Brookwood Military Cemetery, Brookwood, Surrey, England

War Graves

Lest We Forget

World War 1

643   PRIVATE

G. PIGGOTT

38TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

10TH MARCH, 1917

Age 33

The Lord Gave

And The Lord Hath Taken Away

George PIGGOTT

George Piggott was born at Goornong, Victoria in 1883 to parents George James & Elizabeth Piggott (nee Hepworth).

The 1906 & 1909 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Bendigo, subdivision of Goornong, Victoria recorded George Piggott, Labourer from Goornong.

George James Piggott, father of George Piggott, died on 24th November, 1909 at Goornong, Victoria.

George Piggott married Elenor (Helen) Hinch in Victoria in 1910.

The 1906, 1909, 1912, 1913 & 1914 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Bendigo, subdivision of Goornong, Victoria recorded George Piggott, Labourer from Goornong.

George Piggott was a 32 year old, married, Farmer from Goornong, Victoria when he enlisted on 24th February, 1916   at Bendigo, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs E. Piggott, Goornong, Victoria.

[His brother - John James Piggott, 30 year old, married, Farmer from Goornong, Victoria enlisted on 21st February, 1916 & was issued a Service number of 644.]

George Piggott was posted to "B" Company, 38th Battalion on 18th March, 1916.

Private George Piggott, Service number 643, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Runic (A54)* on 20th June, 1916 with the 10th Infantry Brigade, 38th Infantry Battalion "B" Company & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 10th August, 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 Piggott proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 22nd November, 1916.

Private George Piggott was wounded in action on 27th February, 1917. He was admitted to 10th Australian Field Ambulance on 27th February, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to left Tibia, both Legs, left Thigh, Face & abrasions to Face. Private Piggott was transferred to 2nd Casualty Clearing Station the same day. He was transferred to No. 10 Ambulance Train on 2nd March, 1917 & was admitted to 8th Stationary Hospital at Wimereux, France on 7th March, 1917. Private Piggott was transferred to Boulogne, France on 8th March, 1917 & embarked on Hospital Ship *St Denis* for England on the same day with G.S.W. Leg & Face.

38th Battalion

The 38th Battalion was formed on 1 March 1916 at a camp established on the Epsom Racecourse at Bendigo in Victoria. Early training was disrupted by a severe outbreak of cerebro-spinal meningitis in the camp, as a result of which the healthy members were transferred to a camp at Campbellfield, where the Battalion had to be rebuilt from fresh reinforcements.

After training in both Australia and Britain, the 38th Battalion crossed to France in late November 1916 and moved into the trenches of the Western Front for the first time on 1 December. During the harsh winter of 1916-17 the 3rd Division was heavily involved in raiding the German trenches. In February 1917 the 38th Battalion provided 400 troops, with a similar party from the 37th 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……

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 38th Battalion

27 February, 1917 – At 12.30 am the raiding battn attacked the German lines preceded by a heavy barrage. They penetrated to the third line and completed the destruction caused by the artillery, inflicting heavy casualties and bringing back one Machine Gun, one Searchlight and seventeen prisoners. Enemy dead were estimated at about 200. 38th Casualties consisted of 16 O.R's Killed or missing, 3 Officers, 42 O.R. wounded.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Base Records advised Mrs H. Piggott, Goornong, Victoria, wife of Private G. Piggott, on 6th March, 1917 that Private George Piggott had been admitted to Hospital on 27th February with gunshot wound to Legs & Hand & his condition was dangerous.

Private George Piggott was admitted to The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 8th March, 1917 with G.S.W. to both Legs (serious).

Private George Piggott died at 1.45 pm on 10th March, 1917 at The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action in France - G.S.W. Legs & left Hand.

Base Records advised Mrs H. Piggott, Goornong, Victoria on 12th March, 1917 that Private George Piggott's condition was improving.

A death for George Piggott, aged 33, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Private George Piggott was buried on 13th March, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 178.920.

From the burial report of Private George Piggott - *Coffin was good. Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral. Firing Party comprising members attached to the Administrative Headquarters Staff, A.I.F. London were present. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside by an Australian bugler. Prior to the interment of the deceased soldier's remains a Memorial Service was held in the Chapel at the Brookwood Cemetery. Lieut Gallagher of the A.I.F. represented the Commonwealth Military Authorities. No relatives were present at the funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mrs H. Piggott on 3rd April, 1923 stating that the site of No. 643 Private G. Piggott's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row F Grave 10.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – XI. F. 10   Private G. Piggott now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private George Piggott contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relations in Australia to know any particulars.

- The Matron, The King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London replied with the following**:** *"In reply to your letter of April 6th, I beg to say Pte Piggott was admitted on March 8th with wounds of both legs and wrist, he als had an internal ulcer. He was in a very serious condition at time of admission and died on March 10th 1917. He was buried at Brookwood on March 13th. The War Sister has already written to his wife."*

A War Pension was granted to Elinor Piggott, Post Office, Goornong, widow of the late Private George Piggott, 643, 38th Battalion, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 15th May, 1917.

Elizabeth Piggott, Post Office, Goornong, wrote to Base Records on 15th March, 1918 with the following letter: *"I am wrighting in reference to my son foto Private George Piggott who died on March 10 in King George hospital England No 643 B Company 38 Battalion. My daughter in law received too photos was one for me as I would like to now if not do you think there is anyway for me to get one & I loved my son he was one of the Best."*

Base Records replied to Mrs E. Piggott on 22nd March, 1918 advising that *"….photographs (in duplicate) of the graves of deceased members of the Australian Imperial Force, are forwarded to next-of-kin. You could, however, obtain a copy by communicating with The Director of Graves, Registration & Enquiries, War Office, Winchester House, St. James Square, London, S.W. England."*

Private George Piggott was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Piggott's widow - Mrs H. Piggott, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent May, 1922 & Plaque sent July, 1922). The Victory Medal was despatched in March, 1923 & signed for by Elinor Currie on 21st May, 1923. The British War Medal was returned unclaimed on 17th November, 1924.

Communications addressed to Mrs E. Currie, Goornong, Victoria in November, 1924 were returned to Base Records marked "Unclaimed."

Base Records wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Repatriation, Melbourne, on 27th November, 1924 requesting the recent address of Mrs Elinor Currie, the widow (remarried) of the late No. 643 Private George PIGGOTT, 38th Battalion, as a communication forwarded to her at Goornong, Victoria, had been returned unclaimed.

The Deputy Commissioner of Repatriation, Melbourne, replied to Base Records on 4th December, 1924 advising that the present address of Mrs Elinor Currie, widow (remarried) of the late No. 643 Private George PIGGOTT, 38th Battalion, was recorded as Post Office Baddaginnie.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. Currie, Post Office, Baddaginnie, Victoria on 11th December, 1924 with the following:
"I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me now whether communications addressed as this is will reach you, as I desire to transmit to you the British War Medal issuable on account of the service of the late No. 643 Private G. PIGGOTT, 38th Battalion. An early reply will be appreciated."

Mrs E. Currie replied to Base Records on 8th January, 1925 advising that communications addressed to Baddaginnie P. O., Victoria would reach her.

[Elinor Piggott, widow of the late Private George Piggott, remarried in 1923 to Herbert L. Currie.]

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private George Piggott – service number 643, aged 33, of 38th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George James and Elizabeth Piggott; husband of Elinor Piggott, of Goornong, Victoria, Australia.

Private G. Piggott is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 130.

Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Geo. Piggott is remembered on the Goornong & District Honor Roll, located in Goornong Memorial Hall, Midland Highway, Goornong, Victoria.

Goornong & District Honor Roll

(Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Western Front Association Central Victoria Branch)

G. Piggott is remembered on the Goornong Church of England Roll of Honour, located in St. George's Anglican Church, Midland Highway, Goornong, Victoria.

Goornong Church of England Roll of Honour *(Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)*

(52 pages of Private George Piggott'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

WOUNDED.

Pte. G. Piggott, of Goornong.

(*Bendigo Independent*, Victoria – 10 March, 1917)

PRIVATE GEO. PIGGOTT, husband of Mrs. Piggott, of Goornong, wounded in France.

(Bendigonian, Victoria – 15 March, 1917)

Newspaper Notices

PRIVATE G. PIGGOTT

Goornong, 17th March

Mrs Geo. Piggott has received word from the Defence department that her husband, Private Geo. Piggott, was dangerously wounded on the 29th February. He received gunshot wounds in the leg and arm, and was admitted to hospital. Private Piggott, who, with his brother, Lance-Corporal John Piggott, enlisted with the 38th Battalion and sailed on 20th June, 1916, went into action on the 29th November. Being good rifle shots, he and his brother were picked for special sniping work. Private Piggott is a native of Goornong, and his many friends hope he will make good progress towards recovery.

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – 9 March, 1917)

PRIVATE G. PIGGOTT

Goornong, 17th March

Much sympathy was expressed when it became known that Private Geo. Piggott, who was wounded in France, had died in hospital from gunshot wounds in the leg and arm. He was the second son of the late Mr Geo. Piggott, of this township, and was in the firing line with his brother, Lance-Corporal John Piggott. His nephew, Private Charles Thornton, who was reported missing last August, has not been heard of since. Private Piggott's aged mother still resides in the township, also his widow, for whom much sympathy is felt.

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – 19 March, 1917) & (*Bendigonian*, Victoria – 22 March, 1917)

THE 280th CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian names are:-

WOUNDED

Private G. Piggott, Goornong

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 21 March, 1917)

THE 282nd CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian names are:-

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private G. Piggott, Goornong

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 28 March, 1917)

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

THE CASUALTY LISTS

The list of casualties since last Thursday included:-

BENDIGO AND NORTHERN DISTRICT MEN

DIED FROM WOUNDS

Pte G. PIGGOTT, Goornong, 10/3/17

(*Bendigonian*, Victoria – 29 March, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

PIGGOTT. — In loving memory of mv dear son, Pte. George Piggott, died of wounds received in France. March 10, 1917.

Sleep thy last sleep loved one.

Free from and sorrow,

Life's dream is past.

Earth received our treasure.

To rest with God. Asleep in Jesus,

We will meet in heaven, dear son.

— Inserted by his sorrowing mother.

PIGGOTT. — In loving memory of my dear brother, Pte. George Piggott. died of wounds received in France, March 10, 1917.

So sadly missed, so deeply mourned.

                 Rest in peace.

— Inserted by his loving brother on active service, and sister-in-law, Jack and Lydia Piggott.

(*The Bendigo Independent*, Victoria – 11 March, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

PIGGOTT.—In loving memory of my dear husband, Pte. George Piggott, died of wounds received in France, 10th March, 1917.

                 "One of the best."

Oh, the racked suspense of waiting,

      Oh, the misery and strain:

Oh, the heartbreak at the tidings

      That our dear one has been slain.

Are we alone? No, surely

      Some form stands at our side,

That points to cruel wound prints

      In hands and feet and side.

Some mighty, healing comfort

      That makes our tears refrain,

And whispers, oh, so gently,

      For you I, too, was slain.

—Inserted by his loving wife, Elinor Piggott.

(*Bendigo Advertiser*, Victoria – 11 March, 1918) & (*Bendigonian*, Victoria – 14 March, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 27th July, 1921, to Mrs H. Piggott, Goornong, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her husband, the late No. 643 Private G. Piggott, 38th Battalion, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

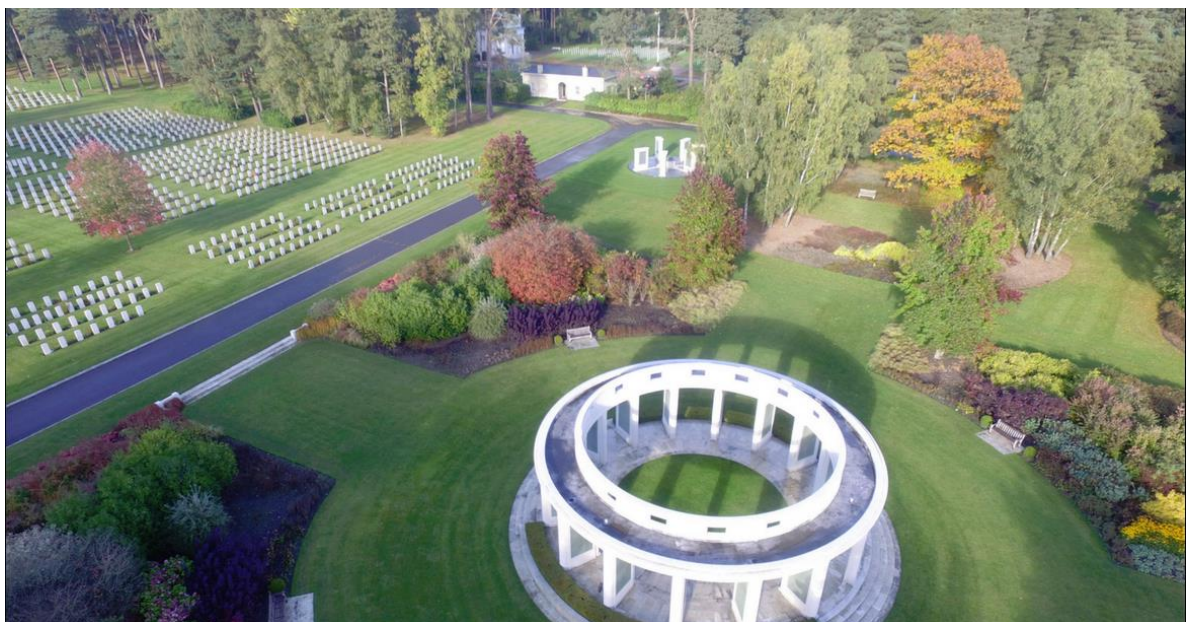Private G. Piggott does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.

Brookwood Military Cemetery *(Photo from CWGC)*

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A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Brookwood Military Cemetery *(Photos by Magicfingers)*

Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery *(Photos by Magicfingers)*

(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)

Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private G. Piggott's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.

(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright)

(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)