

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2717 LANCE CPL.

F. ROBERTSON

11TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

26TH DECEMBER, 1917 Age 25

*In Loving Memory Of
Our Dear Son Fred
Dearly Loved, Sadly Missed
R.I.P.*

Frederick (Fred) ROBERTSON

Frederick Robertson was born at Fremantle, Western Australia on 25th December, 1892 to parents John and Hannah Robertson

Frederick Robertson commenced employment with the Western Australia Great Railways on 15th July, 1911. He was a Cleaner at Bunbury then was transferred to Midland Junction on 28th October, 1912. On 3rd April, 1914 Frederick Robertson became a Fireman & on 14th November, 1914 he was Fireman 2nd Class. He left W.A.G.R. on 7th July, 1915 to join Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force.

The 1914, 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Fremantle, subdivision of Guildford, Western Australia recorded Frederick Robertson, Railway Employee, of New Bond Street, Midland Junction.

Frederick Robertson was a 22 year old, single, Locomotive Fireman from care of Mrs Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia when he enlisted in Perth, Western Australia on 24th June, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2717 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs H. Robertson, care of Mrs Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia (as per Embarkation Roll, however his father – Mr John Robertson was listed as next-of-kin on the Attestation Papers.)

Private Frederick Robertson was posted to 3rd Reinforcements of 28th Battalion on 24th June, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred on 31st August, 1915 to 8th Reinforcements of 11th Battalion.

Private Frederick Robertson embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Anchises (A68)* on 2nd September, 1915 with the 11th Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements.

Private Frederick Robertson was en route from No. 1 Training Battalion at Zeitoun on 21st October, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).

Private Frederick Robertson was taken on strength of 11th Battalion, "B" Company at Sarpi Camp, Lemnos on 12th December, 1915 from 8th Reinforcements.

Private Frederick Robertson disembarked at Alexandria on 6th January, 1916 from H.M.T. *Lake Michigan*. (after evacuation of Gallipoli).

Private Frederick Robertson was admitted to No. 2 Australian General Hospital at Ghezireh on 8th January, 1916 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was transferred to No. 2 Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 12th January, 1916 with Bronchitis & was discharged to duty at Ghezireh on 14th January, 1916. The Clinical Chart recorded Private F. Robertson was with 11th Battalion "B" Company & had Bronchial Catarrh.

Private Frederick Robertson rejoined his Unit at Habieta on 2nd March, 1916.

Private Frederick Robertson embarked from Alexandria on 29th March, 1916 on H.M.T. *Corsican* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 6th April, 1916.

Private Frederick Robertson was appointed Lance Corporal from 13th December, 1916.

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson was admitted to S. M. Field Ambulance on 26th December, 1916 with Gonorrhoea. He was transferred to S.M. Casualty Clearing Station the same day then transferred & admitted to 1st Stationary Hospital at Rouen on 28th December, 1916 with V.D.G. Lance Corporal Robertson was transferred to 51st General Hospital at Etaples, France on 1st January, 1917. He was discharged to duty on 8th March, 1917 – total V.D. Period – 73 days.

Mrs Hannah Robertson, mother of Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson, wrote to Base Records on 12th February, 1916 to notify her change of address from New Bond Street, Midland Junction, West Australia to c/o Mrs C. Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle & advised it was in connection with No. 2717 Private Frederick Robertson, 8th Reinforcements, 11th Battalion & 3151 Private L. A. Robertson, 10th Reinforcement, 11th Battalion.

Base Records replied to Mrs H. Robertson on 26th February, 1916 acknowledging that her change of address had been noted on the records of No. 2717 Private F. Robertson & No. 3151 Private L. A. Robertson.

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson joined 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples on 8th March, 1917. He was marched out from A.D.B.D on 31st March, 1917 to join 11th Battalion.

A Query was made to 11th Battalion on 6th June, 1917 as to when Lance Corporal Robertson rejoined from Hospital.

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson was wounded in action on 15th April, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Field Ambulance on 15th April, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Abdomen. Lance Corporal Robertson was transferred to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station on 16th April, 1917 then transferred to Ambulance Train on 3rd May, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Convalescent General Hospital on 4th May, 1917 then on 6th May, 1917 he was transferred from Boulogne, France to England on Hospital Ship *Jan Breydel*.

11th Battalion

The 11th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. It was the first battalion recruited in Western Australia, and with the 9th, 10th and 12th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.....

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 11th Battalion returned to Egypt. It was split to help form the 51st Battalion, and then brought up to strength with reinforcements.

In March 1916, the battalion sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July. After Pozieres, the battalion manned trenches near Ypres in Flanders before returning to the Somme valley for winter.

In 1917 the battalion took part in the brief advance that followed the German Army's retreat to the Hindenburg Line. During a German counterattack at Louverval, France, in April 1917 Lieutenant Charles Pope was killed performing the deed for which he would be awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross. The battalion subsequently returned to Belgium to participate in the offensive that became known as the Third Battle of Ypres.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 11th Battalion

15th April, 1917 – Louverval:

At 0400 the Battalion was submitted to an Artillery attack, followed by an infantry attack (see narrative of operations)

The number of casualties were (see list attached)

Two prisoners were sent to Brigade Headquarters at 7.10 pm.

At about 1000 Major Watson with two companies of the 2nd Battalion arrived as supports at disposal of C.O. 11th Bn.

The 10th Bn. took over the left half of the front line during the night. Refer to "shorten line order" of 15/4/17 attached.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Base Records wrote to J. Robertson, care of Mrs C. Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia, on 2nd May, 1917 to advise that Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson had been admitted to Hospital in 20th April with gunshot wound penetrating abdomen – dangerous.

Base Records wrote to Mrs Robertson, care of Mrs C. Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia, on 12th May, 1917 to advise that Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson's condition was stationary.

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson was admitted to Military Hospital, Edmonton, England on 7th May, 1917 with G.S.W. to Abdomen- severe.

Base Records wrote to Mrs H. Robertson, care of Mrs C. Deram, Chester Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia, on 23rd May, 1917 to advise that Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson had been transferred to the Edmonton Military Hospital, London North on 7th May, 1917.

Mrs Hannah Robertson, Chester Street, South Fremantle, wrote to Base Records on 3rd August, 1917 asking "*Will you kindly let me know No. 2717 Private F. Robertson progress. I received two Telegrams from the Base Record to the affect that he was dangerously wounded and that his condition was stationery ...*"

Base Records replied to Mrs Hannah Robertson on 14th August, 1917 advising that her "*son is now progressing favourably...*"

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson died at 1.30 pm on 26th December, 1917 at General Military Hospital, Edmonton, England from wounds received in action – gunshot wound/s to Abdomen. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*G.S.W. Abdomen with perforation of liver and ascending (?) to transverse colon..... Patient developed 2 abscess in abdominal wall.....these were opened & drained.....*"

A death for Fred Robertson, aged 24, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Edmonton, Middlesex, England.

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson was buried at 1.30 pm on 29th December, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 180262.

From the burial report of Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson - *Coffin was good, polished Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag. Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were supplied by the Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London. The grave will be turfed immediately and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. No relatives were present at the funeral. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Robertson, 34 Charles St, Sth Fremantle, Western Australia on 3rd April, 1923 stating that the site of L/Corporal F. Robertson's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row B Grave 2. "*While the actual place of burial remains unchanged the previous registration allotted thereto has been altered to conform with the uniform layout of this Cemetery.*" This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - XI. B. 11. Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Hannah Robertson, c/o Mrs C. Dearn, Chester Street, South Fremantle, mother of the late Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson, wrote to Base Records on 13th January, 1917 requesting his death certificate in duplicate.

Base Records replied on 28th February, 1917 enclosing the certificate in duplicate, of report of death of her son, the late No. 2717, Lance Corporal F. Robertson, 11th Battalion.

Mr John Robertson, 34 Charles St, South Fremantle, wrote to Base Records on 24th May, 1920 "*I beg to make application for 1914/15 Star on account of my two sons, Frederick Robertson, No. 2717, 11th Battalion, and Lewis Robertson, 3151, 11th Battalion.*"

Base Records replied to Mr J. Robertson on 14th June, 1920 advising that "*when the Medals are available they will be transmitted to the Military Commandant, Military headquarters, Francis Street, Perth, who will arrange for same to be handed to you on the first suitable occasion.*"

Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Robertson's father – Mr J. Robertson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson – service number 2717, aged 25, of 11th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of John and Hannah Robertson, of Charles St., Fremantle, Western Australia.

Lance Corporal F. Robertson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 63.



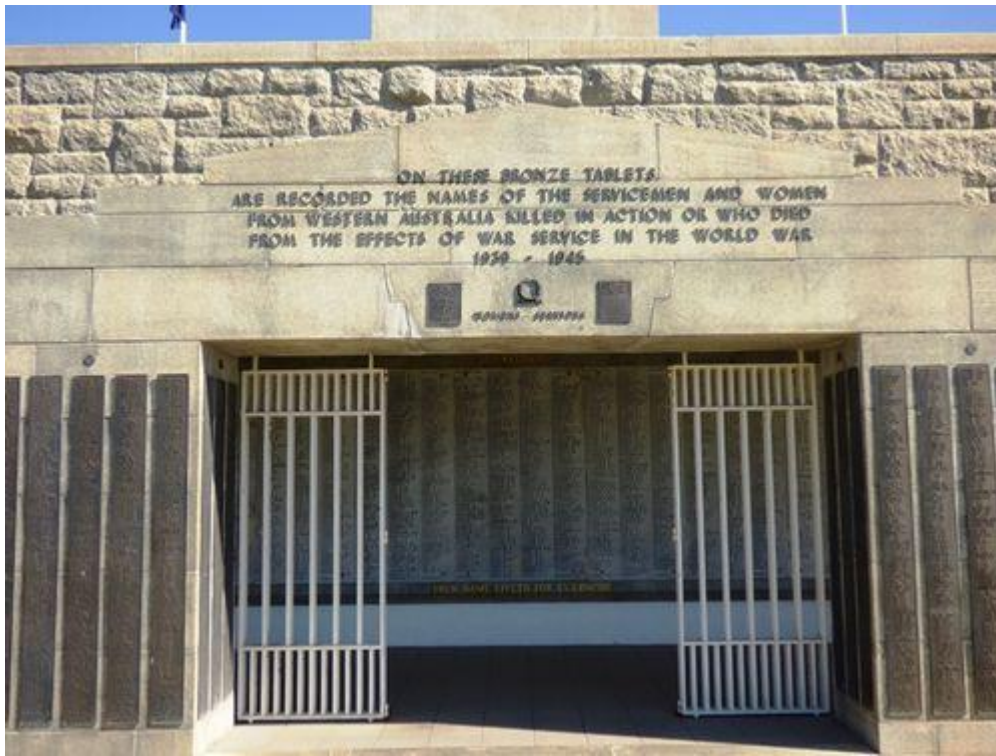
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. Robertson is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park



The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)



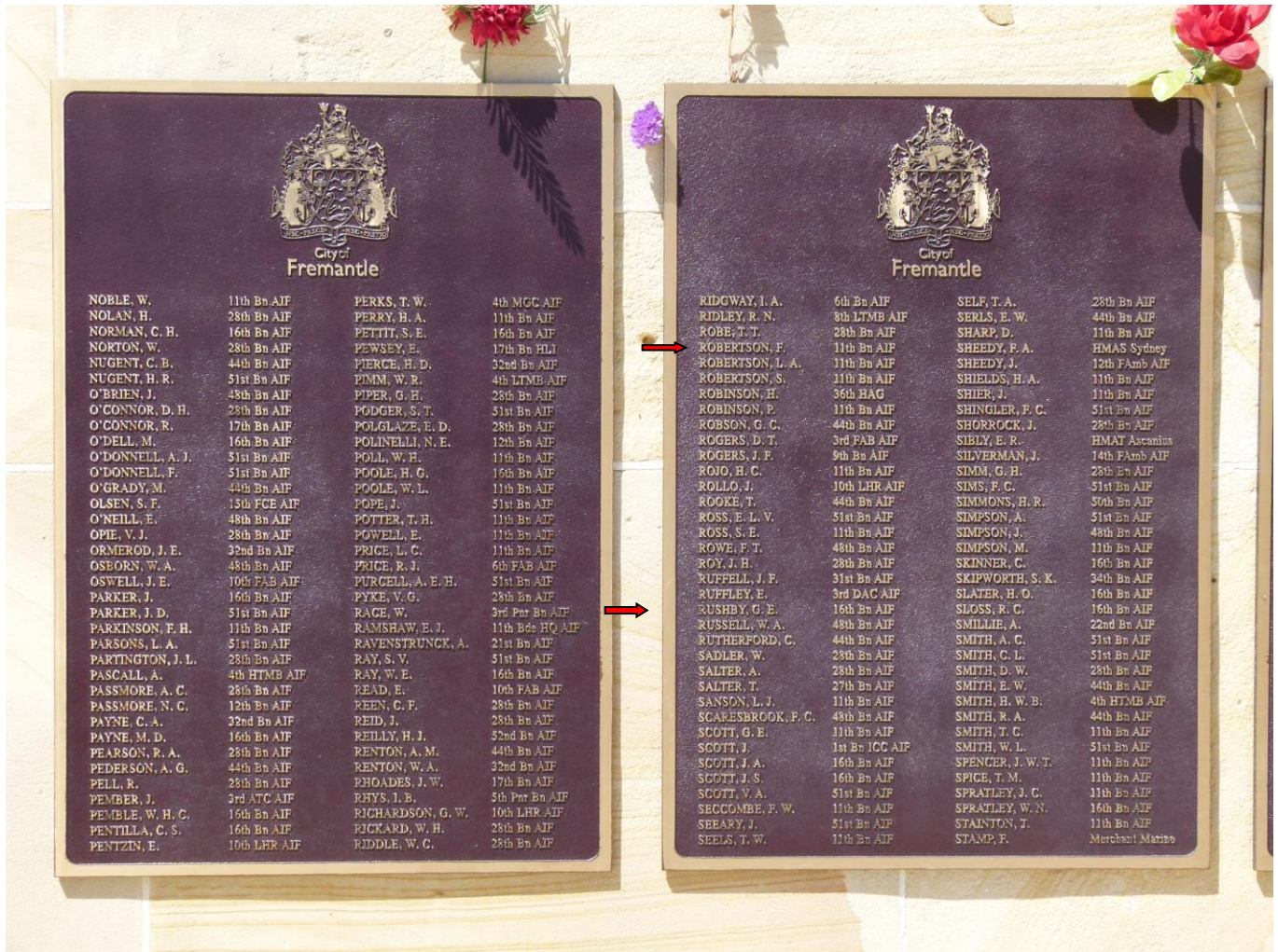
11th Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

F. Robertson & his brother L. A. Robertson are both remembered on Fremantle's 849, located at War Memorial, Monument Hill Memorial Reserve, High & Swanbourne Streets, Fremantle, Western Australia. Twelve plaques contain all 849 names of the Fremantle servicemen who died in service or were killed in action during World War One. The plaques were created as part of the Centenary of Anzac commemorations.



Fallen Sailors & Soldiers Memorial (*Photos from Monument Australia*)





(Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

W. F. Robertson & his brother L. A. Robertson are both remembered on the Midland Town Hall Soldiers Memorial Clock Tower, located Great Eastern Highway, Midland, Western Australia.



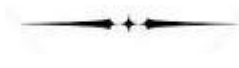
Midland Town Hall Soldiers Memorial Clock Tower

(Photos from AWM – Places of Pride – Midland and Districts Historical Society Inc.)



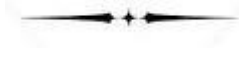
(68 pages of Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Connected to Lance Corporal Frederick Robertson:

Younger brother - Lewis Alexander Robertson. Enlisted 9th August, 1915 as a 22 year old Cleaner. Embarked from Fremantle, Western Australian on 13th September, 1915 on HMAT Themistocles (A32) with 11th Infantry Battalion, 10th Reinforcements. Killed in action 20th August, 1916, aged 21 years & 4 months. He is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial as he has no known grave.



Newspaper Notices

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

297th CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

Lance-Corporal F. S. Robertson (Fremantle), dangerously.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 15 May, 1917)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

378th and 379th CASUALTY LISTS

.....

LIST No. 379

DIED OF WOUNDS

L-cpl. Robertson, Frederick (South Fremantle) previously reported dangerously wounded.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 12 January, 1918)

KILLED IN ACTION

ROBERTSON – Died on December 26, 1917, of wounds received in France on April 16, 1917, Lance-Corporal Fred Robertson, dearly beloved son of Mr and Mrs J. Robertson, Charles-street, South Fremantle, late of Bunbury and Midland Junction, brother of Lou, killed in action in France, and of Jackie, aged 25 years and one day.

We prayed for your safe return Fred,
And longed to clasp your hand;
But God postponed our meeting,
It will be in a better land.

None were there who loved you, dear
To hear your last soft sigh;
To breathe a prayer to God above
Or kiss your lips good-bye.

-Inserted by his sorrowing parents and brother.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 16 January, 1918)

KILLED IN ACTION

ROBERTSON – Died on December 26, 1917, of wounds received in France on April 16, 1917, Lance-Corporal Fred Robertson, dearly beloved son of Mr and Mrs J. Robertson, Charles-street, South Fremantle, late of Bunbury and Midland Junction, brother of Lou, killed in action in France, and of Jackie, aged 25 years and one day.

-Inserted by his sorrowing parents and brother.

(*Western Mail*, Perth, Western Australia – 18 January, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

ROBERTSON – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Lance-Corporal Fred Robertson, 8th reinforcements 11th Battalion, who died in England of wounds received in action December 26, 1917, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J. Robertson, and brother of Jackie, of Charles-street, Fremantle, and Lou, killed in action August 23, 1916.

Day by day the boys returning
Cheer the darkened lives of some;
But our hearts are sad and lonely
For our boys who have gone.
Gone, dear Fred, gone for ever,
Gone from this world of sorrow and pain;
Gone from the mother that loved you dearly,
Never on earth to see you again.
Sadly missed.

Inserted by his loving parents and brother, of Charles-street, South Fremantle.

ROBERTSON – A tribute to the memory of my dear cousin, Fred, who died of wounds received in action on December 26, 1917; also his brother, Lou, killed in action August 23, 1916.

Ever remembered by their cousin, Linda Eacott, Mandurah.

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 27 December, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Hero

ROBERTSON – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Private F. Robertson, who died of wounds on December 26, 1917, and loving brother of Lou, killed in action on August 23, 1916.

We miss you for we love you,
As memories we recall,
For the parting with our dear boys
Was the saddest day of all.

Inserted by his loving parents and brother Jack, 34 Charles-street, South Fremantle.

ROBERTSON – In sad but loving memory of my dear cousin, Fred, who died of wounds received in action on December 26, 1917.

Sadly missed.

Inserted by his loving cousin, Linda Eacott, Mandurah.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 27 December, 1919)

***Notices were also placed in newspapers in 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952 & 1953

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

ROBERTSON: In loving memory of my brother, Frederick, died of wounds Dec. 26, 1917; and Lou, killed in action, Aug 22, 1916. Ever remembered by their brother Jack.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 27 December, 1919)

**Note: at the time of researching (2021) Trove (website for searching newspapers) could only be searched up till 1954 for *The West Australian* newspaper.

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)

Lance Corporal F. Robertson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Loving Memory Of Our Dear Son Fred

Dearly Loved, Sadly Missed

R.I.P.

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.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

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

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



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 Lance Corporal F. Robertson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Wertypop 2013))



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

