

**Shorncliffe Military Cemetery,  
Folkestone, Kent  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**629 PRIVATE**

**G. MELBOURNE**

**37TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**2ND SEPTEMBER, 1917 Age 20**

*For His Country*

*To Live In Hearts*

*We Leave Behind*

*Is Not To Die*

## George MELBOURNE

George Melbourne was born at Yackandandah, Victoria in August, 1897 to parents George and Ellen Agnes Melbourne (nee McVicar).

George Melbourne was an 18 year old, single, Labourer from Yackandandah, Victoria when he enlisted at Wangaratta, Victoria on 22nd February, 1916 with the 10th Infantry Brigade, 37th Infantry Battalion "B" Company of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 629 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – George Melbourne of Yackandandah, Victoria. George Melbourne's Attestation Papers are marked with "*Teeth need attention*" & under the Certificate of Medical Examination section it reads "*Deficient in physique & chest. Accepted provisionally. 25/3/16 Re-examined at Seymour & medically fit.*" George's older brother – William Robert Melbourne, a 22 year old Labourer from Monea, Victoria enlisted a week earlier on 15th February, 1916 with 37th Infantry Battalion "B" Company of the Australian Imperial Force.

Private George Melbourne was posted to "B" Company, 37th Battalion on 16th March, 1916 for recruit training.

Private George Melbourne was absent without leave for 3 days from Camp at Seymour on 13th May, 1916. He was fined 15/- & 14 days confined to Barracks.

Private George Melbourne & his brother William Robert Melbourne both embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Persic* (A34) on 3rd June, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 25th July, 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 George Melbourne was admitted to Brigade Hospital at Parkhouse, Wiltshire on 10th October, 1916 with Mumps. He was discharged from Hospital on 23rd October, 1916 & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 24th October, 1916.

Private George Melbourne proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 22nd November, 1916.

Private George Melbourne was sent sick to Hospital in France on 9th February, 1917 & admitted to 9th Australian Field Ambulance the same day with Scabies. He was discharged to duty on 17th February, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion the same day.

Private George Melbourne was wounded in action on 7-9th June, 1917 (date recorded as per Casualty Form - Active Service). He was admitted to 77th Field Ambulance on 8th June, 1917 with gunshot wounds to left shoulder & left knee then transferred to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 8th June, 1917. Pte Melbourne was transferred to Ambulance Train 28 on 11th June, 1917 & admitted to 14th General Hospital on 12th June, 1917. He was invalided to England from Boulogne, France on 12th June, 1917 on Hospital Ship *St Denis* with gunshot wounds to left Shoulder & left knee – severe.

### 37th Battalion

The 37th Battalion was formed, as part of the 10th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division, in February 1916 at Seymour in Victoria. Its recruits were drawn from Melbourne, north-east Victoria and Gippsland.

After training in both Australia and Britain, the battalion moved to France on 23 November 1916. Within a week it had begun to occupy trenches on the Western Front, just in time for the onset of the terrible winter of 1916-17. During this time the 3rd Division was heavily involved in raiding the German trenches. In February 1917 the 37th Battalion provided 400 troops, with a similar party from the 38th Battalion, to form a special raiding "battalion". After several weeks of training this force staged a single 35-minute raid on the night of 27 February and was then disbanded

The 37th fought in its first major battle at Messines, in Belgium, between 7-9 June 1917. For his actions during this battle, Captain Robert Grieve was awarded the Victoria Cross.

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

No.	629	Rank	PTE.
Name (Block letters to be used.)	MELBOURNE G.		
Unit (Above to be filled in by earliest unit possible.)	37/A.I.F.		
<b>SHIP LABEL</b>			
The following details, and also the above if not already completed, to be filled in at the last Base Hospital, excepting date and name of ship, which will be entered on board ship.			
Diagnosis (briefly).	G.S.W. Shoulder (L)		SLIGHT or SEVERE
Special attention needed in transit.	Knee (L)		

### Ship Label for Pte George Melbourne

Private George Melbourne was admitted to Manor House Hospital, Folkestone, Kent, England on 19th July, 1917 with gunshot wounds to left knee & left shoulder. The Medical Case Sheet for Pte George Melbourne reads in part

"He was admitted to this Hosp with shoulder condition *practically* healed. Knee had been incised... and was still discharging at the incision. ... On 9-8-17 the knee became very painful and swollen and temp went up to 102.8. Knee incised on 15-8-17 and tubes inserted. Considerable discharge but temp. did not fall. On 18-8-17 incision enlarged laterally.... In 29-8-17 a Lung condition followed and Resp became rapid."

Samples from the discharge of the knee of Pte Melbourne were sent to the No. 2 Canadian Mobile Laboratory at Folkestone on 19th August, 1917 – Staphylococcus was found to be growing abundantly.

Private George Melbourne died at 7 am on 2nd September, 1917 at Manor House Hospital, Folkestone, Kent, England from wounds received in action – Gunshot wounds to left shoulder & left knee. The Admissions to Hospital (pink) form records that Pte George Melbourne "developed Septicaemia and Septic Pneumonia and died."

A death for George Melbourne, aged 20, was registered in the September quarter, 1917 in the district of Elham, Kent, England.

Private George Melbourne was buried on 4th September, 1917 in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England – Plot number O. 591. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte G. Melbourne - Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. Gun Carriage, Band, Firing Party, buglers and party of mourners of the 14th and 16th Canadian Scottish Regiments under the Command of Lt Adie were in attendance. The coffin was draped with the "Union Jack". Prior to interment a service was held in the Garrison Church by Senior Chaplain McCready of the Imperial Army. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. No relatives were present at the funeral. Temporary oak memorial will be erected by the A.I.F.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private George Melbourne contains a request from the British Red Cross on behalf his brother who was in First Southern General Hospital & believed his brother died in a Birmingham Hospital about August, 1917 & he wished to know where his brother is buried & the exact location of the grave so that he can visit it. A reply from O.C. At Manor House Hospital, Folkestone advised that "Pte George Melbourne was

*admitted to this hospital on 19-7-17 suffering from wound of left knee with suppuration and died on 2-9-17 of septicaemia. He was buried in the cemetery at Shorncliffe Camp about 1 ½ miles from here. It is very sad for the relatives when they are so far away. They have our warm sympathy."*

Private George Melbourne was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Melbourne's father – Mr George Melbourne, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent March, 1922 & Plaque sent September, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private George Melbourne – service number 629, aged 20, of 37th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of George and Ellen Agnes Melbourne of Yackandandah, Victoria.

Private G. Melbourne is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 128.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

G. Melbourne & his brother W. Melbourne are remembered on the Back Street State School Honour Roll, located in Atheneum Building, 29 High Street, Yackandandah, Victoria.



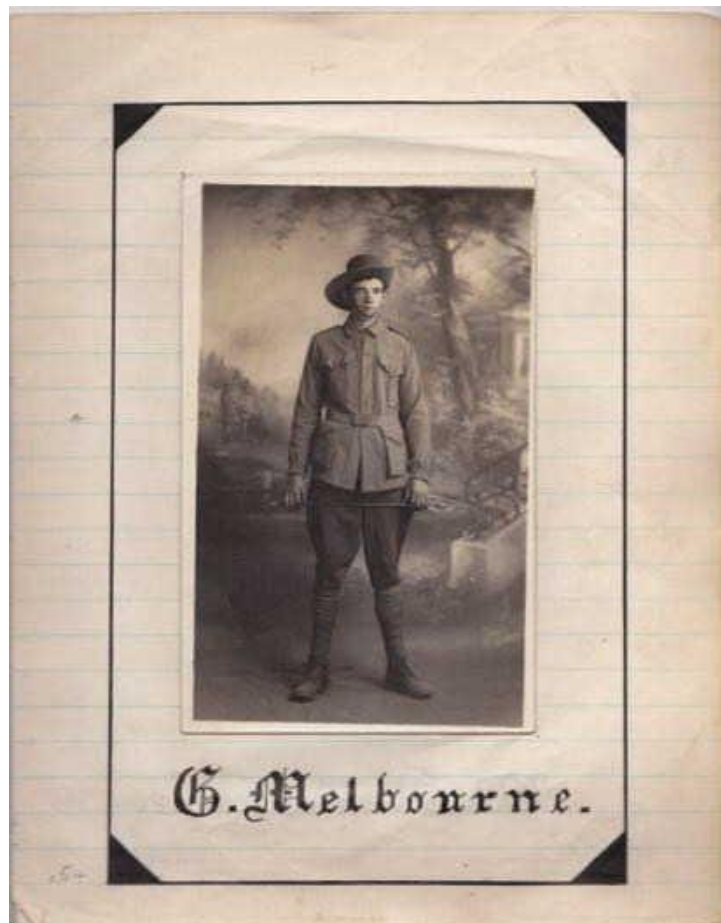
**Back Street State School Honour Roll** (Photo from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)



G. Melbourne is remembered on the Yackandandah State School Honour Roll, located in Atheneum Building, 29 High Street, Yackandandah, Victoria.



Yackandandah State School Honour Roll (Photos from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)



Yackandandah School's "War Stories"

G. Melbourne is remembered on the Soldiers Memorial Gates to Yackandandah Gardens on Wellsford & High Streets, Yackandandah, Victoria.

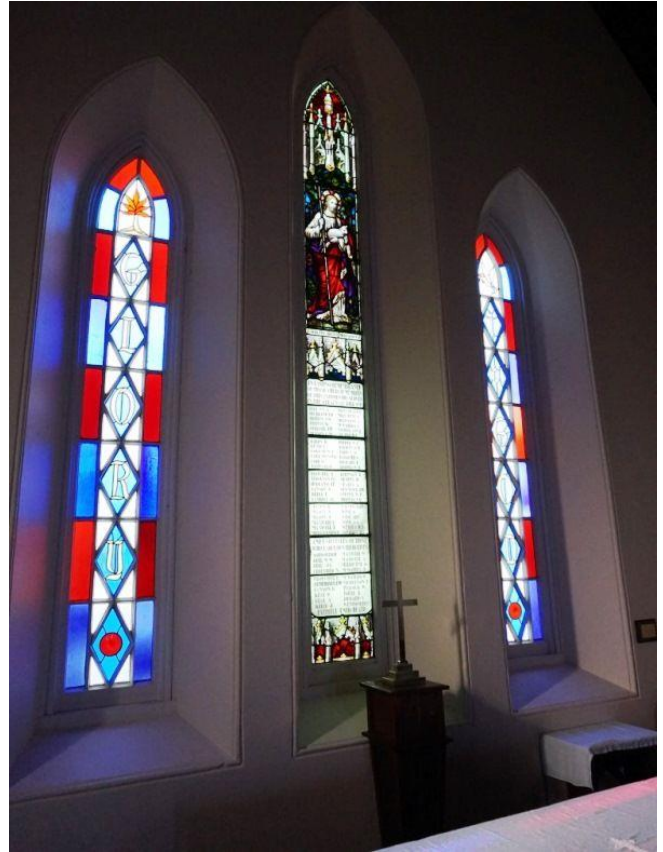


**Soldiers Memorial Gates, Yackandandah** (Photos from Monument Australia – Graeme Saunders / Chris McLaughlin)





G. Melbourne is remembered on the World War One Memorial Window, located in Yackandandah Uniting Church at 8 Church Street, Yackandandah, Victoria.



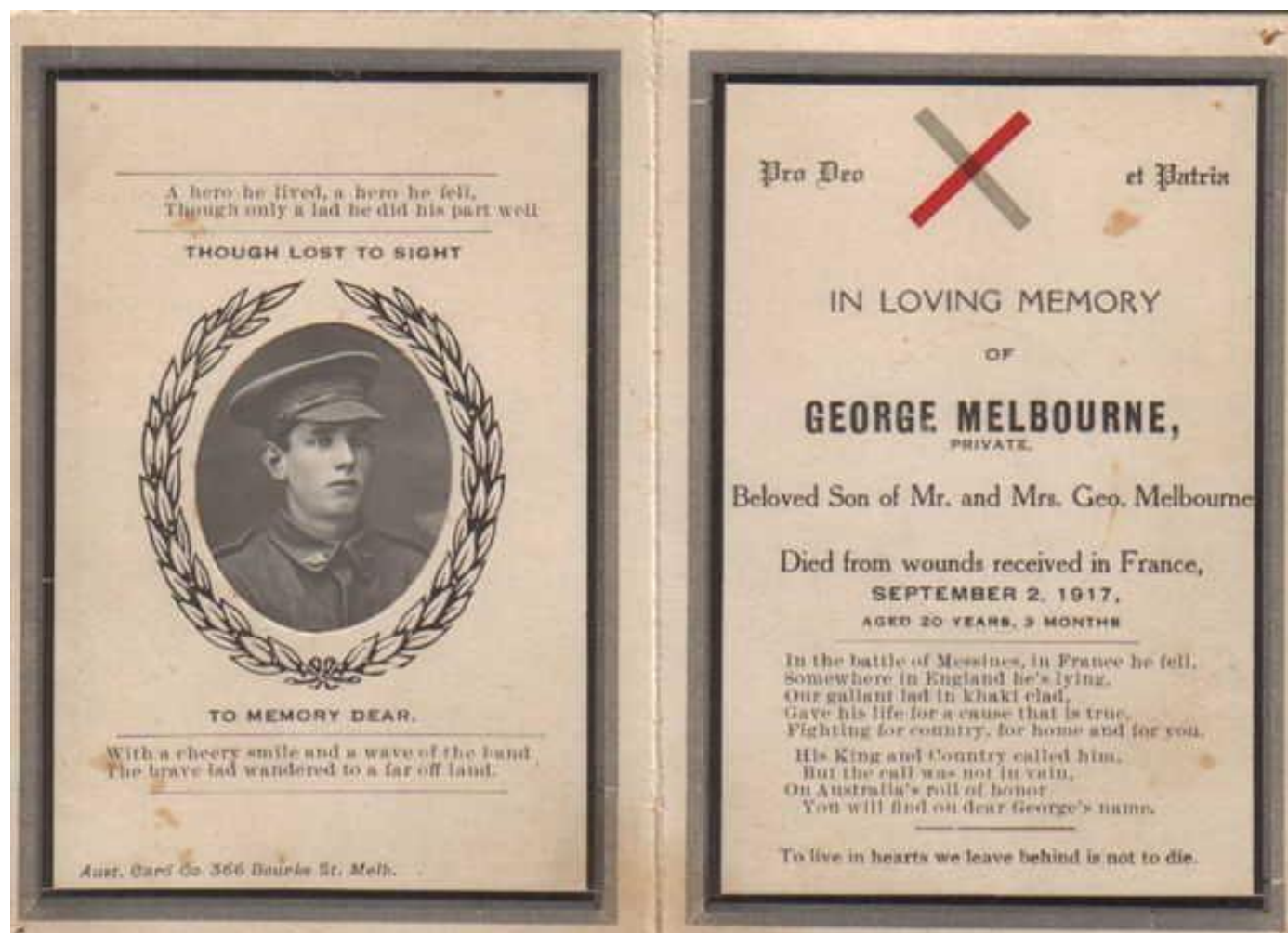
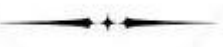
**World War One Memorial Window, Yackandandah Uniting Church**

*(Photos from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)*

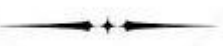


(56 pages of Private George Melbourne's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Memorial Card for Private George Melbourne



## Newspaper Notices

### THE 320th CASUALTY LIST

#### WOUNDED

Private G. Melbourne, Yackandandah

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 14 July, 1917)



News was received to-day that Private George Melbourne had died in hospital from wounds received in action.

*(The Yackandandah Times, Victoria – 6 September, 1917)*

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The death of Private George Melbourne came as a shock to the residents of the district. He had been in hospital some time, suffering from wounds in the left shoulder and left knee, and in letters received from him by his relatives he stated his knee was coming on well and he hoped to be coming home to Australia as soon as he was able to walk. He only anticipated that his knee would be a little stiff. His brother, William, who is a machine gunner was in the same battle and came out without a scratch, although he was buried up to the neck through a shell explosion. Another brother is in hospital in Egypt suffering from shell shock. He was in one big battle that lasted a week, and had nothing to eat for four days. Private George Melbourne was well liked by everybody, and great sympathy is felt for his parents.

*(The Yackandandah Times, Victoria – 13 September, 1917)*

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### **Bereavement Notice**

Mr GEO. MELBOURNE and Family desire to return sincere thanks to friends for letters of condolence, telegrams and sympathetic messages in their recent sad bereavement.

*(The Yackandandah Times, Victoria – 13 September, 1917)*

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### **THE 338th CASUALTY LIST**

#### **DIED OF WOUNDS**

Private G. Melbourne, Yackandandah

*(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 19 September, 1917)*

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### **In Memoriam**

MELBOURNE – In sad and loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private George Melbourne, who died of wounds received in France, September 2nd, 1917.

In the battle of Messines in France he fell,

    Somewhere in England he's lying,

Our gallant lad, in Khaki clad,

    Gave his life for a cause that is true,

Fighting for country, for home and for you.

His King and Country called him,

    But the call was not in vain,

On Australia's roll of honour

    You will find our dear George's name.

                            Sadly missed

- Inserted by his sorrowing parents, brother, and sister Eva.

*(The Yackandandah Times, Victoria – 5 September, 1918)*

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George Melbourne is remembered on the Family Headstone located in Yackandandah Cemetery, Victoria.



Melbourne Family Headstone in Yackandndah Cemetery, Victoria

*In Memory of my Husband*

**GEORGE MELBOURNE**

*Died 7<sup>th</sup> May 1942 Aged 74 Years*

*Also My Beloved Sons*

***GEORGE Died On Active Service England***

***2<sup>nd</sup> September 1917 Aged 20 Years.***

*CLARENCE Beloved Husband of JANE*

*Killed In Action N.C. 27<sup>th</sup> April 1943*

*Aged 31 Years.*

*Also Our Beloved Mother*

**ELLEN AGNES MELBOURNE**

*Passed Away 17<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1969, Aged 94 Years.*

*At Rest*

### 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)*

Private G. Melbourne does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*For His Country To Live In Hearts We Leave Behind Is Not To Die*

### **Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England**

Shorncliffe Military Cemetery belongs to the Ministry of Defence and contains war graves of both World Wars. It is close to the military camp at Shorncliffe, 2 miles west of Folkestone

During the First World War a number of Canadian military establishments were centred on Shorncliffe. There were camps and a Machine Gun School which were served by the Shorncliffe Military Hospital (later No. 9 Canadian General), the Moore Barracks Military Hospital (later No. 11 Canadian General), and other Canadian hospitals. The Canadian Army Medical Corps Training Depot was at or near Shorncliffe during almost the whole of the war. On three occasions Canadian soldiers were killed during air raids on Shorncliffe.

Shorncliffe Military Cemetery contains 471 First World War burials, more than 300 of them Canadian. Second World War burials number 81, including 1 unidentified U.K. soldier and 1 Polish Foreign National. The cemetery also contains a screen wall on which are commemorated 18 Belgians originally buried in a mausoleum, now demolished.

There are 11 Australians from World War 1 buried in this Cemetery – 2 with Royal Air Force.

*(Information from the CWGC)*



**Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Folkestone** *(Photo courtesy of Paul Kendall)*





**Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Folkestone** (Photo above courtesy of Paul Kendall & below Stephen Summerfield)





Photo of Private G. Melbourne's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Folkestone, Kent, England.





**Cross of Sacrifice** *(Photo courtesy of Paul Kendall)*