

**Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery,  
East Sussex, England  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**5402 PRIVATE**

**G. SUMMERTON M.M.**

**27TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**7TH OCTOBER, 1917**

## George SUMMERTON

George Summerton was born at Broken Hill, NSW around 1897 to father George Summerton.

*(According to a Tree on Ancestry George Summerton was an illegitimate child & was raised by his paternal grandmother – Susan Summerton. Two trees on Ancestry have his date of birth as 6th September, 1899).*

George Summerton stated he was aged 18 years & 8 months, single & a Labourer from Broken Hill, NSW when he enlisted on 1st June, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5402 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr George Summerton, of Silverton, NSW.

As George Summerton was under the age of 21 years, his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. G. Summerton signed as Father's signature & Susen Summerton signed at Guardian's signature.

Private George Summerton was posted to "C" Company, 2nd Depot Battalion on 2nd June, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 14th Reinforcements of 27th Infantry Battalion on 16th June, 1916.

Private George Summerton embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Ballarat (A70)* on 12th August, 1916 with the 27th Battalion, 14th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 30th September, 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 Summerton was marched in to 7th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire, England on 30th September, 1916.

Private George Summerton proceeded overseas to France, via Folkestone on 16th November, 1916 from 7th Training Battalion.

Private George Summerton was marched in to 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 17th November, 1916.

Private George Summerton was sent sick to Hospital on 27th November, 1916 from 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot. He was admitted to 24th General Hospital on 27th November, 1916 with Mumps then transferred & admitted to 14th Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France on 2nd December, 1916. Private Summerton was transferred & admitted to No. 1 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne on 20th December, 1916. He was classed as Fit on 26th December, 1916 & marched back in to 2nd Divisional Base at Etaples, France on 28th December, 1916. Private Summerton proceeded to join his Unit on 6th January, 1917 from 2nd Divisional Base Depot & was taken on strength of 27th Battalion in France on 8th January, 1917 from 14th Reinforcements.

Private George Summerton was wounded in action in Belgium on 20th September, 1917. He was admitted to 44th Casualty Clearing Station on 21st September, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to shoulder then transferred to Ambulance Train. Private Summerton was admitted to 3rd Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 22nd September, 1917. He was invalided to England on 25th September, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Princess Elizabeth*.

### **27th Battalion**

The 27th Battalion was raised in South Australia in March 1915, from recruits previously earmarked for the 24th Battalion, a large number of whom hailed from the suburbs of Adelaide. ....

Although it participated in minor attacks during the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in early 1917, the 27th Battalion did not carry out a major attack again until 20 September 1917. On this occasion, it was part of the 2nd Division's first wave at the battle of Menin Road. Victory here was followed up with the capture of Broodseinde Ridge on 4 October, in which the 27th Battalion also played a role.....

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

## War Diary – 27th Battalion

### YPRES and WESTHOEK RIDGE

19th, 20th & 21st September, 1917:

.....

#### 2. The Artillery and Machine Gun Barrages and the Infantry Advance

*Punctually at 5.40 AM on the 20th (zero hour) the most intense and accurate Barrage I have ever witnessed was put down by the Artillery and Machine Gun Companies, to who these duties had been allotted.*

*The Battalion well concealed in very muddy shell holes fixed bayonets and advanced behind the 25th Bn, and was well under weigh before the Enemies Guns and responded to his S.O.S. signal....At Zero, plus 88 when the barrage commenced to move forward for the second phase, the first wave moved practically with it, many of the men arriving at the hostile positions actually with the Barrage itself. In no instance was the Enemy allowed to get out of his Pill Boxes in time to use his rifles or machine guns. Resistance where encountered was feeble, about 80 of the enemy surrendering themselves to our men.*

*The number of enemy killed in the zone between the RED & BLUE lines was roughly from 80 – 100; this is if anything a low estimate. The second objective was reached without difficulties and exactly on time.*

*There was some disorganisation due to loss of direction by some platoons and also to men of other units having lost their way and gone forward with this Bn.*

.....

#### 5. Enemy Action

*The action taken by the enemy so far as it affected this unit consisted mainly of irregular and erratic Artillery fire with some sniping from the direction of the Mound (POLYGON WOODS) during the 20th. His aircraft made several M.G. attacks on the BLUE LINE but casualties from this source were negligible.*

### RENINGHELST AREA

28th September, 1917:

*The following men & N.C.O.'s have been awarded Military Medals by the Corps Commander:-*

1672	Pte CHAPPEL J. H.	5054	Pte PIKE J.D.
4322	Sgt SPARROW R.G.B.	2234	Pte TOMICH J.
4741	Pte LUNDSTROM J.E.	93	Pte HARRISON M.R.
1626	Pte HARRIS W. J.	5402	Pte SUMMERTON G.
619	L/C LAMBERT E.G.	2483	SGT. SMITH W.M.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

*Private George Summerton was awarded the Military Medal – “At WESTHOEK on 20th/21st September 1917, this man acted as a Battalion runner. His work was distinctly good, and his pluck and determination in getting through barraged areas with messages was an example of bravery to all ranks. His willingness to undertake perilous journeys at all hours of the day and night cannot be too highly spoken of.”*

Private George Summerton was admitted to Pavilion General Hospital, Brighton, Sussex, England on 26th September, 1917. He was reported as dangerously ill on 28th September, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to back. The Hospital Admissions form recorded that Private Summerton had Penetrating wounds of chest. “wounded 21st Sept. Entry Rt shoulder. E Ray showed F.B. under ribs. Incision & \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ removed. Removed \_\_\_\_ & collapsed lung...” (Note: F.B. = Foreign Body)

Private George Summerton died at 9.45 am on 7th October, 1917 at Pavilion General Hospital (York Place Division), Brighton, Sussex, England from wounds received in action in France – Shrapnel wound to chest – penetrating.

A death for George Summerton, aged 20, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Brighton, Sussex, England.

Private George Summerton was buried at 3 pm on 10th October, 1917 in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England – Plot number ZIF.102 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private George Summerton - *Coffin was polished Elm Good. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military Funeral, Firing Party being supplied by the Royal Field Artillery, Band by the 23rd Canadian Reserve Regiment and Bearers (6) attached to the R.A.M.C. from the Pavilion Hospital, Brighton. The service was conducted at the graveside by the Rev. Father Redding, St. Joseph Church, Brighton. The "Last Post" was sounded by two buglers at the graveside. Several Australian soldiers, comrades of the deceased, attended the funeral. Wreaths were sent by comrades in the deceased soldier's Ward. An oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F.*

Names of relatives or friends present at the Funeral – Pte R. Roberts, 10th Bn, and Pte B. O. Balfit, 13th Fld Coy, A.E. (comrades in hospital).

Private George Summerton was awarded the Military Medal on 14th October, 1917 (posthumously) (1st Army Corps Routine Order). (*London Gazette* – 12 December, 1917) (*Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* – 2 May 1918)

The Military Medal (MM) was a military decoration awarded to personnel of the British Army and other arms of the armed forces, and to personnel of other Commonwealth countries, below commissioned rank, for bravery in battle on land. The award was established in 1916, with retrospective application to 1914, and was awarded to other ranks for "acts of gallantry and devotion to duty under fire". (*Wikipedia*)

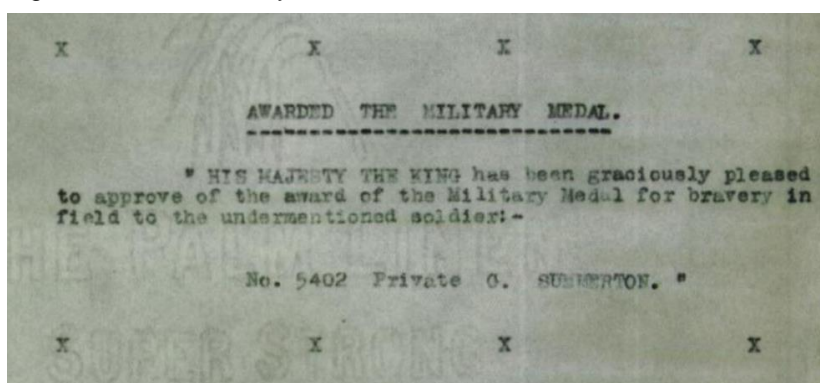


**Military Medal (MM)**

Private George Summerton requested in his Will dated 30th May, 1917 that his personal estate be bequeathed to his grandmother – Mrs Susan Summerton, of Silverton, Broken Hill, NSW.

The personnel effects of the late Private George Summerton were sent in three separate parcels but were signed for by Susen Summerton.

Base Records forwarded on to Mr G. Summerton, c/o Mr McEnhill, Castle Inn, Hindley Street, Adelaide, South Australia on 29th May, 1918 a copy of the extract from Second Supplement to the London Gazette which published the details of his son being awarded the Military Medal.



Private George Summerton was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Summerton's father – Mr G. Summerton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent September, 1922 & redespached March, 1924).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private G. Summerton – service number 5402, of 27th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed. Awarded M.M.

Private G. Summerton is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 111.



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

Private George Summerton was selected for the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial held on 13th November, 1917.

*“Commencing at approximately 4.55 pm, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony in the Commemorative Courtyard. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the Roll of Honour.”* (Photo from AWM)



Mr George Summerton was advised Base Records in November, 1932 that that printed order form for the publication of Brighton Borough Cemetery Register containing the particulars of his son – the late Private G. Summerton, had inadvertently omitted the letters “M.M.” signifying the award of the Military Medal. It was stated that the discrepancy would be brought to the notice of the Imperial War Graves Commission.

Base Records wrote to The Secretary, Imperial War Graves Commission, London advising them of the omission & requested that the “*necessary action be taken to ensure the accuracy of the headstone inscription in this respect.*”

G. Summerton is remembered on Barrier District Roll of Honour, located at Broken Hill RSL Sub-Branch, 403 Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW.



**Barrier District Roll of Honour** (Photo from War Memorials Register NSW)

G. Summerton is remembered on Broken Hill War Memorial (also referred to as "The Bomber"), located at Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW.



**Broken Hill War Memorial**

*(Photo above by PookieFugglestein; below by Henry Moulds)*



G. Summerton is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



**National War Memorial – Adelaide** (Photos by Bilby)

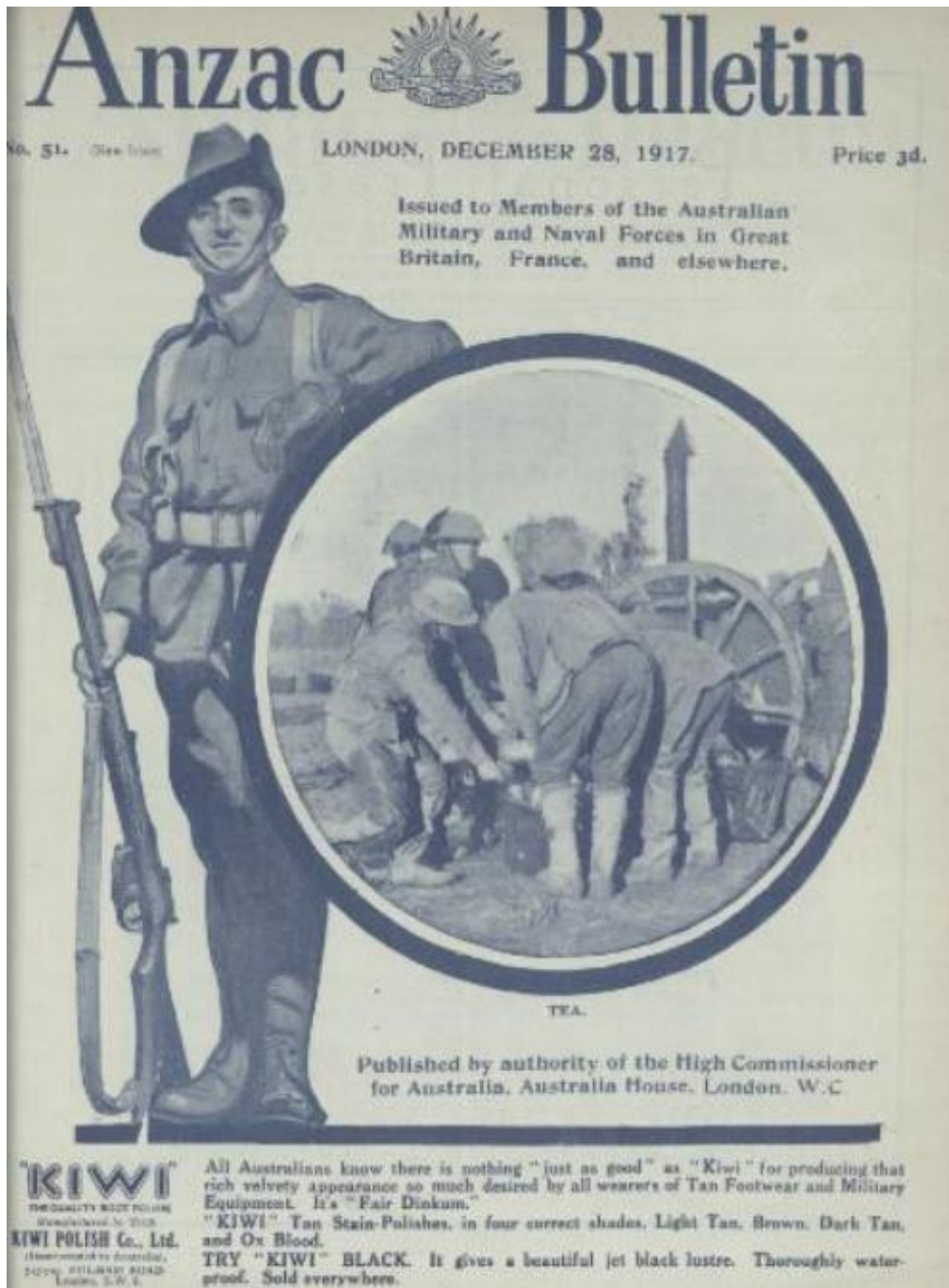
(53 pages of Private George Summerton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



**Private George Summerton**





## THE ANZAC BULLETIN

London, December 28, 1917 Issue No. 51

War Honours of the A.I.F. (page 10)

His Majesty the King has been graciously please to approve of the award of the Military Medal for bravery in the Field to the undermentioned Non-Commissioned Officers and Men:-

### THE MILITARY MEDAL

...5402 Pte G. Summerton, Inf.; .....



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **FAREWELL TO A SOLDIER**

The citizens of Silverton tendered Private George Summerton, who is shortly leaving for the front, a social evening on Tuesday night. The gathering (says "The Miner" correspondent) which was largely attended, was presided over by Mr. A. Newman. A committee of ladies of the local Red Cross Society had the hall tastefully decorated for the occasion. A musical Programme was contributed by Mesdames P. W. Baeker and A. Newman. Misses M. Baeker and A. Smith, and the Rev. L. D. Keipert, and was interspersed with games and dancing. Mr. A. Newman, on behalf of the citizens presented Private Summerton with a wristlet watch, suitably inscribed and a prayer book. Supper was provided by the ladies. Private Summerton left by Wednesday night's, express. A large, number of residents assembled at the station to see him off.

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 15 July, 1916)*

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### **HONORING SOLDIERS**

On Wednesday evening a farewell social was tendered to Private George Summerton, at the residence of his aunt, Mrs D. Colbert, of Whitmore square, Adelaide. An enjoyable evening was spent. Musical items were given by Mr McInernay, Misses Malone, McInernay, Summerfield, and McCarty, and Master Howard Wallace.

*(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 16 August, 1916)*

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### **341st Casualty List**

#### **BROKEN HILL AND DISTRICT**

##### **WOUNDED**

Private George Summerton, Broken Hill

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 13 October, 1917)*

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#### **DEATH**

##### **FOR KING AND COUNTRY**

SUMMERTON – On the 6th October, died of wounds in France, Private George Summerton, of 27th Battalion, only son of G. Summerton, Silverton, aged 19 years. R.I.P.

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 16 October, 1917)*

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##### **DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE**

SUMMERTON – Died of wounds received in France, on September 6, Private G. Summerton, 27th Battalion, 19 years, beloved son of George Summerton, and devoted grandson of Mrs S. Summerton, of Silverton. Loved by all who knew him.

*(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 23 October, 1917) & (The Advertiser, Adelaide, Sth Aust – 23 October, 1917) & (Chronicle, Adelaide, South Australia – 27 October, 1917)*

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## AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

### 347th Casualty List

BROKEN HILL DISTRICT

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private George Summerton, Broken Hill, October 7.

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 30 October, 1917)*

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## SOLDIERS' LETTERS

### FROM THE FRONT AND ABROAD

#### PRIVATE T. SUMMERTON

Mrs. Summerton, of Silverton, has received the following letter from Lance-corporal F. S. Shreeve, D Company, 16th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment, in connection with the death of her grandson, the late Private G. Summerton:

"Your grandson was in the same ward as I while he was in this hospital. I cannot tell you how sorry the staff and patients were when he died. Corporal Cartledge, of the 11th Sherwood Foresters, and I started a subscription list. We bought a large cross all of white flowers, with two large bows of ribbon, his regimental colors (the cross was as large as the coffin), and two large wreaths. The wreaths were of white and pink flowers. We decided to have funeral cards with the money we had left over. These cards have been disposed of as follows: to the sisters and nurses who nursed him; the Australians who attended the funeral; Father Evans; Corporal Cartledge ; and myself. The remainder we are sending to you to dispose of as you think best. I deeply sympathise with you in your loss. He was a good lad, always thankful for anything done for him."

Lance-corporal Shreeve was in the same hospital as the late Private Summerton, from which the letter was written under date of October 27. Enclosed in the letter were two photographs, one of the late Private Summerton's grave, with the snapshot of a church. The pictures were taken by the night sister of the ward in which the late Private Summerton died. Private G. Summerton enlisted in Broken Hill in May, 1916, and was educated at the Silverton Public School. Prior to enlisting he worked in the telegraph department of the Broken Hill Post Office. At the time of enlistment he was employed at the Government water works. Private G. Summerton was wounded while dispatch riding on September 28, and died on October 7.

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 23 December, 1917)*

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## DIED OF WOUNDS



PRIVATE G. SUMMERTON

Private G. Summerton, who died on October 7 of wounds received whilst on active service, in France, enlisted in Broken Hill in May, 1916. He was educated at the Silverton Public School. Prior to enlisting he worked in the telegraph department of the Broken Hill Post Office. At the time of enlistment he was employed at the Government waterworks. Private G. Summerton was wounded while dispatch riding on September 26.

Mrs. Summerton, of Silverton, his grandmother, recently received the following letter from Lance-corporal F. S. Shreeve, D Company, 16th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment, in connection with the death of Private Summerton:

"Your grandson was in the same ward as I while he was in this hospital. I cannot tell you how sorry the staff and patients were when he died. Corporal Cartledge, of the 11th Sherwood Foresters, and I started a subscription list. We bought, a large cross all of white flowers; with two large bows of ribbon, his regimental colors (the cross was as large as the coffin), and two large wreaths. The wreaths were of white and pink flowers. We decided to have funeral cards with the money we had left over. These cards have been disposed of as follows: to the sisters and nurses who nursed him; the Australians who attended the funeral, Father Evans, Corporal Cartledge, and myself. The remainder we are sending to you to dispose of as you think best. I deeply sympathise with you in your loss. He was a good lad, always thankful for anything done for him."

Lance-corporal Shreeve was in the same hospital as the late Private Summerton, from which the letter was written under date of October 27. Enclosed in the letter were two photographs, one of the late Private Summerton's grave, with the snapshot of a church. The pictures were taken by the night sister of the ward in which the late Private Summerton died.

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 30 December, 1917)

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## **AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS**

### **DIED FOR THEIR COUNTRY**

Private GEORGE SUMMERTON, who has been killed in France, was a grandson of Mrs. G. Summerton, of Silverton. He enlisted at Broken Hill in 1916. He gained the Military Medal for bravery in France. He was wounded in September, and died in hospital at Brighton, England, on October 7. His comrades in the hospital and the nurses purchased a beautiful floral cross and wreaths to place on the coffin, and the nurse attending him was kind enough to take a photo, of the grave and forward to his grandmother, who is very grateful for the attention.

(*The Express and Telegraph*, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 9 January, 1918) & (*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 10 January, 1918) & (*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 26 January, 1918)

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### **IN MEMORIAM**

SUMMERTON – In sad and loving memory of Private George Summerton, M.M., who died at Brighton on October 7, 1917, of wounds bravely borne, and fortified with the rites of the holy church.

I think of you in silence, dear George,

    No eyes can see me weep;

And many a silent tear I shed

    While others are asleep.

God know how much I miss you,

    He counts the tears I shed;

And whispers, "Hush, he only sleeps,

    Your loved one is not dead.

I shall need a hand to guide me

    When I cross the flowing tide;

Will you come and meet me  
On the other side?

Yes, at Heaven's gates he'll meet me,  
With the same sweet, loving smile;  
For we are parted just for a little while.

Inserted by his loving aunt, Minnie Hall, Port Augusta.

SUMMERTON – In sad but loving memory of our dear nephew and cousin, Private George Summerton, M.M., who died at Brighton on October 7, 1917, of wounds bravely borne, and fortified with the rites of the holy church.

For by man came death, and by man came the resurrection of the dead, as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.

Death is swallowed up in victory.

Inserted by his loving uncle and aunt and cousins, Bob, Will, and Charles.

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 7 October, 1918)

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#### **IN MEMORIAM**

SUMMERTON – In loving memory of Lance-corporal George Summerton, M.M., who died at Brighton from wounds received in action on 7th October, 1917.

A noble hero, true and brave,  
Peacefully sleeps in a soldier's grave.

Inserted by his loving uncle, aunt and cousins, Silverton.

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 8 October, 1918)

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#### **IN MEMORIAM**

SUMMERTON – In loving memory of Lance-corporal George Summerton, M.M., who died at Brighton, England, from wounds received in action on October 7th, 1917. "Dead, but not forgotten." Inserted by his father and grandmother, living at Silverton.

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 11 October, 1918)

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#### **IN MEMORIAM**

SUMMERTON – In loving memory of our dear son and grandchild, who died of wounds in Brighton Borough Hospital, on October 7th, 1917.

A noble hero, true and brave,  
Peacefully sleeps in a soldier's grave.

Inserted by his loving father and grandmother, Silverton.

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 7 October, 1919)

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## SILVERTON NEWS

### WELCOME HOME SPECIAL

“The Miner’s” Silverton correspondent writes as follows:-

A combined welcome home social was given by the residents of Silverton and Umberumberka to Lieutenant J. G. Polkinghorne, M.M., Corporal H. E. Lord, Signaller Alec Smith, Private E. R. Crocker, M.M., Private W. Groves, Sapper B. R. Matteson and Private W. G. Smith in the Mechanics’ Institute on Friday night last.....

Mr W. J. Hughes, of South Broken Hill, presided over a large attendance, and spoke in the highest terms of the returned men, expressing sympathy with the relatives of the late Corporal T. J. Smith and Corporal G. Summerton, both of who were killed on active service....The relatives of the late Corporals T. G. Smith and G. Summerton are also to receive a gold medal each.....

*(Barrier Miner, Broken Hill, NSW – 11 November, 1919)*

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### 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. Summerton does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

### **Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England**

The cemetery is on the Lewes road. It was opened in 1857, and now covers 44 acres. It climbs the hill Eastward, crossing a public road. A War Cross stands in the cemetery.

There are 275 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and a further 102 of the 1939-1945 war commemorated in this site. The 1939-45 commemorations include 3 unidentified Merchant seamen and 1 unidentified British soldier. There are also 40 Foreign National war burials here and 4 non-war service burials.

*(Information from CWGC)*



*(Photos by julia&keld – Find a Grave)*



*(Photo from CWGC)*

Photo of Private G. Summerton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England.



*(Photo by Terry Denham)*





*(Photo from CWGC)*