

**Sutton Road Cemetery,
Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2934 PRIVATE

J. S. MITCHELL

52ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH FEBRUARY, 1917

James Summerville MITCHELL

(also **Somerville**)

James Summerville Mitchell was born in Edinburgh, Scotland on 18th January, 1870 to parents William James & Grace Mitchell (nee Somerville).

The 1871 Scotland Census recorded James A. Mitchell (born Colinton, Midlothian) as a 1 year old, living with his family at Juniper Green, Montpelier, Midlothian, Scotland. His parents were listed as William James Mitchell (Landowner & Retired Farmer, aged 35, born Milburn, Linlithgowshire) & Grace Mitchell (aged 34, born Carotyne, Lanarkshire). William James Mitchell's brother – Graham A. Mitchell (House Carpenter, aged 38) was also listed. James Mitchell was the youngest of seven children listed on this Census – Susan B. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 12, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire), Agnes E. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 10, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire), Catherine W. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 8, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire), Grace A. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 7, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire), Margaret S. Mitchell (aged 4, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire), Graham A. Mitchell (aged 2, born Crenwath, Lanarkshire) then James. Also listed were 2 Servants – Jane Price (General Servant, aged 24) & Margaret McBell (Nursery Maid, aged 18). (Note: the actual 1871 Scotland Census was not viewed - transcript was as listed on Ancestry)

The 1881 Scotland Census recorded James S. Mitchell (born Juniper Green, Edinburgh, Scotland) as an 11 year old Scholar, living with his family at Farmer's House, Whitelaw, Whittingham, East Lothian, Scotland. His parents were listed as William James Mitchell (Farmer – employing 6 men, 3 women & 1 boy, aged 46) & Grace Mitchell (aged 44). James S. Mitchell was one of eight children listed on this Census – Susan B. Mitchell (Farmer's daughter, aged 21, born Carnwath, Lanarkshire), Agnes E. Mitchell (aged 19, born Carnwath, Lanarkshire), Cathrine W. Mitchell (aged 17, born Carnwath, Lanarkshire), Grahame A. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 12, born Carnwath, Lanarkshire), James S. Mitchell, William Mitchell (Scholar, aged 8, born Juniper Green, Edinburgh), Euphemia Mitchell (Scholar, aged 6, born Haddington) & Maggie S. Mitchell (Scholar, aged 14, born Carnwath, Lanarkshire – listed under 3 servants). Also listed was William James Mitchell's brother – Grahame A. Mitchell (Annuitant, aged 44) & 3 servants – Jessie Hunter (Cook, aged 18), Cathrine Smith (House Maid, aged 18) & Grace Waters (House maid, aged 17). (Note: the actual 1881 Scotland Census was not viewed - transcript was as listed on Ancestry)

James Summerville Mitchell attended Tonbridge Grammar School, England.

James Sumerville Mitchell (2 listings were made – also in the name of James Summerville Mitchell on England & Wales Civil Registration Marriage Index 1837 - 1915) married Hilda Grey in 1896. Their marriage was registered in the district of Edmonton, Middlesex, England on December quarter 1896.

According to information provided by his wife for the Roll of Honour – James Mitchell came to Australia when he was 30 years old. James Mitchell (Farmer, aged 41), his sons - William (aged 10) & Graham (aged 8), along with his wife Mrs Hilda Mitchell (aged 33) & their daughters – Grace (aged 13), Hilda (aged 11) & Ada (aged 5) were passengers on *Commonwealth* which had departed from London, England on 2nd February, 1911 bound for Australia. (Names were listed in order they were listed on Passenger List).

[According to information provided by his wife for the Roll of Honour – she stated James Summerville Mitchell (name as written by Hilda Mitchell) was "*son of Dr Graham Alexander Mitchell LLD (?) of Whitburn, Scotland*"]

James Sommerville Mitchell stated he was aged 40 years & 11 months, married & a Draper when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Lismore, New South Wales on 2nd December, 1915. His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs J. S. Mitchell of Guards Hill, Lismore, NSW. James Mitchell stated on his Attestation Papers that he had been apprenticed to C. & E. Daniels, London, for 3 years.

[Note: Private James Mitchell's middle name was recorded with various spellings. I have used the spelling as shown on the different forms]

Private James Sommerville Mitchell, Service number 619, was posted to No. 10 Depot Battalion (B. Company) from 15th December, 1915. He was transferred to 36th Battalion on 22nd January, 1916 then transferred to 42nd Battalion on 18th February, 1916.

Private James Somerville Mitchell, "C" Company, 42nd Battalion had applied for 8 days Home Leave (which meant a total of 4 days at home, the rest were for time travelling to & back) as his wife was seriously ill. 6 days Home Leave was granted to Private James Somerville Mitchell on 23rd February, 1916.

Private James S. Mitchell telegraphed Captain Hearn, O.C., 42nd Battalion, Thompson Paddock, Enoggera Camp on 28th February, 1916 "*Wife very ill, returning Wednesday.*"

Private J. S. Mitchell, 42nd Battalion, Thompson Paddock wrote to the O.C., 42nd Battalion on 8th March, 1916 with the following letter: "*I herewith apply for my Discharge as my wife is in a very bad state of health. Should anything happen to her this would leave seven young children destitute in a country with no friends as my home is in England.*"

Hilda Mitchell wrote the following letter from Lismore on 9th March, 1916: "*I am desirous of my husband J. S. Mitchell getting his discharge owing to the state of my health.*"

Captain A. R. Heron, O/C 42nd Battalion wrote to Camp Commandant on 13th March, 1916 recommending a discharged for Private J. S. Mitchell.

Private James Sommerville Mitchell was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on 20th March, 1916 at his own request owing to his wife's illness.

James Summerville Mitchell stated he was a 42 year old, married (with 3 children), Farmer from Brisbane, Queensland when he re-enlisted on 20th September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2934 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Hilda Mitchell, Wynnum, Queensland. James Mitchell stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served for 16 weeks with A.I.F. in Brisbane but had been discharged owing to his wife's illness. He stated he had never been apprenticed.

[Note: The Attestation Papers for James Mitchell when he re-enlisted have his middle name listed as "*Sumerville*". Some of the forms in his Service Record file have the name as "*Somerville*".]

Private James Summerville Mitchell was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 26th September, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 7th Reinforcements of 52nd Battalion on 16th October, 1916.

Private James Summerville Mitchell embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Marathon (A74)* on 27th October, 1916 with the 52nd Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 9th January, 1917.

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.

52nd Battalion

The 52nd Battalion was raised at Tel el Kebir in Egypt on 1 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were veterans from the 12th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 12th, the 52nd was originally a mix of men from South and Western Australia and Tasmania. From March 1916, the battalion's reinforcement groups mainly comprised men from Queensland. The 52nd became part of the 13th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

***[Note: There are no entries in Private Mitchell's Service Record file to show where he was posted between 9th January, 1917 & his death]*

Private James Summerville Mitchell died on 8th February, 1917 at Westcliffe-On-Sea Hospital, Westcliffe, Essex, England from Acute Bronchitis.

The Death Certificate shows the following details:

No: 381 **When and where died:** Eighth February 1917. 5 Cossington Road Southend on Sea. U.D. **Name and Surname:** James Somerville Mitchell **Sex:** Male **Age:** 46 years **Occupation:** of Ridley Street Brisbane Australia. Private, A.I.F. No. 2931 (Farmer). **Cause of Death:** (1) Chronic Bronchitis with Asthma – 8 days (2) Chronic Nephritis Certified by John Watson Marshall L.R.C.P. **Signature, description and residence of informant:** Katherine Mitchell, sister. Present at the death 5 Cossington Road Southend on Sea. **When registered:** tenth February 1917.

A death for James S. Mitchell, aged 46, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Rochford, Essex, England.

Private James Summerville Mitchell was buried on 12th February, 1917 in Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England – Plot number E. 3440 and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private James Summerville Mitchell 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 Mitchell's widow – Mrs H. Mitchell, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921, returned to Base Records & redespached in May, 1922. The Plaque was sent July, 1922 & returned to Base Records later that month).

Base Records wrote to The Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation, Sydney, NSW on 6th November, 1930: "*With reference to the affairs of the late No. 2934 Private J. S. Mitchell, 52nd Battalion, I should be obliged if you would kindly furnish this office with the latest recorded address of the deceased's widow, Mrs Hilda Mitchell, formerly of Clayfield, Brisbane, Queensland.*"

The Deputy Commissioner, Repatriation replied to Base Records on 13th November, 1930 to advise "... *that the death of Mrs Hilda Mitchell, the widow of the abovementioned late ex-soldier, occurred on 15th November, 1925. A war pension, however, is payable in this State on behalf of Harold Osborne B. Mitchell, a son of the late ex-soldier, and payment of the pension is being collected by his sister, Miss Hilda Mitchell as trustee. The son is an inmate of the Royal North Shore Hospital, St. Leonards, and Miss Hilda Mitchell's address is 121 Belmore Road, Coogee.*"

Base Records wrote to Miss H. Mitchell, 121 Belmore Road, Coogee, NSW on 18th November, 1930 stating "*In order to facilitate the disposal of the Memorial Bronze Plaque issuable on account of the services of the late No. 2934 Private J. S. Mitchell, 52nd Battalion, I should be glad to learn the name and address if the eldest surviving son of this soldier, and in the event of his being a minor, whether you are prepared to accept this memento to be held in trust until such time as the boy reaches the age of discretion, and to return same to the Department of Defence on demand should a prior claimant arise. Should the deceased's eldest son already be of age, however the Plaque will be forwarded direct in receipt of his name and address.*"

Miss H. Mitchell, No. 12 Ambassador Flats, Arden St, Coogee, replied to Base Records on 3rd December, 1930 with the following: "*I have to thank you for yours of 18th November only just received as I had changed my address. My Brother who is the eldest son is still a minor being 19 years of age and is living with me. I will be pleased to accept the Memorial Plaque to be held in trust by me, or return to you should it be necessary as per terms of your letter.*"

Base Records replied to Miss H. Mitchell on 12th December, 1930 with the following: "*I have to acknowledge receipt of your communication of 3.12.1930 relative to the affairs of the late No. 2934 Private J. S. Mitchell, 52nd Battalion, and note your change of address as hereunder. Having regard to the fact that your brother, the eldest surviving son of this soldier, is now 19 years of age, it is considered that he is old enough to personally take possession of the Memorial Bronze Plaque, and arrangements are accordingly being made for this memento to be forwarded to him direct. I am also enclosing herewith two photographs depicting the temporary cross erected over your Father's grave in Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-on-Sea, England, which were previously forwarded to next-of-kin and returned unclaimed.*"

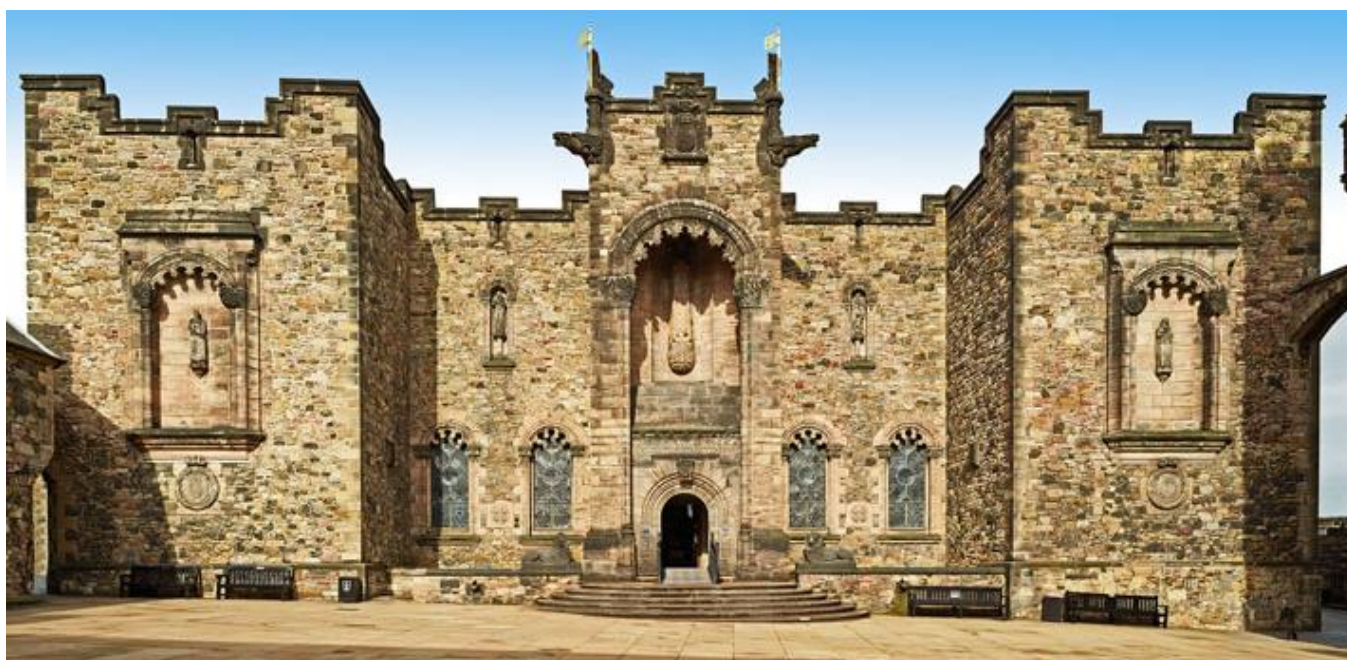
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private J. S. Mitchell – service number 2934, of 52nd Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private J. S. Mitchell is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 155.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

James Summerville Mitchell 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.

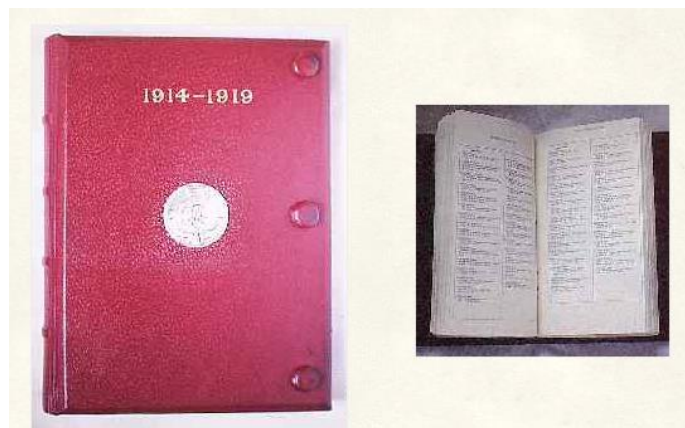


The Scottish National War Memorial

(Photos from The Scottish National War Memorial)



The Hall of Honour & the Roll of Honour books.



(50 pages of Private James Summerville Mitchell'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

PERSONAL NOTES

Mrs Mitchell, Island Farm, Colinton, has been officially notified of the death of her husband, Private James Somerville Mitchell. He sailed from Brisbane on October 27 last, and had only been in England about a month, when he died in the West-Cliff-on-Sea Hospital, Essex, England. The deceased, who was 44 years of age, leaves a widow and a family of seven. He formerly resided in the Lismore district. His two brothers in the Old Country joined the forces soon after the war broke out.

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 16 February, 1917) & (The Queenslander, Brisbane, Queensland – 24 February, 1917)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

Casualty List No. 279 was released yesterday morning by the Commonwealth Defence Department, as follows :_

QUEENSLAND

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte J. S. Mitchell, Nurinda, 8/2/17

(The Daily Mail, Brisbane, Queensland – 16 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. 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. S. Mitchell has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but there is no inscription.

Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England

This cemetery contains 127 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war and 152 burials of the 1939-45 war, including 1 unidentified seaman of the Merchant Navy. In addition there are 4 Foreign National war burials here. There are 2 small Screen Wall memorial panels naming those of the 1914-1918 war whose graves are not marked by headstones.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photo from Find a Grave – Hawk Moth)



(Photo from CWGC)

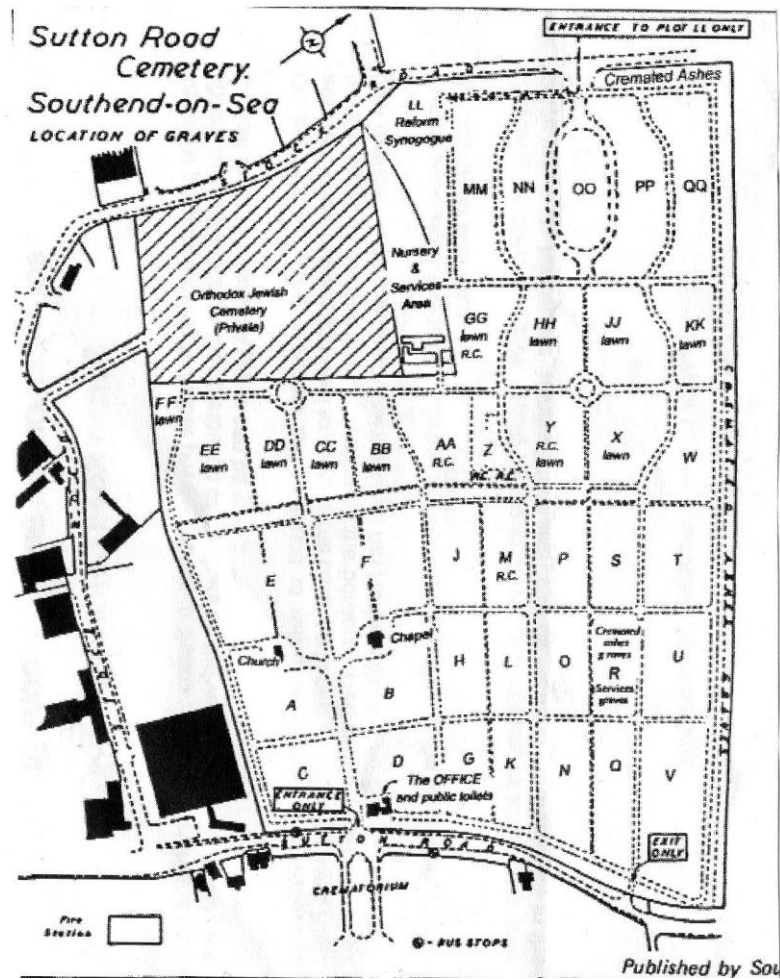
Photo of Private J. S. Mitchell's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England.



(Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)



Row of 7 Australian WW1 Headstones (Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)



(Find a Grave – J Keefe)