

**Westburn Cemetery,  
Cambuslang, Glasgow, Scotland  
War Grave**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3963 CORPORAL**

**J. R. WATTIE M.M.**

**5TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**10TH FEBRUARY, 1919 Age 43**

*Father In Thy Gracious  
Keeping  
Leave We Now Thy Servant  
Sleeping*

## John Ritchie (Dick) WATTIE

John Ritchie Wattie was born in Victoria in 1874 to parents James and Sarah Wattie (nee Hewitson). John Ritchie Wattie stated on his Attestation Papers that he was born at Kerang, whereas information provided by his brother, William Wattie, for the Roll of Honour states that John Ritchie Wattie was born at Newstead.

James Wattie, father of John Ritchie Wattie, died at Newstead, Victoria on 3rd July, 1908. Sarah Wattie, mother of John Ritchie Wattie, died at Newstead, Victoria on 9th July, 1908.

Obituary notices – Kerang Times, Victoria 10 July, 1908 & 14 July, 1908:

### **OBITUARY**

*The death is announced in his 63rd year of Mr James Wattie, an old resident of the Kerang district, the sad event taking place at Newstead, at which place, prior to his coming to Kerang, he was a well-known employee of Kyd and Mackie's flour mills. Deceased leaves a wife and large family to mourn his loss. The remains were interred in the Newstead cemetery on Friday last, the Rev. Father Carney conducting the service at the grave.*

### **OBITUARY**

*In our last issue we reported the death at Newstead on the 1st inst. of Mr James Wattie an old resident of the Kerang district. It is now our sad duty to report the death, six days later, of his wife, Mrs Sarah Wattie. Mrs Wattie had been ill for the previous six weeks from heart complaint and it was during the course of her illness that Mr Wattie was seized with a paralytic stroke and died. It was no doubt due to this sad event that her own death took place. Her remains were interred in the Newstead cemetery, the Rev. Wellard, of the Methodist Church, officiating at the grave. A family of six daughters and five sons are left, the youngest being 14 years of age.*

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Flinders, subdivision of Warburton, listed John Ritchie Wattie, Labourer of Warburton, Victoria.

The 1914, 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Wimmera, subdivision of Kerang, listed John Ritchie Wattie, Labourer of Kerang, Victoria.

John Ritchie Wattie was a 40 year old, single, Labourer from Kerang, Victoria when he enlisted at Bendigo, Victoria on 27th July, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3963 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his brother – W. Wattie, of Wandella, Kerang, Victoria.

Private John Ritchie Wattie was posted to Depot on 27th July, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 12th Reinforcements, 5th Battalion on 11th October, 1915.

Private John Ritchie Wattie embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 23rd November, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements.

Private John Ritchie Wattie was taken on strength of 5th Battalion from Reinforcements at Serapeum on 22nd February, 1916.

Private John Ritchie Wattie embarked from Alexandria on 25th March, 1916 on *Briton* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th March, 1916.

Private John Ritchie Wattie was still with his Unit on 6th January, 1917.

Private John Ritchie Wattie was promoted to Lance Corporal on 28th March, 1917 – vice Moseley promoted to Corporal.

Lance Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was awarded the Military Medal on 31st October, 1917. Appeared in the London Gazette 12th December, 1917 & the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on 2nd May, 1918.

*"During the operations east of YPRES on 20th September, L/Cpl. WATTIE was made responsible to lay a tape from the centre of the Red Line to the centre of the Blue Line as the advance proceeded. He succeeded in doing this and*

*immediately proceeded to establish an observation post in the blue line. At this place he was cut off from the Intelligence Section and partially isolated, but he remained there for two days despite all barrages. The information collected by him from this observation post was extremely valuable. Twice he discovered large parties of enemy massing over near the "Mound" and again in a trench on the far ridge. In each case owing to the information he collected in spite of heavy enemy barrage, the artillery was brought to bear on these targets in sufficient time."*

War Diary – 5th Battalion –30 September, 1917:

*The following recommendations were submitted on the 24/9/17 for works done in the action of the 20th inst....*

*D.C.M.*

*3963 L/Cpl. R. WATTIE ..... (was one of 10 names listed)*

*M.M.*

*..... (11 names listed)*

(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)



*Military Medal issued for bravery in battle on land.*

*The MM ranked below the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)*

Lance Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was on furlough to UK from 27th January, 1918 & rejoined from furlough on 12th February, 1918.

Lance Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was promoted to Corporal on 30th August, 1918 to complete Establishment.

Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was on leave to UK from France on 12th January, 1919. Corporal Wattie was reported to be on leave to Glasgow from 15th January, 1919 to 29th January, 1919.

### **5th Battalion**

The 5th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the A.I.F. during the First World War. Like the 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion was heavily involved in operations against the German Army. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders then returning to the Somme for winter.

In 1917, the battalion participated in the operations that followed-up the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line, and then returned to Belgium to join the great offensive launched to the east of Ypres. In March and April 1918, the battalion helped to stop the German spring offensive. It subsequently participated in the great Allied offensive launched near Amiens on 8 August 1918. The advance by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war".

The battalion continued operations until late September 1918. At 11 am on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent.

The November armistice was followed by the peace treaty of Versailles signed on 28 June 1919.

In November 1918 members of the A.I.F. began to return to Australia for demobilisation and discharge.

*(Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was admitted to War Hospital, Cambuslang, near Glasgow, Scotland on 9th February, 1919.

Corporal John Ritchie Wattie died at 8.10 am on 10th February, 1919 at War Hospital, Cambuslang, near Glasgow, Scotland from Lobar Pneumonia.

Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was buried on 12th February, 1919 in Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Glasgow, Scotland – Plot number 4273 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Corporal John Ritchie Wattie - *Coffin was Oak with black covering. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was covered with the Union Jack, and conveyed to the graveside, surmounted by several beautiful wreaths sent:- Lady Primrose, A. Robertson, Friend "Minnie" and Hospital Staff of Military Hospital Cambuslang, Lanarkshire. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the Rev. H. T. Shppard, officiated. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives & friends present at the Funeral – Mr, Mrs & Miss Shields, Lady Primrose, R. D. Chalmers, A.I.F., J. C. Skinner, N. M. Rolls, J. C. Maynard, G. B. Woods, J. Campbell, A. Templeton, E. Dehn, J. R. Chamers, 5th Bn A.I.F.

Notification was made in August, 1922 to Base Records that permission had been granted to the Cambuslang War Memorial Committee to carry out the exhumation and re-interment of the body of Corporal J. R. Wattie, M.M., 3963, 5th Battalion, A.I.F., from Grave No. 4273 to Grave No. 4275 in Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Scotland. The reason explained was that the War Memorial Committee had decided to erect a monument in Westburn Cemetery in memory of the soldiers interred & this would encroach on the existing grave of Corporal Wattie

Corporal John Ritchie Wattie was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Corporal Wattie's brother - Mr William Wattie, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal John Ritchie Wattie – service number 3963, aged 43, of 5th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of the late James and Sarah Wattie. Born at Newstead, Victoria, Australia. Awarded the M M (Military Medal).

Corporal J. R. Wattie is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 45.



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

J. R. Wattie is remembered on the Kerang Shire Honour Roll, located in Kerang Municipal Chambers, 47 Victoria Street, Kerang, Victoria.



**Kerang Shire Honour Roll** (Photo from Monument Australia)

J. Wattie is remembered on the Kerang East State School Honour Roll, located in Tragowel Hall, Tragowel, Victoria.



**Kerang East State School Honour Roll** (Photo from Victorian Heritage Council)

J. R. Wattie is remembered on the Newstead Methodist Church Honour Roll, located in Newstead Uniting Church, Lyons & Wyndham Streets, Newstead, Victoria.



Newstead Methodist Church Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)

J. R. Wattie is remembered on the Newstead & District Honour Roll, located in Newstead Mechanics Institute, Lyons Street, Newstead, Victoria.



Newstead & District Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Tim Fitzgerald)

J. R. Wattie was remembered with a tree on the Avenue of Honour, Maryborough Road, Newstead. The Avenue of Trees commemorated those who served in World War 1. The name plates that were placed at each tree were made of wood and were part of small crosses. They were removed many years ago and held privately. In 2002 the holder of the plates presented the plates to the Newstead Historical Society (Old Newstead Courthouse, Canrobert Street) and they were mounted in a frame.



**Newstead Avenue of Honour** (Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson & Tim Fitzgerald)



J. R. Wattie was remembered on the Newstead War Memorial, located in Newstead Memorial Park, Creswick-Newstead Road, Newstead, Victoria.



**Newstead War Memorial** (Photos from Monument Australia & Victorian Heritage)

(59 pages of Corporal John Ritchie Wattie'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*







**John Ritchie Wattie**



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **RECRUITING CAMPAIGN**

#### **THE NEW SOLDIERS**

The following applicants passed the medical test last Tuesday week:-.....John Ritchie Wattie, Labourer.....

*(Bendigonian, Bendigo, Victoria – 5 August, 1915)*

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#### **OUR SOLDIERS**

Amongst the latest decorations for bravery on the battlefields of France, appears the name of Corporal J. R. Wattie, who has been awarded his Military Medal. Corporal Wattie enlisted in Kerang, and sailed from Australia with the 5th Battalion about two and a half years ago. He was brought up here in the Kerang district, having come here when only 6 years old. Three of his brothers are now living in the Kerang district. He has taken part in several big engagements, escaping on every occasion without a scratch. His brother Pte T. G. Wattie has served the same period, and so far has escaped injury likewise.

*(Kerang New Times, Victoria – 10 May, 1918)*

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#### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

##### **CASUALTY LIST No. 461**

##### **DIED OTHER CAUSES**

J. R. WATTIE, Kerang, 10/2/19, illness

*(Weekly Times, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 March, 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)*

Corporal J. R. Wattie does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

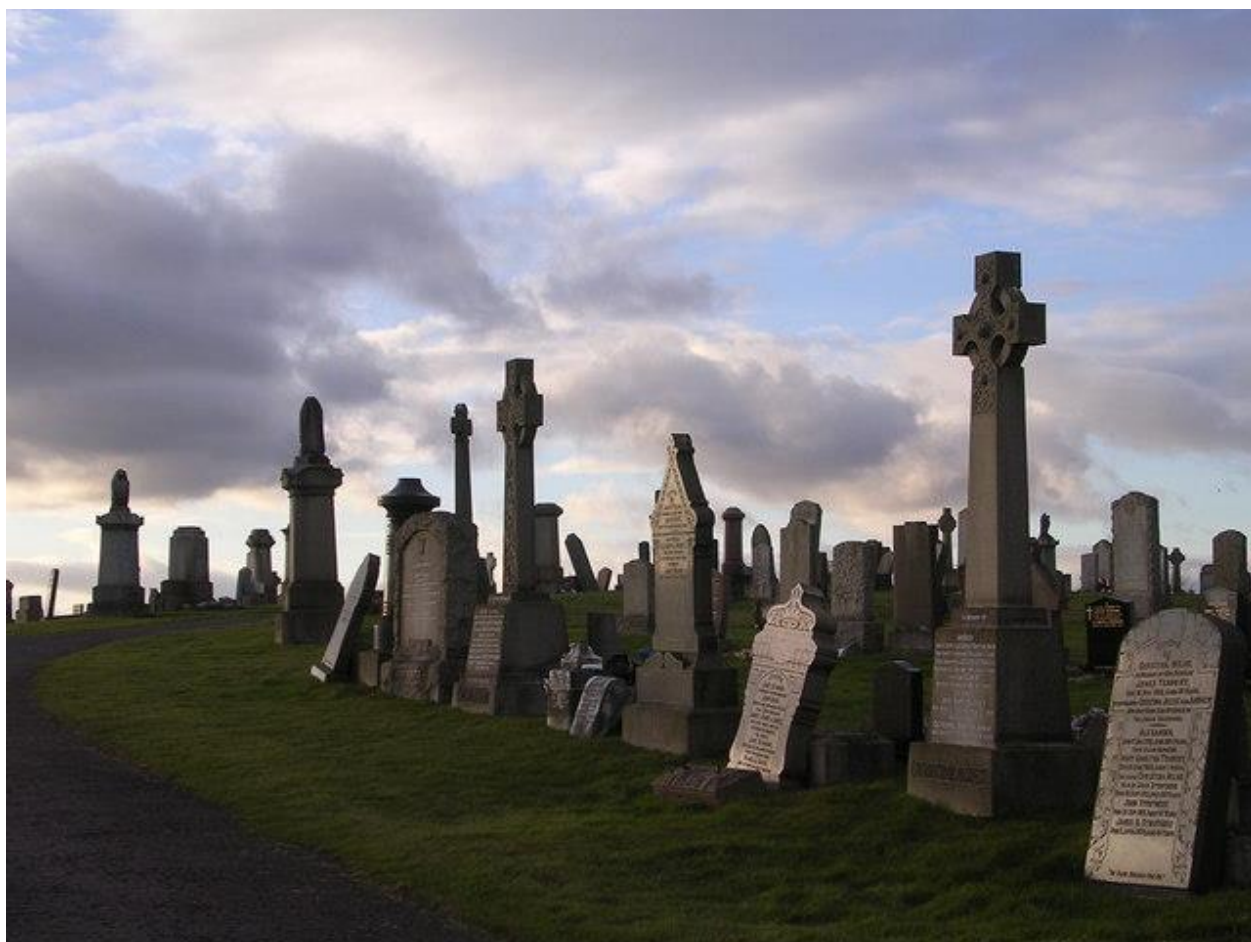
*Father In Thy Gracious Keeping  
Leave We Now Thy Servant Sleeping*

## Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland

Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Glasgow contains 60 Commonwealth War Graves – 22 from World War 1 & 38 from World War 2.



Entrance to Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Glasgow



*(Photo by Chris Upson)*

Photo of Corporal J. R. Wattie's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Westburn Cemetery, Cambuslang, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland.

