

**Parkhurst Military Cemetery,  
Parkhurst, Isle of Wight  
War Grave**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT**

**T. G. WHITNEY**

**ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT**

**15TH JUNE, 1916 Age 18**

## Thomas Geffrey WHITNEY

Thomas Geffrey Whitney was born on 23rd August, 1897 at Nebea Station, Coonamble, New South Wales, Australia to parents Edward Whitney and Helen Amy Whitney (nee Keep). He was baptised on 7th March, 1898 at Springwood Christ Church, New South Wales. Edward Whitney was listed as a Grazier.

[There is insufficient information to prove if this is definitely Thomas Geffrey Whitney's family - The Whitney family were passengers on *Oruba*, which departed from Sydney, Australia & arrived at the port of London, England on 27th April, 1900. The family consisted of: E. Whitney, age 45, Mrs Whitney, aged 40, G. Whitney, aged 4, & L. Whitney, aged 8.]

The 1911 England Census recorded Thomas Geoffrey Whitney as a 13 year old School Boy, boarding at Aysgarth School, Newton le Willows, Yorkshire, England.

Thomas Geffrey Whitney attended Sherborne School, Dorset, England from September, 1911 to April, 1915. He then attended Sandhurst (The Royal Military College) in April, 1915 as a Cadet.

Cadet Thomas Geffrey Whitney was appointed Second Lieutenant on 15th September, 1915.

*The London Gazette – 14 September, 1915:*

*War Office*

*REGULAR FORCES*

*The undermentioned Gentlemen Cadets, from the Royal Military College, to be Second Lieutenants. Dated 15th September, 1915:-*

*The Royal Warwickshire Regiment*

*Francis Henry Cox*

*William Johnson Kenyon*

*Thomas Geffrey Whitney*

Second Lieutenant Thomas Geffrey Whitney died at 6.30 pm on 15th June, 1916 at Parkhurst Military Hospital, Isle of Wight, England from injuries received when his motor cycle collided with a motor char-a-banc at Chale, Isle of Wight, England. (Note: the UK Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects records that 2 Lieut. T. G. Whitney, of Warwickshire Regiment, died on 16th June, 1916 at Parkhurst Military Hospital.)



**Example of a motor char-a-banc**

Newspaper item – *Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser*, 24 June, 1916:

## **WHITLEY**

### **TRAGIC DEATH OF LIEUTENANT WHITNEY**

#### **Fatally Injured in Motor Collision**

*The circumstances connected with the death of Second Lieutenant Thomas Geoffrey Whitney, 3rd Royal Warwickshire Regiment, son of Mr and Mrs Edward Whitney, of Meadow Bank, who was fatally injured whilst motor cycling from Brightstone, Isle of Wight (where he was stationed) to Chale, a distance of about eight miles, through colliding with a powerful motor char-a-banc, were investigated by the Isle of Wight Coroner and a jury at the Parkhurst Barracks on Saturday.*

*In addition to military representatives there were present the father (Mr Edward Whitney) and the younger brother (Mr E. Percival Whitney). The former stated that his son's age was 18.*

*Lieutenant Heywood, R.A.M.C. stated that deceased was brought to the hospital at Parkhurst on Thursday afternoon about 3.30 suffering from a fracture of the right leg. At 6.30 he succumbed to internal haemorrhage.*

*Cyril Peck, of Shanklin, said he was in charge of a 35 h.p. motor bus and was on his way to Shanklin via Chale and Godshill, early on the afternoon of Thursday. He had 16 passengers. When approaching Newman's Lane corner, a very dangerous spot, the deceased suddenly appeared on a motor cycle not more than two or three yards from the char-a-banc. Witness instantly applied his brakes and almost at the same moment the young officer crashed into the radiator at the front of the car. He should think he was travelling at the rate of from 20 to 25 miles an hour. Witness did not hear him sound his hooter but he sounded his 50 yards away and again at the corner.*

*By the Foreman: The width of his car was seven feet, the length seventeen feet, and the width of the road sixteen feet. Deceased was into them before they knew where they were. When the impact took place his car was practically at a stand still.*

*Two passengers by the motor char-a-banc, Mr Victor G. Alexander, residing at Streatham, and Mr Joseph Lewis, of Woking, agreed that all the way along the journey from Shanklin to the spot where the accident happened their driver had been hooting so incessantly as to make it almost unpleasant for the passengers. Mr Alexander said he thought their speed did not exceed twelve miles an hour, whilst that of the deceased must have been considerable, judging from the force of the impact and the angle at which he struck them.*

*The foreman of the jury said he did not think deceased had been travelling anything like so fast as had been reported, otherwise his machine must have rebounded and not have remained bolt upright as described by the witnesses.*

*The Coroner said it was clear that the accident was brought about primarily by deceased riding too fast round a dangerous corner. The jury found that the deceased was fatally injured by his motor cycle colliding with a motor char-a-banc and requested the Coroner to communicate with the Rural District Council with a view to having certain trees cut back so as to give a clear view round the corner. The Foreman expressed the deep sympathy of the jury with the bereaved parents and other relatives of the unfortunate young officer who was very popular with his brother officers of all ranks.*

*The funeral took place at Parkhurst on Saturday afternoon with full military honours. Both the father and the mother of deceased were present, as also the brother and other relatives.*

A death for Thomas G. Whitney, aged 18, was registered in the June quarter, 1916 in the district of Isle of Wight, Hampshire, England.

Second Lieutenant Thomas Geoffrey Whitney was buried in Parkhurst Military Cemetery, Isle of Wight, England – Plot number I. E. 95 and has a Private Headstone. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Newspaper item – Isle of Wight Mercury, 23 June, 1916:

**The Motor Cycle Accident at Chale**  
**YOUNG OFFICER FATALLY INJURED**  
**HIS LAST CYCLE RIDE**

*At the Recreation-room, Parkhurst Barracks, on Saturday, the Island Coroner and a jury investigated the circumstances connected with the death of second Lieut. Jeffery Whitney, of the 3rd Royal Warwickshire Regiment, who succumbed to injuries received whilst riding a motor cycle at Chale in collision with a motor char-a-banc, with a load of passengers, early on Thursday afternoon. There were present Mr. Edward Whitney, father of the deceased, and his brother, Mr. Percival Edward Whitney, Major Hackett (representing the 3rd Warwickshire Regiment), and Inspector Sibbick, on behalf of the Isle of Wight County Constabulary. Mr. Edward Whitney identified the body as that of his son, who, he said, had held a commission in the 3rd Warwickshire Regiment, and had been stationed at Brighstone. His age was 18.*

.....  
*The jury found that the deceased was fatally injured by his motor cycle coming in collision with a motor char-a-banc, and requested the Coroner to communicate with the Rural District Council as to the dangerous state of the corner. The jury, through the foreman, expressed deep sympathy with the parents and other relatives of the unfortunate young officer. . . .*

*The funeral took place at Parkhurst Cemetery the same afternoon, with full military honours. Colonel Clyne, commanding the Warwickshires, was present, as also a detachment of the men, with band and a firing party. The family mourners were Mr. and Mrs. Edward Whitney (father and mother), Mr. Edward Percival Whitney (brother), and Mr. R.J. Whitney, of Liverpool (uncle).*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Second Lieutenant Thomas Geoffrey Whitney, aged 18, of 3rd Bn., Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was the son of Edward Whitney and Helen Amy Whitney, of Broad Oak, Groombridge, Sussex.

Second Lieutenant Thomas Geoffrey Whitney is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

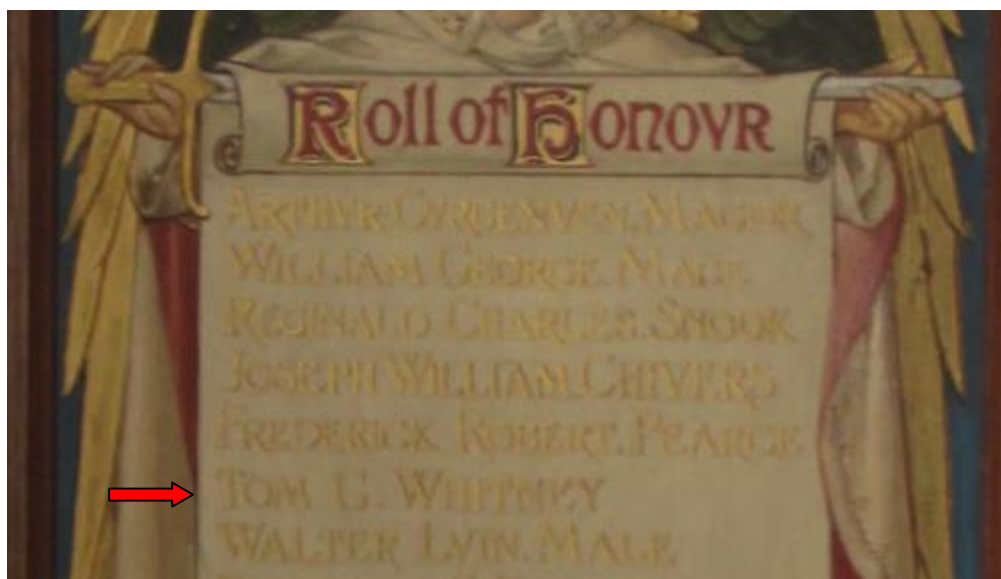


**Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial** (Capital Photographer)

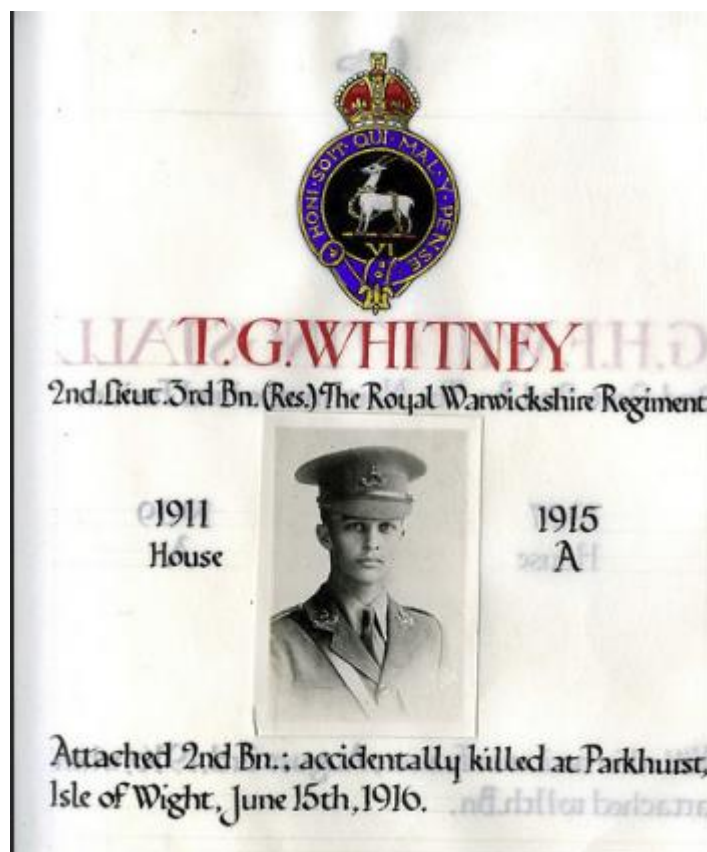
Tom G. Whitney is remembered on the Roll of Honour located in Christ Church, Shaw, Wiltshire, England.



Christ Church, Shaw Roll of Honour (Photo by Michael Day)



T. G. Whitney is remembered in the Sherborne School, UK, Book of Remembrance for former pupils who died in the First World War 1914 – 1918. He is also remembered on the War Memorial Staircase at Sherborne School, Dorset, England.



**Sherborne School, UK, Book of Remembrance** (Photo by Rachel Hassall)

Obituary in *The Shirburnian* (Sherborne School Magazine) July, 1916:

*Thomas Geoffrey Whitney (a, 1911-15), 2nd Lieut. 3rd Bn. R. Warwickshire Regt., was accidentally killed in a motor accident at Parkhurst, Isle of Wight, on June 15th, 1916. His sudden death, before he had the chance of foreign service, came as a great shock to his friends at Sherborne, especially at School House. A very quiet unobtrusive boy of small stature, he nevertheless more than held his own in the life of the place, and by his unselfishness, steadiness, and imperturbable good humour, won the respect and affection of all with whom he came into contact. He went to Sandhurst in April, 1915, and on passing out was gazetted to the 3rd (Reserve) Bn. of the R. Warwickshire Regt., but attached to the 2nd BG. His superior officer had nothing but praise for his steady devotion to duty and good influence on his men. On the day of the accident he was to have gone before the Brigadier-General with a view to passing as fit for the front.*





**Thomas Geoffrey Whitney**



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **COLLISION WITH CHAR-A-BANC**

#### **Officer's Death in the Island**

Newport, I.W., Friday

The death occurred last evening at the Military Hospital, Parkhurst, of Second Lieut. T. G. Whitney, 3rd Royal Warwickshire Regiment, who sustained serious injuries to the head and face and a broken leg yesterday, when his motor cycle collided with a motor char-a-banc at a dangerous corner at Chale Green.

Deceased was picked up unconscious, but after attention by Dr Armstrong he appeared to be better, partly regained consciousness and was removed to the Hospital.

*(Portsmouth Evening News, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England – 16 June, 1916)*

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### **MELKSHAM OFFICER'S DEATH**

Second-Lieutenant Tom G. Whitney, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, who died on June 15 in the Isle of Wight as the result of a motor accident, was the son of Mr. Edward Whitney, Melksham, Wilts, and Nebea, Coonamble, N.S.W. Lieutenant Whitney was in his nineteenth year, and obtained his commission in September, 1915.

*(Bath Chronicle, Somerset, England - 24 June 1916)*

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Accidental death was the verdict at an Isle of Wight inquest on 2nd Lieut. Thomas Geoffrey Whitney, of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, of Melksham, Wilts, whose skull was fractured in a collision between his motor cycle and a motor charabanc at a dangerous corner at Chale

*(The Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser, England - 24 June 1916)*

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## DEATHS

WHITNEY – On the 15th inst., at Parkhurst, I.W., as result of motor accident, 2nd Lieut. Tom G. Whitney, Royal Warwickshire Regt., son of Edward Whitney, Melksham, Wilts, and Nebea, Coonamble, N.S.W., aged 18 years and 10 months.

*(Hampshire Advertiser, Southampton, Hampshire, England - 24 June, 1916)*

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## THE DEATH ROLL FOR 1916

### A HEAVY TOLL: NOTABLE PERSONS PASS AWAY

In June the deaths were recorded of ..... Lieut. T. G. Whitney, of the Royal Warwicks, from injuries received in a cycle accident at Chale, I.W., 18; .....

*(Hampshire Advertiser, Southampton, Hampshire, England – 30 December, 1916)*

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## Parkhurst Military Cemetery, Isle of Wight, England

This cemetery is War Department property, attached to the Albany Barracks. It contains war graves of both world wars and after the war a Cross of Sacrifice was erected. There are 59 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war here. There are a further 26 Commonwealth burials of the 1939-1945 war, including 1 unidentified British soldier and 2 unidentified seamen of the Merchant Navy. *(Information from CWGC)*



**Parkhurst Military Cemetery**



Photo of Second Lieutenant Thomas Geffrey Whitney's Private Headstone in Parkhurst Military Cemetery, Isle of Wight, England



*(Photo by Geoffrey Allan)*

*In*

*Loving Memory*

*Of*

*TOM GEFREY WHITNEY,*

*2ND Lieut. Royal Warwickshire Regiment,*

*Accidentally Killed on Active Service*

*15TH June, 1916*

*Aged 18 Years and 10 Months*

*Born At Nebea, Coonamble, New South Wales*