward (munition worker), third son of Mr and Mrs Langworthy, Adderley-street, Auburn, aged 21 years 7 months. Beloved by all who knew him.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 17 August, 1918)

On Active Service

LANGWORTHY – In proud and loving memory of our dear Jack, who died at Cambridge, July 30, 1918, aged 21½. His duty bravely done.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 30 July, 1919)

On Active Service

LANGWORTHY – In loving memory of John Edward (Jack), who died at Cambridge, July 30, 1918, aged 21. At rest.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 30 July, 1920)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) honours the 1,700,000 men and women of the forces of the Commonwealth who died in the two world wars and ensures that their memory is never forgotten. The applicable periods of consideration are 4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921 for the First World War and 3 September 1939 to 31 December 1947 for the Second World War.

The Commission's principles:

- Each of the dead should be commemorated by name on the headstone or memorial
- Headstones and memorials should be permanent
- Headstones should be uniform
- There should be no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed

During both WW1 (& WW2) a number of Commonwealth civilian organisations were accepted by the military as qualifying for war grave status.

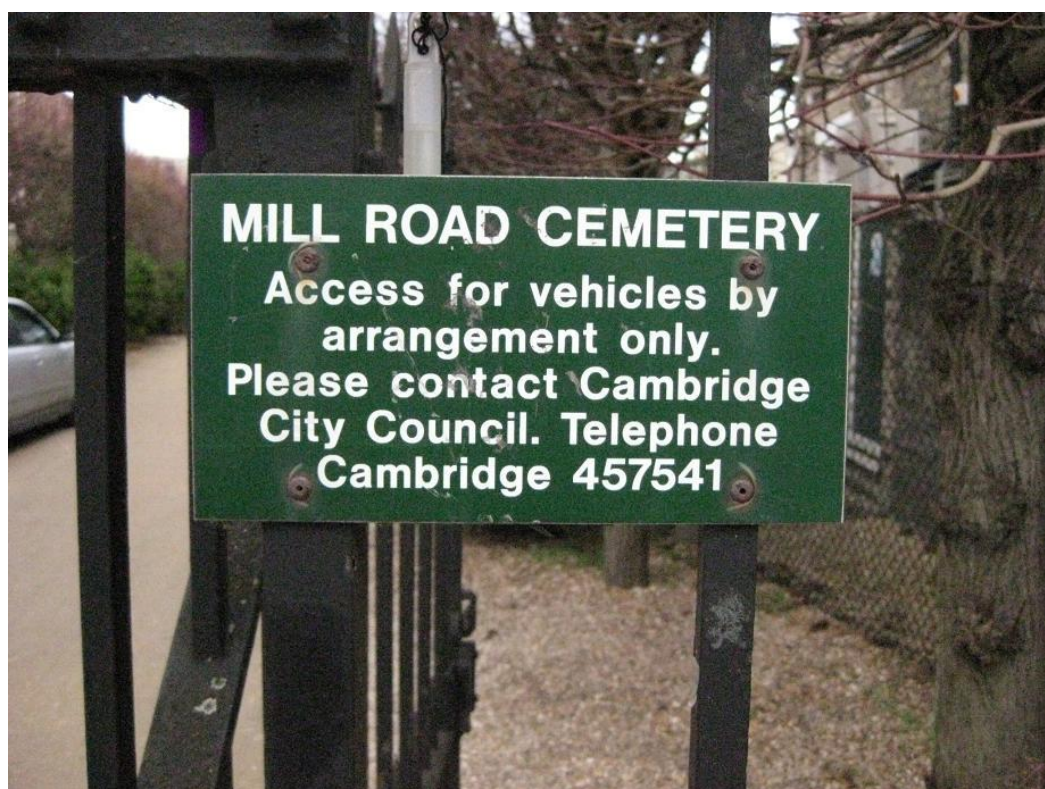
Members of the Recognised Civilian Organisations had to meet two additional criteria not required by military casualties.

1. Their death had to be caused by war actions or the increased threat caused by war and
2. They had to be on duty at the time of their death - being posted overseas counted as 'being on duty'.

The Australian government deemed that their War and Munitions Workers (men and women) qualified for war grave treatment as they were recruited as a body and were posted overseas for the war effort. Some of their CWGC entries show a 'service number' indicating that they were an organised body.

Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England

Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge contains 38 Commonwealth War graves – 33 from World War 1 & 4 from World War 2.



Entrance to Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge (Photo by *julia&keld* – Find a Grave)



Entrance to Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge (Photo by *julia&keld* – Find a Grave)



Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge (Photo by *julia&keld* – Find a Grave)

Photo of Australian Munition Worker J. E. Langworthy's Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone in Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.



(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)