

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



R. I. P.

Sacred

To the Memory of

2996 Pte. MICHAEL SMITH

45TH BATTN. A.I.F.

WHO DIED DEC. 5TH 1916. AGED 38 YEARS

ERECTED BY HIS COMRADES

A COMPANY 12TH TRAINING BATTN. A.I.F.

***Service number of 2996 is incorrect – should be 2782)*

Michael SMITH

Michael Patrick Smith was born in Melbourne, Victoria in 1878 to parents Michael & Mary Smith (nee Temple).

Michael P. Smith married Lucy Mungovan (nee Flindt) in Sydney, New South Wales in 1915.

Michael Smith was a 38 year old, married, Cook from Chippendale, NSW when he enlisted on 18th July, 1916 at Royal Agricultural Show Grounds, Moore Park, Sydney, NSW with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Lucy Smith of 22 Dick Street, Chippendale, NSW. Michael Smith stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 403 days with Home Defence Service but was no longer required.

Private Michael Smith was posted to "C" Company, 1st Depot Battalion at Cootamundra, NSW on 21st July, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to "A" Company of 1st Battalion (no date recorded). He was transferred to Kiam on 28th August, 1916 then on 31st August, 1916 he was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 45th Battalion.

Private Michael Smith, Service number 2782, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 7th October, 1916 with the 45th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 21st November, 1916.

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 Michael Smith was marched in to 12th Training Battalion – Camp 13 at Codford, Wiltshire on 21st November, 1916.

Private Michael Smith was admitted to Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire & died at 2.35 a.m. on 5th December, 1916 of pneumonia.

A death for Michael Smith, aged 38, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Michael Smith was buried on 6th December, 1916 was buried in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England - Grave No. 46 (north-west corner of cemetery).

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File on Private Michael Smith contains a request for further information regarding the illness, death & burial which was sent from Secretary of Red Cross on behalf of Private Smith's family. Sister F. M. Biggar, who nursed Private Michael Smith wrote the following letter, dated 29th January, 1917:
Pte Michael Smith was admitted to this hospital with double pneumonia and was past all hope of recovery on admission and died within 48 hours. He was quite conscious at first and gave me his wife's address and asked me to write. I did so after he died, also to two friends in Camp in case they should take any message but they were not up in time. He died in the night. I think that is all there is to tell of him.
Pte Smith was buried on the 12th of December 1916 in the Military portion of Codford, St. Mary's Churchyard, Wilts.

A War Pension was granted to Lucy Smith, widow of Private Michael Smith, in the sum of £2 per fortnight. Lucy Smith died on 16th January, 1918.

A Statutory Declaration is included in Private Michael Smith's Service Record File. It was signed by William Smith of 5 Dick Street, Chippendale, dated 6th January, 1923, declaring:

That I am the eldest son of the late No. 2782 Pte M. Smith 40th Btn. That Lucy Smith my mother and the wife of the above mentioned soldier died on 16th Jan 1918.

Private Michael Smith 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 Smith's son – William Smith (January, 1923)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Michael Smith - service number 2782, of 45th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private M. Smith is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 140.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(36 pages of Private Michael Smith's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES – LISTS Nos. 252 AND 253

DIED OF ILLNESS

NEW SOUTH WALES

M. Smith, Chippendale

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria, Tuesday 19th December, 1916)

MICK SMITH

A Son of The Bush

(Written for "The Forbes Advocate" by Sergeant-Major G. W. Brownhill)

Mick Smith no doubt in his thoughts before leaving the sunny shores of Australia pictured many possibilities of his career as a soldier, but it is almost safe to say that there never crept into his mind, even a suggestion of the grand military funeral that one day in December would make its solemn way through the little English village of Codford, with the body of Mick Smith on the gun carriage, covered over with the Union Jack. And yet that was the destiny and earthly end of good old Mick. We hadn't been in England more than a few days before Mick went down to pneumonia and succumbed to it before we had properly made up our minds that he was seriously ill. I met him the morning of the day he was admitted to the hospital, and he was even then only a shadow of the Mick Smith who left Australia early in October. I had been pretty bad myself with a cold, and Mick and I had been daily exchanging commiserations on our condition. This day he said, "You haven't gone down to it yet, Sergeant-Major, but blow me if I can dodge the doctor any longer." Then, with an attempt at his former gaiety, he said, "How would a good stiff whiskey go now?" I thought it would be just the thing, and said so, and Mick's eyes lighted up for the moment, and I believe he swallowed one on the spot – strictly in his mind. After that the next news I had of poor Mick was an official announcement – "Died on such and such a date, at such and such a hospital, number so and so, Michael Smith, of such and such a company and battalion. Funeral on a certain date, at 3 p.m. in Codford Cemetery."

The whole company turned out to pay the last token of respect to Mick Smith. We were nearly 500 strong, and the procession was headed by the firing party, the gun carriage and pall-bearers, and the battalion brass band. For the best part of the way from the camp to the little cemetery we marched at the slow march to the strains of the "Dead March in Saul." At one farmhouse a great mastiff bounded out barking, as though to intimate that funerals were not in his line, and anyway Codford was not the place for them, but otherwise the solemnity of our progress was not interfered with. Soldiers saluted from the roadside, and the villagers peered from their doors and windows, and paid silent reverence to the dead. And then we reached the cemetery, and gathered round the graveside. The burial service was read, the firing party fired three volleys over the grave, and the buglers peeled out "The Last Post," and then we all marched home again.

And old Mick Smith is in a lonely, and soon to be untended grave, 13,000 or 14,000 miles from his Australian home. A good sort, a rough diamond, and probably the makings of a dependable soldier. He was of the bushman type, and had lived a hard life. What it was to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow had been his life-long experience, and the wild ranges of Monaro had echoed many a time to the tramp of his feet. A willing worker, and a great old fellow for a yarn "while the billy boils" was he, in fact, you in Australia who knows the bush, are as familiar with his type as with anything in the big broad places where the eucalyptus is scent to the nostrils, and the note of the wild magpie music to the ear. Mick Smith will know the glorious bushland of our loved Australia no more, but he lies in an honoured soldier's grave, with the folds of the Union Jack wrapped about his coffin, and who knows but what he is better off, all said and done.

(*Forbes Advocate*, NSW Friday 23rd February, 1917)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Private Michael Smith does not have a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. His headstone was erected by "His Comrades A Company 12th Training Battn. A.I.F."

* Private Thomas Ernest Osborne also has a similar headstone erected by "His Comrades A Company 12th Training Battn. A.I.F." Private Smith died on 5th December, 1916 & Private Osborne on 10th December, 1916. They are buried next to each other in plots 27 & 28 (using Map by Brian Marshall below).

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.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00275



St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford (Photos by Romy Wyeth 2013)



(Photo by Romy Wyeth 2013)



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



Photo of Private M. Smith's Private Headstone in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England. Also known as Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.

****Note: Private Smith's Service number was 2782. The Service number of 2996 on his headstone is incorrect & belonged to Private Thomas E. Osborne who is buried next to Private Smith – except his service number was 2696. Both men had their headstones erected by their Training Battalion – 12th 'A' Company.**



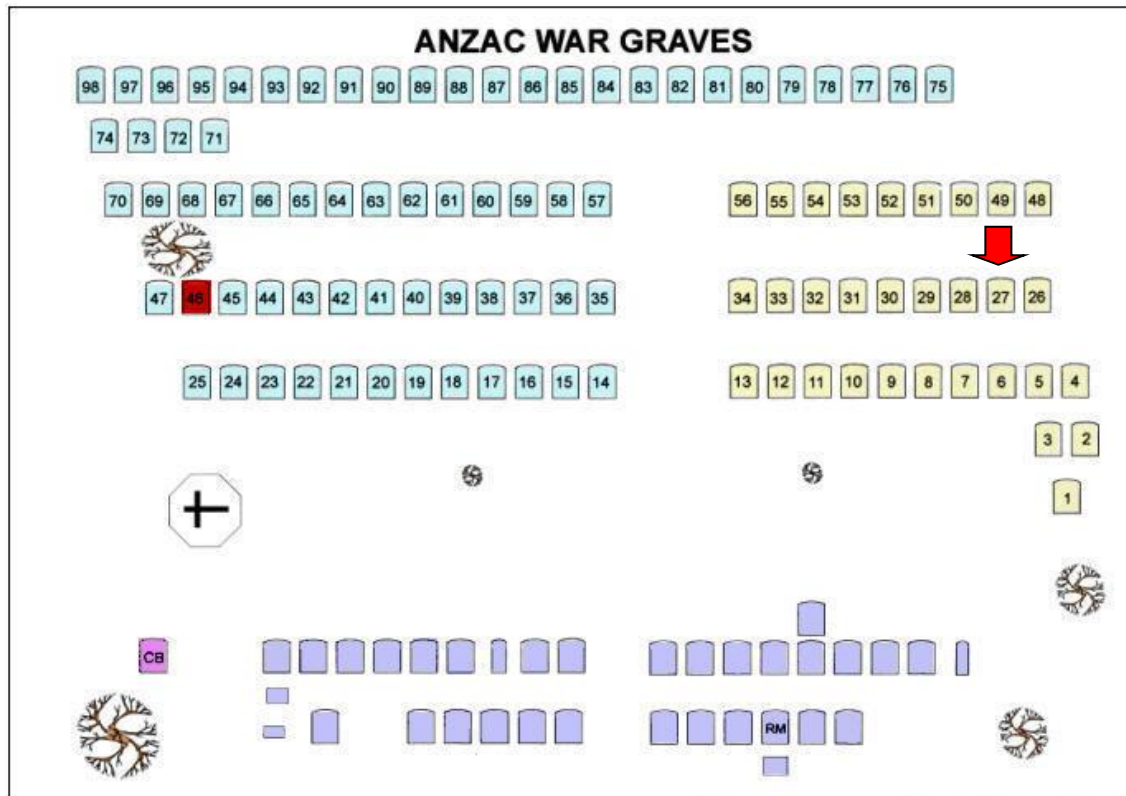
(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)



(Photo from Find a Grave – Retired QA)

Sacred
to the Memory of
2966 Pte MICHAEL SMITH
45th Battn A.I.F.
Who Died Dec 5th 1916. Aged 38 Years
Erected by his Comrades
“A” Company 12th Training Battn, A.I.F.

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Private Michael Smith is located in Main Middle Row (Right hand side) Grave Plot # 27 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (CWGC Reference - Grave # 46)



- Australian Soldiers
- New Zealand Soldiers
- UK Soldier
- Welsh Soldier
- Local Burials

Codford War Graves map adapted from Brian Marshall courtesy of Romy Wyeth