

**Tottenham Cemetery,
Greater London, Middlesex, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3959 PRIVATE

W. WHITEHEAD

23RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND OCTOBER, 1916

Walter WHITEHEAD

Walter Lee Whitehead was born at King's Lynn, Norfolk, England on 19th June, 1860 to parents William & Elizabeth Whitehead (nee Lee).

The 1861 England Census recorded Walter Whitehead as a 9 month old, living with his family in Victoria Street, South Lynn, Norfolk, England. His parents were listed as William Whitehead (Merchant Seaman, aged 37, born Denver, Norfolk) & Elizabeth Whitehead (aged 32, born Stow Bridge, Norfolk). Walter was one of four children listed on this Census (all born South Lynn, Norfolk) – William Whitehead (Scholar, aged 10), Liza Ann Whitehead (Scholar, aged 6), Elizabeth Whitehead (Scholar, aged 4) then Walter.

The 1871 England Census recorded Walter L. Whitehead as 10 year old Scholar, living with his family at Keppel (?) Street, King's Lynn South, Norfolk, England. His mother – Elizabeth Whitehead was listed as Sailor's Wife (age 37). Walter was one of five children listed on this Census – William L. Whitehead (Sailor, aged 20), Eliza A. Whitehead (Scholar, aged 14) then Walter, John Whitehead (Scholar, aged 6, born King's Lynn) & Lee Richard Whitehouse (aged 1, born King's Lynn, Norfolk).

Walter Whitehead joined Royal Naval Reserve.

Walter Whitehead stated he was a 41 year old, single, Mariner from Chas. Cook, Steampacket Hotel, Williamstown, Melbourne, Victoria when he enlisted on 18th January, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3959 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Eliza Wanford, Battersea Parade, Park Road, London, S.W., England. Walter Whitehead stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with "*South Africa Scottish Horse*" for 6 months

Private Walter Whitehead was posted to Z Company, 4th Depot Battalion on 18th January, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 9th Reinforcements of 23rd Battalion on 23rd December, 1915.

Private Walter Whitehead embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Warilda* (A69) on 8th February, 1916 with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 23rd Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements.

Private Walter Whitehead embarked from Alexandria on H.M.T. *Oriana* on 21st March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 27th March, 1916.

Private Walter Whitehead was written up on 16th April, 1916 while posted at 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France – 1. Drunk in Lines at 10 pm & 2. Failing to hand in pass to Guard Tent. He was awarded 21 days Field Punishment No. 1.

Private Walter Whitehead was written up on 24th June, 1916 while posted at 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France – "*While in Active Service Drunkeness.*" He was awarded 28 days Field Punishment No. 1.

Private Walter Whitehead was marched out from 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 11th July, 1916 to join his Unit. He was marched out from 1st Anzac on 1st August, 1916 to join his Unit & was taken on strength of 23rd Battalion in France on 6th August, 1916 from 9th Reinforcements.

Private Walter Whitehead was wounded in action in France on 22nd August, 1916. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 23rd August, 1916 with Shrapnel Wounds to Back then transferred & admitted to 44th Casualty Clearing Station on the same day. Private Whitehead was transferred to No. 19 Ambulance Train on 24th August, 1916 & admitted to 8th Red Cross Hospital at Le Toquet on 25th August, 1916 with "*G.S.W. VI I (Severe).*" He was invalided to England on 28th August, 1916, leaving Calais on 29th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Brighton* with G.S.W. Contusions (severe).

23rd Battalion

The 23rd Battalion was raised in Victoria in March 1915 as the third battalion of the 6th Brigade. After initial training, it left Australia in March and arrived in Egypt, where it would complete its advanced training, in June.....

The battalion was next "in the line" on 10 April 1916, when it occupied forward trenches of the Armentieres sector in northern France. This relatively gentle introduction to the Western Front was followed in July by the horrific battles of Pozieres and Mouquet Farm, after which it was estimated that the Battalion lost almost 90 per cent of its original members.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 23rd Battalion

22nd August, 1916 - Pozieres:

5 am – Battalion left BRICKFIELDS en route to trenches at 5 am. Received orders from Brigade to relieve 1st BN. Proceeded to trenches to take over.

2.30 pm – Arrived at Hdquarters 1st Battalion.

4.50 pm – D 23rd relieved D 1st Battalion

6.0pm – C. O. relieved from tour of line.

6.30 pm – Heavy barrage by enemy on our lines commenced due to their observance of our relief. Casualties Lt Cuthbertson wounded 5 Or Killed 12 OR wounded.

8 pm – Received complete reports from Coys that they had relieved Coys of 1st Btn.

8.40 pm – C.O. & Staff 1st Battalion left.

8.30 pm – Message received from Liaison Officer 50th Battalion Germans reinforcing round R28 & C36

10.30 pm – Barrage on this sector ceased, Conditions normal.

10.45 pm Col Forbes reported following up the rear of his 3 Coys D.A.C. 21st Btn

10.55 pm Report of 23rd, 21st and al that is known of 24th sent to Bde No A 109.

11 pm – Disposition of 23rd Btn attached herewith with plan

11.30 pm – Intermittent shelling on the sector Casualties Lt R. M. Cuthbertson wounded.

11.45 pm – Lewis Gun covering working party opposite "C" Sap was blown out by shell fire. Strength 32 OFF 729 O.R.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Walter Whitehead was admitted to Edmonton Military Hospital on 29th August, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Back (severe).

Private Walter Whitehead died on 2nd October, 1916 at Military Hospital, Edmonton, England from wounds received in action in France - G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Back.

A death for Walter Whitehead, aged 55, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Edmonton, Middlesex, England.

Private Walter Whitehead was buried in Tottenham Cemetery, Greater London, Middlesex, England – Heroes Corner, Grave No. 7305.

He is now remembered on CWGC Screen Wall – Gen. 7355 (Screen Wall) as he has no headstone. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Private Walter Whitehead requested in his Will (extracted from A.B. 64 - Soldier's Pay Book) that in the event of his death the whole of his possessions he leaves to his sister – Mrs Eliza Wandford, No. 486 Octavis St, Surrey Lane, Battersea, London.

Base Records wrote to D.F.O. (District Finance Officer), 3rd Military District on 7th September, 1921 advising: "As a communication addressed to Mrs E. Baker, at 48 Octavia Street, Surrey Lane, Battersea, London, the next of kin of the late No. 3959, Private W. Whitehead, 23rd Battalion, has been returned unclaimed, I should be glad to be informed whether you have a later address than the one quoted above."

The District Finance Officer, 3rd Military District, replied to Base Records on 13th September, 1921 advising "...up to the present no claim for the War Gratuity has been received from Mrs Parkes (sister). According to the records in this Office the husband of Mrs Parkes was the Organizing Secretary of the National Union of Millers, 467 Battersea Park Road, London S.W.11."

Private Walter Whitehead was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Whitehead's sister – Mrs E. Parkes, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in England in May, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Walter Whitehead – service number 3959, of 23rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

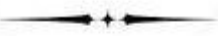
Private W. Whitehead is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 100.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(33 pages of Private Walter Whitehead'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



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

TWO LISTS ISSUED

Two lists of Australian casualties – Nos. 22 and 223 – were made available by the Defence department yesterday.

WOUNDED

W. WHITEHEAD, England

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria - 29 September, 1916)

The 235th CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian names are:-

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private W. Whitehead, England.

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 18 October, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN GRAVES

FLOWERS IN TOTTENHAM CEMETERY

Eight Australian soldiers are lying in Tottenham Cemetery, England. News of the tending of their graves has been received by Miss G. Limmer, of 299 Avoca street, Randwick, in a letter from a friend, Miss Lillian Short whose address is 130A Gladstone Avenue, Wood Green, London N. The letter says:

In Tottenham Cemetery there are eight Australian soldiers buried, and a few friends and myself have undertaken to place flowers on the graves once every month, so that they are not forgotten. The graves are beautifully turfed and looked after by the cemetery authorities, but we supply the flowers. We have been wondering whether the relatives of the men would like to know that we are doing this. It seems so dreadful to think that the poor boys are lying here and their friends cannot get to them. I went to the cemetery yesterday and put daffodils, narcissus and marguerites (yellow) there. They looked so nice when they were finished. The men's names and numbers are as follow:

3959 Pte. W. Whitehead, 23rd Battn., died October 2, 1916.

4654 Pte. W. G. Staveley, 58th. Battn.. died November 12, 1916.

651 Pte. E. J. Willis, 29th Battn., died August 2, 1916.

3558 Pte. E. Smith, 6th Battn., died September 9, 1916.

2778 Pte. H. L. Beaumont, 10th Battn., died September 25, 1916.

4146 Pte. F. A. Beard, 59th Battn., died July 30, 1916.

553 Pte. D. Low, 32nd Battn., died August 4, 1916.

2466 Pte. R. V. Feehan, 10th Battn., died September 22, 1916.

(*Advocate*, Burnie, Tasmania – 17 June, 1921)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

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.

Tottenham Cemetery, Greater London, Middlesex, England

Tottenham Cemetery contains burials of both wars. Most of the 293 First World War graves are in a plot on the western side of the cemetery, backed by a Screen Wall bearing the names of those buried both there and elsewhere in the cemetery, whose graves could not be individually marked.

There are 212 burials of the Second World War, mostly scattered, but 30 graves form a small plot facing the First World War plot. Again, some graves could not be individually marked and these casualties are commemorated on supplementary panels to the Screen Wall.

(Information from CWGC)



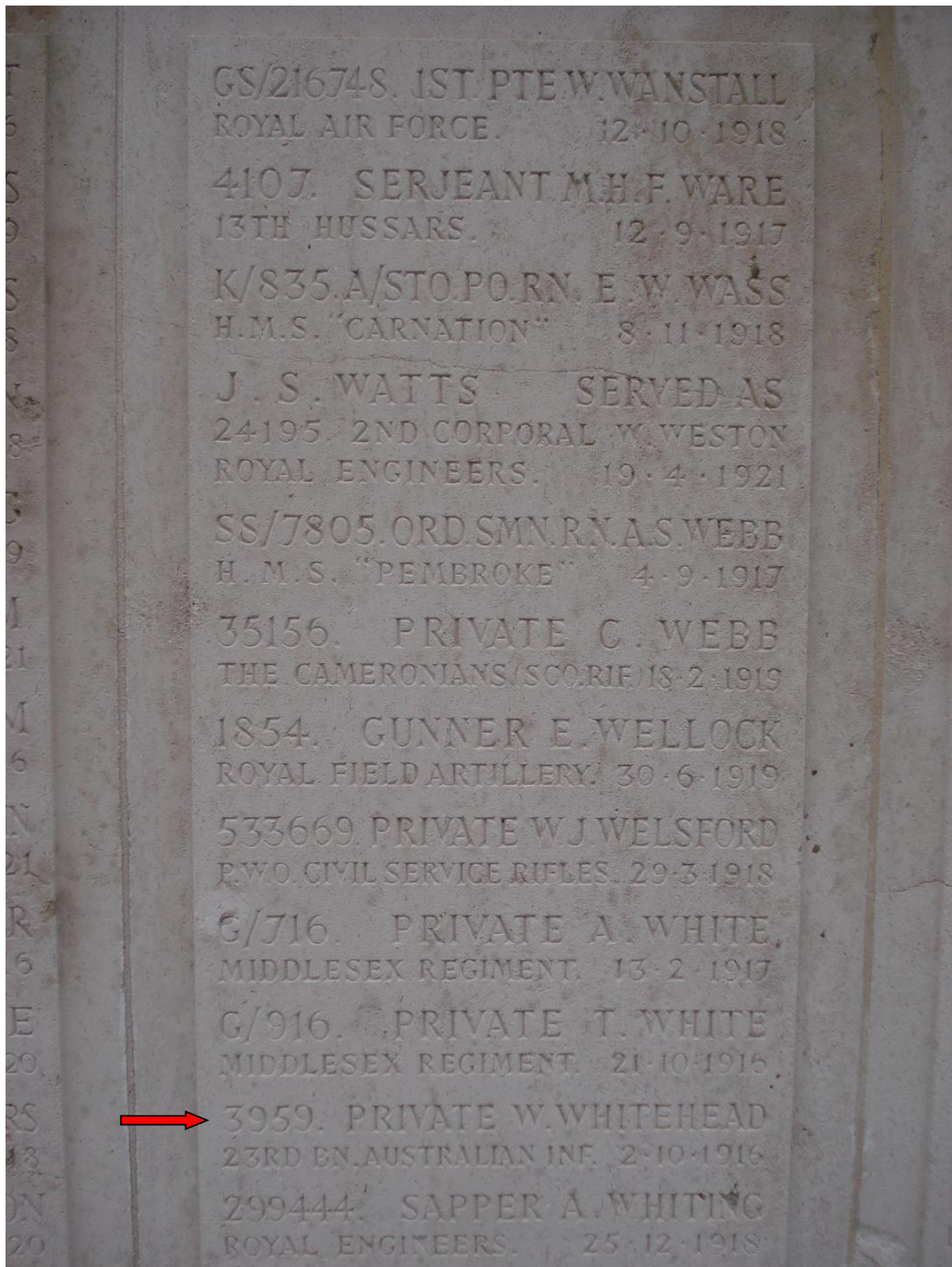
Tottenham Cemetery (Photo above from *Find a Grave* – Mike Ganly; below from CWGC)



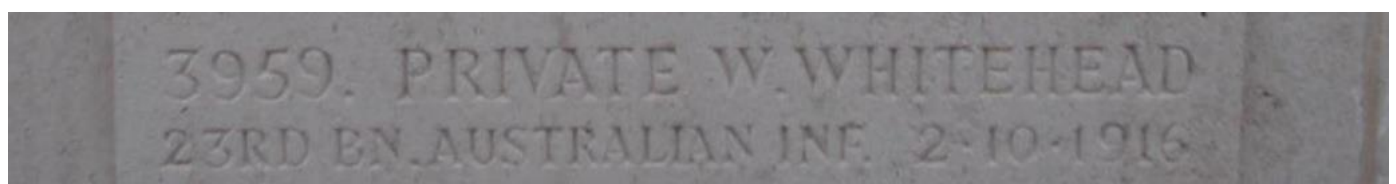
Photo of Private W. Whitehead's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall in Tottenham Cemetery, Greater London, Middlesex, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Geoffrey Gillon)



(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)



field.crematorium@dignityuk.co.uk

May to September 8.30am ~ 6.00
October to April 8.30am ~ 4.30



Tottenham Cemetery Map (Photo from Find a Grave – Justin)