

**St. George's Churchyard,
Fovant, Wiltshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6895 PRIVATE

W. H. SYMONS

27TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND FEBRUARY, 1920 Age 24

For Ever With The Lord

In Loving Memory

Of Our Dear Son

William Henry SYMONS

William Henry Symons was born at Morgan, South Australia on 13th July, 1895 to parents John and Matilda Jane Symons (nee Pendle).

William Henry Symons was a 20 year old, single, Postal Assistant from Morgan, South Australia when he enlisted at Adelaide, South Australia on 4th March, 1916 with "B" Company, 2nd Depot Battalion, A.I.F. His service number was S4847 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Matilda Jane Symons, of Morgan, South Australia. William Symons stated he had served with 23rd Light Horse & 3 months with Citizen Forces. As William Henry Symons was under the age of 21 years, his father signed his consent on 5th March, 1916 for his son to enlist in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia for Active Service abroad.

Private William Henry Symons had been admitted to Hospital at Exhibition Camp on 15th May, 1916 with Influenza then transferred to Military Hospital, Keswick, Adelaide from 16th May, 1916 to 26th May, 1916.

A Medical Report was completed on Private W. H. Symons on 16th June, 1916 at Exhibition Camp due to a disability – Hammer Toes. Private Symons had the condition for as long as he could remember & stated that his feet get very sore with walking. His little toe on right foot had been amputated. The Medical Board recommended that Private Symons be discharged as permanently unfit.

Private William Henry Symons was discharged being medically unfit on 15th July, 1916 due to defective feet.

William Henry Symons was a 21 year old, single, Postal Assistant from Morgan, South Australia when he re-enlisted at Adelaide, South Australia on 20th April, 1917 with the 27th Infantry Battalion, 20th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 6895 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs M. J. Symons, of Morgan, South Australia. William Symons stated he had served for 1 year with 23rd Light Horse & 3 months with A.I.F. He had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to his toes.

Private William Henry Symons was posted to "B" Company at Mitcham on 20th April, 1917 for recruit training then transferred to "A" Company on 1st May, 1917. Private Symons was transferred to L.T.M.B. (Light Trench Mortar Battery) at Seymour on 7th June, 1917 as Gunner. He was transferred to 1st (Depot) Battalion, A.I.F. at Broadmeadows on 10th August, 1917 as Private. Private Symons was transferred to 20th Reinforcements of 27th Infantry Battalion on 18th September, 1917. He entrained from 3rd Military District on 27th October, 1917 for Embarkation.

Private William Henry Symons embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Aeneas* (A60) on 30th October, 1917. He was admitted to Ship's Hospital on 3rd November, 1917 to 7th November, 1917 with sea sickness & again from 17th November, 1917 to 22nd November, 1917. Private Symons was again admitted to Ship's Hospital with sea sickness from 28th November, 1917 to 2nd December, 1917 & again from 12th December, 1917 to 26th December, 1917. Private William Henry Symons disembarked at Devonport, England on 27th December, 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.

Private William Henry Symons was marched in to 6th Training Battalion, Fovant Wiltshire from Australia on 27th December, 1917.

Private William Henry Symons was admitted sick to Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 9th February, 1918 & discharged on 26th February, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was written up for an Offence at Fovant – absent without leave from 5 pm on 1st March, 1918 until 3.40 pm on 2nd March, 1918. He was awarded 3 days confined to camp & a total forfeiture of 4 days' pay.

A Medical Report was completed at 6th Training Battalion, Fovant on 19th March, 1918 on Private William Henry Symons who was being medically reported on due to a disability of Hallux Valgus (deformity of the big toe). The

disability prevented Private Symons from doing heavy marching. The Medical Board found that Private Symons was permanently unfit for General Service but fit for Home Service.

Private William Henry Symons was attached for duty to A.M.T.S. (Australian Mechanical Transport Service) at Tidworth, Wiltshire from 6th Training Battalion on 9th April, 1918. He was detached from attached duty and marched out to Camp Commandant Headquarters on 10th April, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was medically reclassified at Tidworth on 16th May, 1918. The Report stated Private Symons was "*very anxious to go to France; general health quite good now; states can march without difficulty now. It is considered he should be given another try-out. Fit General Service, after training & Hardening A3.*"

Private William Henry Symons was re-transferred to 27th Battalion & was marched out to Overseas Training Brigade from Tidworth on 28th May, 1918. He was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 28th May, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was marched in to 5th Training Brigade at Fovant from Overseas Training Brigade on 3rd June, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was admitted to Military Hospital at Fovant on 22nd June, 1918 with Influenza. He was discharged to Training Depot on 26th June, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was sent sick to Fovant Hospital on 9th July, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons proceeded overseas to France from 5th Training Battalion at Fovant via Folkestone on 15th August, 1918. He was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) in France on 17th August, 1918. Private Symons proceeded to join his Unit from A.I.B.D. on 18th August, 1918 & was taken on strength of 27th Battalion from 20th Reinforcements in France on 19th August, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was wounded in action in France on 2nd September, 1918. He was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance with gunshot wounds to left arm then transferred to 37th Casualty Clearing Station. Private Symons was transferred to Ambulance Train on 3rd September, 1918 & admitted to 25th General Hospital on 4th September, 1918. He was invalided to England on 7th September, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was admitted to General Military Hospital at Edmonton, England on 7th September, 1918 with gunshot wounds to forearm (slight). He was discharged to furlo from 30th October, 1918 to 13th November, 1918 & was then to report to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny.

Private William Henry Symons was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire from furlo on 13th November, 1918. He was marched in to Overseas Training Battalion on 30th November, 1918.

Private William Henry Symons was marched out from Overseas Training Battalion on 24th January, 1919 & detached from 27th Battalion for duty with Australian Army Postal Corps for duty from 24th January, 1919.

Private William Henry Symons was granted leave from 16th May, 1919 to 16th August, 1919 with pay 7 subs. fees £6.6.0 – Reason: Student I.D.2. Attending Skerry's College, Hill Place, Nicholson Square, Edinburgh for Non Military Training. He was granted an extension of leave from 17th August, 1919 to 31st October, 1919 with pay.

Private William Henry Symons was retransferred to 27th Battalion on 31st October, 1919.

Private William Henry Symons was taken on strength from Furlo Dept for Sutton Veny on 4th November, 1919.

Private William Henry Symons was admitted to Fovant Camp Military Hospital on 19th December, 1919 with tuberculosis of lung – seriously ill. A cable was sent to the next-of-kin from Fovant Hospital advising "*not so well 6/1/20.*" P 80 81

Base Records advised Mrs M. J. Symons, mother of Private W. H. Symons, on 28th January, 1920 that "*I regret I have to advise you information has been received from A.I.F. Headquarters, London, to the effect that your son, No. 6895 Private W. H. Symons, 27th Battalion, is sinking slowly and no hope is held for his recovery. On receipt of any later advice concerning him you will be promptly notified.*"

Private William Henry Symons died at 18.30 hrs on 2nd February, 1920 at Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire, England from Tubercular disease of lung.

A death for William H. Symons, aged 24, was registered in the March quarter, 1920, in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

Private William Henry Symons was buried on 5th February, 1920 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England, – Plot number I. E. 4. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private W. H. Symons - *The deceased was accorded a full Military Funeral. A service was held in St. Georges Church, Fovant and later at the graveside at which the friends (Mr and Mrs J. W. Cobb, of 50 Moyser Road, London) were present. The pall bearers and Bugler and Firing Party were supplied by Imperial Troops stationed at Fovant. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack. Three volleys were fired over the grave by the firing party. The Last Post was sounded at the Graveside. Three wreaths were sent by the members of the Nursing Staff at the Hospital and one by Mr & Mrs Cobb. A representative of these Headquarters was present. Nurses from Fovant Military Hospital were also present at the Funeral.*

Private William Henry Symons was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Symons' father – Mr J. Symons, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent September, 1922 & Plaque sent February, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Henry Symons – service number 6895, aged 24, of 27th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of John and Matilda Jane Symons, of Morgan, South Australia.

Private W. H. Symons 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.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



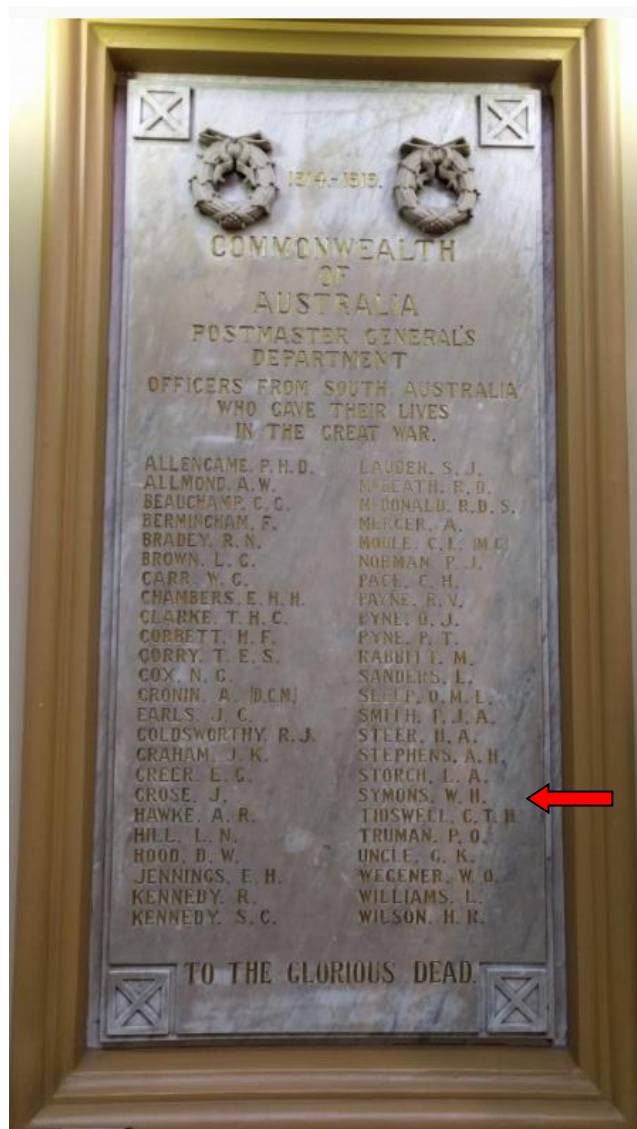
Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. H. Symons 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.



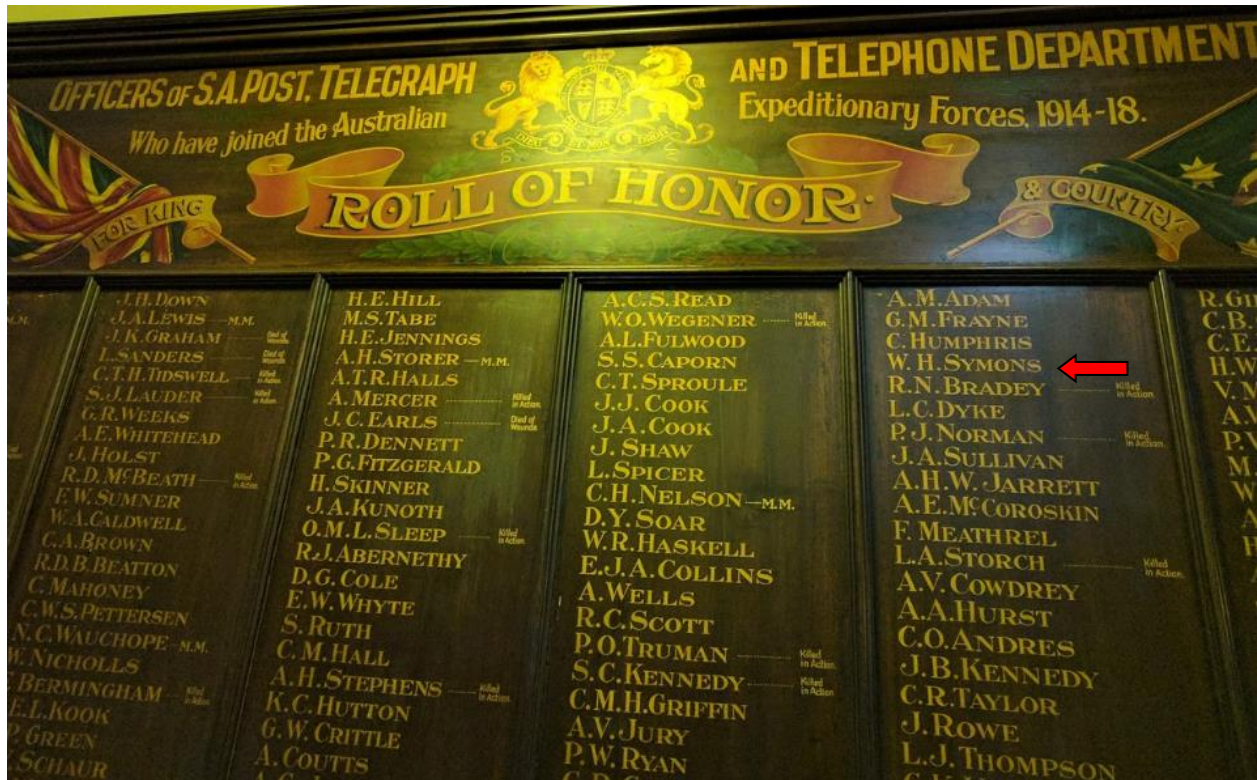
National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

W. H. Symons is remembered on the Commonwealth of Australia Postmaster General's Department Marble Plaque commemorating Officers from South Australia Who Gave their Lives in The Great War, located at the G.P.O. Adelaide, 141 King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia.



Postmaster General's Department Roll of Honour of those who died at GPO Adelaide

W. H. Symons is also remembered on the Officers of S.A. Post, Telegraph & Telephone Department Roll of Honour of those who enlisted, located at the G.P.O. Adelaide, 141 King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia.



S.A. Post, Telegraph & Telephone Department Roll of Honour of those who enlisted

W. H. Symons is remembered on the Grand Masonic Lodge Honour Roll, located at Grand Masonic Lodge, 254 North Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia.



Grand Masonic Lodge Honour Roll, Adelaide (Photo from RSL Virtual War Memorial)

(133 pages of Private William Henry Symons' 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 William Henry Symons

Newspaper Notices

CASUALTY LIST No. 438

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

WOUNDED

Pte W. H. SYMONS, Morgan

(The Register, Adelaide, South Australia - 31 October, 1918)

480th CASUALTY LIST

Pte W. H. SYMONS, Morgan, 27th Battn., died of illness, 2. 2. 20 (p.r. ill)

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia -15 March, 1920)

LATE PRIVATE W. H. SYMONS

Picture dedicated to his memory.

Morgan, November 8.

On Sunday, November 6, an impressive service was conducted in the St. Peter's Church, Morgan, by the Rev. E. W. Maymon Hines, when a beautiful picture "The Light of the World" was unveiled and dedicated to the memory of the late Private William H. Symons, who enlisted in June, 1917, and died at Fovant on February 2, 1919. The memoriam was presented by members of his family. Appropriate hymns were rendered. The late Private William H. Symons was an assistant in the Morgan Post Office and a member of the Nor' West Bend Masonic Lodge, No. 76, and both of these bodies were represented.

(*Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record*, Renmark, South Australia – 11 November, 1921)

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 W. H. Symons does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

For Ever With The Lord In Loving Memory Of Our Dear Son

St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England

There was a 600 bed hutted military hospital at Fovant during the First World War, and the concentration of Australian depots and training camps in the area is reflected in the 63 First World War burials in this churchyard. The war graves form two groups, one west of the church and the other at the east end. There is also one burial of the Second World War. There are 44 War Graves belonging to those who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1.
(Information from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00 299

(Photo c 1919)



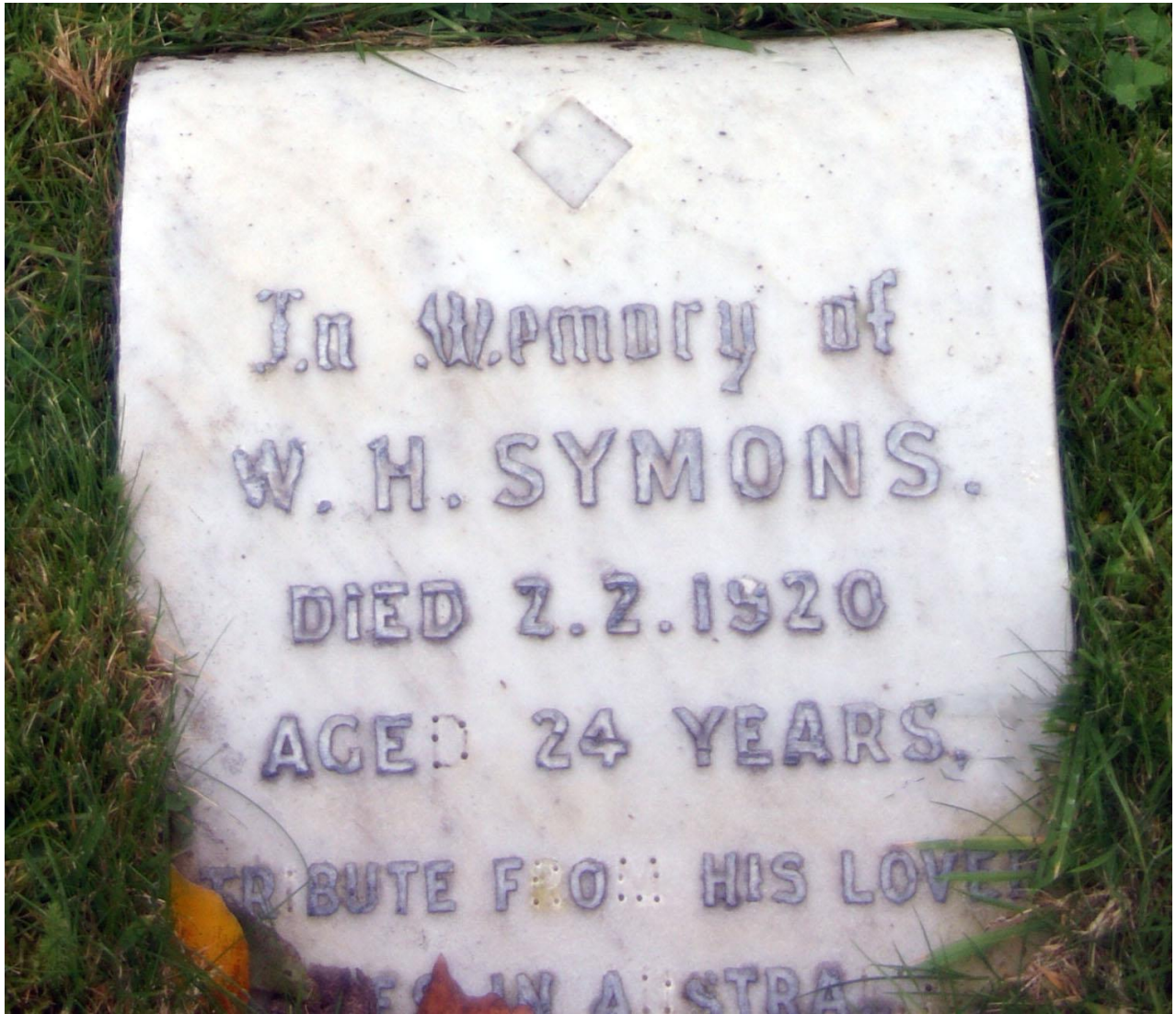


St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at front & rear (*Churchyard photos courtesy of Andrew Stacey*)



Photo of Private W. H. Symons' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.





(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)

In Memory of

W. H. SYMONS

Died 2. 2. 1920

Aged 24 Years

A Tribute From His Loved

Ones In Australia



(Photo courtesy of Richard Avery – 2022)



(Photo courtesy of Richard Avery – 2022)



Cross of Sacrifice (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)