

**St. Mary's New Churchyard,
Codford, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6809 PRIVATE

J. MORTON

15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

19TH FEBRUARY, 1917

John Macintosh Adamson LESSELLS (alias MORTON)

John Macintosh Adamson Lessells was born in Dunfermline, Fifeshire, Scotland in 1896.

John enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) under the name of John Morton. He was a 20 year old, single, Farmer from Harrisville, Queensland when he enlisted on 4th September, 1916. His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his brother – W. Morton of Hunt's Buildings, James' Place, Fifeshire, Dunfermline, Scotland.

Private John Morton, Service number 6809, embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Kyarra (A55)* on 17th November, 1916 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 15th Infantry Battalion, 22nd Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 30th January, 1917. Whilst at sea, Private Morton was admitted to the Ship's Hospital on 26th November & discharged on 2nd December, 1916. On 18th December, 1916, whilst on board, Private John Morton was reported for "*Disobedience of a reasonable order given by his superior officer*" – result was "*Admonished*".

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private John Morton was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 30th January, 1917.

Private John Morton was admitted sick to Group Hospital at Codford on 14th February, 1917 with influenza. He was then admitted to the Sutton Veny Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 16th February, 1917.

Private John Morton died at 9.50 p.m. on 19th February, 1917 at Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England from Pneumonia.

A death for John Morton, aged 20, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private John Morton was buried in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England on 23rd February, 1917 - Grave No. 86.

A communication, dated 21st April, 1920, located in Private John Morton's Service Record file, from Australian Imperial Force, Headquarters in London to Officer in charge of Base Records, Melbourne, Australia reads:

No. 6809 Pte Morton, J, 15th Btn. A.I.F. (deceased)

Statutory Declaration has now been received in this Office from William Lessells, 34, Baldridgeburn Street, Dunfermline, Scotland brother of the above named soldier stating that he enlisted in the A. I. F. under an assumed name. His correct name is given as John Macintosh Adamson Lessells.

Records held by this Office have been amended accordingly. For your information and necessary action please.

Private John Morton – stated to be Lessells, J. M. A. 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 Private Morton/Lessell's brother – Mr W. Lessells (April, 1922 & March, 1922). A note next to the Memorial Plaque notification in Service Record states "*Plaque issued as Lessells, J. M. A. Nom. Roll has shown Morton, J.*"

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Lessells – service number 6809, of 15th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed. Served as MORTON. A separate entry is listed by Commonwealth War Graves Commission for Private J. Morton, – service number 6809, ALIAS, died 19 February, 1917.

As a result of the above letter, Private John Morton is remembered on the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour for World War 1 as Private J. M. A. Lessells. He is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 76. The Roll of Honour lists his full name as John Macindish Adamson Lessells.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

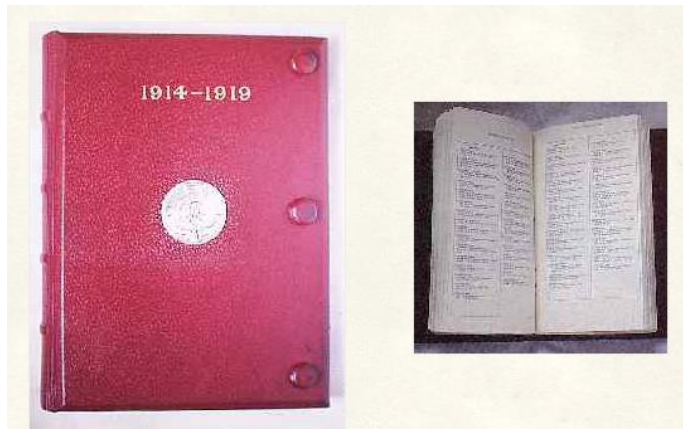


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

John Macindish Adamson Lessells is remembered in the Roll of Honour books held in the Hall of Honour inside The Scottish National War Memorial. The north side of the Hall of Honour is divided by columns into bays, each dedicated to a different regiment and enhanced with battle honours and consecrated colours. On the broad shelf in front of each of the bays, the names of the dead are listed in leather-bound books.



The Scottish National War Memorial & the Hall of Honour



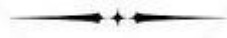
& the Roll of Honour books.

(Photos from The Scottish National War Memorial)



(29 pages of Private John Morton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website. His Service Record is filed under the name Morton.)

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



Newspaper Reports

Roll of Honor

Casualty list No. 277

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private J. Morton, Scotland

(Townsville Daily Bulletin, Queensland – 10 March, 1917)

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 at Codford War Graves Cemetery. 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)

Private J. Morton does not have a personal inscription on his headstone. His headstone is under his alias rather than his correct name of John Macintosh Adamson Lessells

St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England

The New Zealand Command Depot was established at Codford in June 1916 and the No 3 New Zealand General Hospital followed in July. The New Churchyard was established by deed of gift as the "Military Burial Ground," with a small part reserved for future burials from the parish. The war graves plot contains 98 burials, mostly of New Zealand and Australian forces. There is only one burial of the Second World War in the New Churchyard.

(Information from CWGC)

There are 31 WW1 Australian War Graves & 66 WW1 New Zealand War Graves located here. There is one WW1 British Royal Army Medical Corp Grave & one WW2 Welsh Guards grave located in this Churchyard.



St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford *(Photos courtesy of Romy Wyeth)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

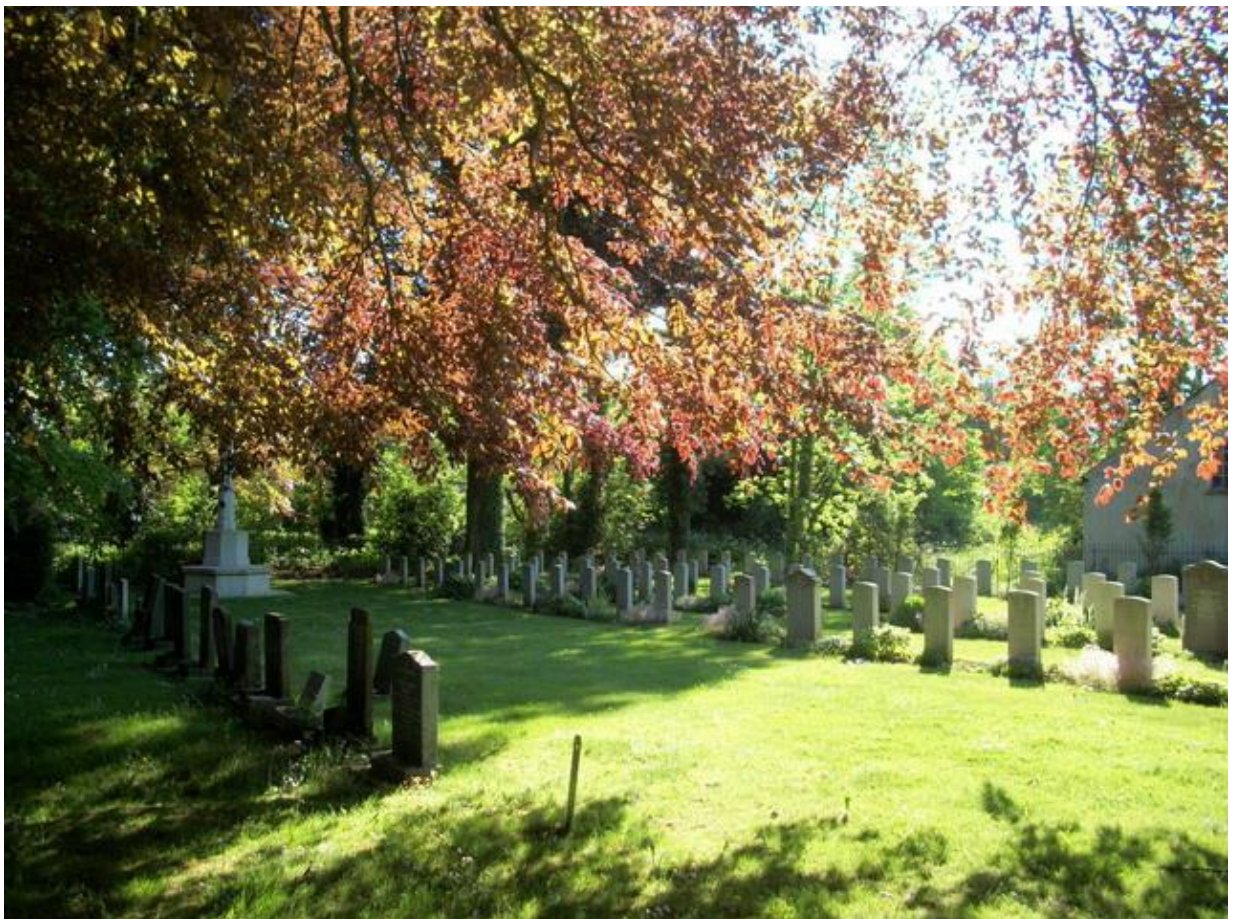
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(Photo by Romy Wyeth 2013)



New Zealand Section of Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery (Photo by Romy Wyeth 2013)



(Photo by Andrea Charlesworth 2012)

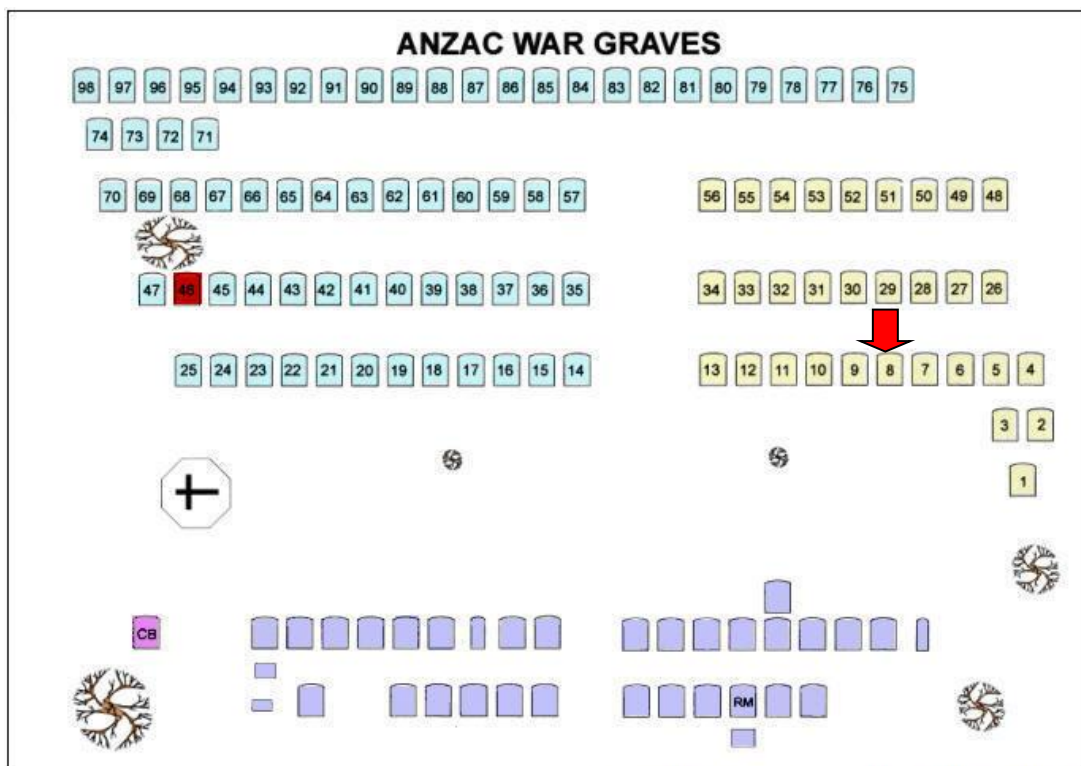
Photo of Private J. Morton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England. Also known as Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Headstone Photos courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Private J. Morton is located in Main Front Row (Right hand side) Grave Plot # 8 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (CWGC Reference - Grave # 86)



- Australian Soldiers
 - Welsh Soldier
 - New Zealand Soldiers
 - Local Burials
 - UK Soldier
- Codford War Graves map adapted from Brian Marshall
courtesy of Romy Wyeth