

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2876 PRIVATE

F. WHITTAKER

AUST. ARMY ORDNANCE CORPS.

8TH MARCH, 1919 Age 40

Thy Will Be Done

Fred WHITTAKER

Fred Whittaker was born at St James, Accrington, Lancashire, England on 12th February, 1878 to parents Roger & Alice Whittaker. He was baptised on 14th March, 1878 in the Chapelry of St. James, Accrington, Lancaster, England. Roger Whittaker was listed on the Baptism Register as a Labourer & the family lived at 10 Hope Street.

The 1881 England Census recorded Fred Whittaker as a 3 year old, living with his family at 10 Hope Street, Accrington, Lancashire, England. His parents were listed as Roger Whittaker (Labourer at Print Works, aged 50, born Accrington, Lancashire) & Alice Whittaker (Housewife, aged 49, born Accrington, Lancashire). Fred was the youngest of eight children listed on this Census (all born at Accrington, Lancashire) – (listed in the order they were recorded on the Census) – Ellen A. Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 22), David H. Whittaker (Iron Moulder, aged 18), Elizabeth J. Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 16), Isabella Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 14), Clara Whittaker (Scholar, aged 8), John A. Whittaker (Scholar, aged 6), then Fred & Mary A. Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 20).

The 1891 England Census recorded Fred Whittaker as a 13 year old, living with his family at 10 Hope Street, Accrington, Lancashire, England. His widowed mother was listed as Alice Whittaker (aged 58). Fred was one of six children listed on this Census – Mary Ann Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 30), Elizabeth Jane Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 26), Isabella Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 23), Clara Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 18), John Albert Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 16) & then Fred. Also listed was Emily Maria Whittaker – a visitor (Living on her own means, aged 27).

The 1901 England Census recorded Fred Whittaker as a 23 year old Iron Fitter (Machine), living with his family at 10 Hope Street, Accrington, Lancashire, England. His widowed mother was listed as Alice Whittaker (aged 67). Fred was one of three children listed on this Census – Isabel Whittaker (aged 33), Clara Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 28) & then Fred.

Fred Whittaker was apprenticed to Howard & Bulloughs for 7 years.

The 1911 England Census recorded Fred Whittaker as a 33 year old (head of the house) Cotton Textile Machine Fitter living with his 2 sisters at 10 Industrial Terrace, Hope Street, Accrington, Lancashire, England. His sisters were listed as Isabella Whittaker (aged 43) & Clara Whittaker (Cotton Weaver, aged 38).

According to information supplied by his sister for the Roll of Honour – Fred Whittaker came to Australia when he was 34 years old.

Fred Whittaker was a 38 year old, single, Textile Fitter from 143 Cleveland Street, Redfern, Sydney, New South Wales when he enlisted at Show Ground Camp, Sydney, New South Wales on 3rd November, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his sister – Isabel Whittaker, 10 Industrial Terrace, Hope Street, Accrington, Lancashire, England.

Private Fred Whittaker was posted to Recruits at Showground Camp, Sydney, New South Wales on 3rd November, 1916. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 34th Battalion on 9th November, 1916.

Private Fred Whittaker, Service number 2876, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 25th November, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 34th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 25th January, 1917 (date as per Casualty Form – Active Service, however the Statement of Service form recorded he disembarked on 29th January, 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 Fred Whittaker was marched in to Details Camp at Fovant, Wiltshire from Australia on 30th January, 1917.

Private Fred Whittaker was marched in to Camp Details at Sutton Mandeville, Wiltshire. He was marched out to 9th Training Battalion at Larkhill (near Durrington), Wiltshire on 6th March, 1917.

Private Fred Whittaker was written up for an Offence while posted at 9th Training Battalion at Durrington – A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from 10 pm on 1st July, 1917 until 7.30 pm on 2nd July, 1917. He was awarded 4 days Field Punishment No. 2 By Major Prince & a total forfeiture of 6 days pay.

Private Fred Whittaker proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 14th October, 1917 from No. 11 Camp, Durrington. He was marched in to 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 15th October, 1917 & marched out from 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) on 18th October, 1917. Private Whittaker was taken on strength of 34th Battalion in the Field on 22nd October, 1917 from Reinforcements.

Private Fred Whittaker reported sick on 22nd February, 1918. He was admitted to 10th Field Ambulance on 22nd February, 1918 with Pyrexia U. O. (Fever of unknown origin). Private Whittaker was transferred & admitted to 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 26th February, 1918 then transferred & admitted to 13th Casualty Clearing Station on 15th March, 1918 with Trench Fever. He was transferred to Ambulance Train on 30th March, 1918 & admitted to 30th General Hospital at Calais, France on 31st March, 1918 with Trench Fever. Private Whittaker was transferred & admitted to 18th Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 2nd April, 1918. On 6th April, 1918 Private Whittaker was transferred to 10th Convalescent Depot at Boulogne. He was transferred & admitted to 25th General Hospital at Hardelot, France on 9th April, 1918 with Myalgia. Private Whittaker was transferred & admitted to 1st Convalescent Depot at Boulogne on 19th April, 1918 & was discharged to Base on 22nd April, 1918. He was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 28th April, 1918 & was transferred to England on 6th May, 1918 – medically classified as Biii.

Private Fred Whittaker was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset, England on 7th May, 1918. He was marched out from No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 22nd May, 1918 & was marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on the same day.

Private Fred Whittaker was marched out from No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 23rd July, 1918 & was marched into Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on the same day.

34th Battalion

The 34th Battalion was formed in January 1916 at a camp established at the Maitland showground in New South Wales. It was planned that the bulk of the battalion's recruits would be drawn from the Maitland area and thus it was dubbed "Maitland's Own". The first recruits for the 34th, however, hailed from the far north-west of the state and arrived at Maitland after joining a recruiting march that began at Walgett. These men were known as the "Wallabies".....

After several stints in the trenches, and a period of rest and training, the battalion entered battle again on 12 October around Passchendaele. The battlefield, though, had been deluged with rain, and thick mud tugged at the advancing troops and fouled their weapons. The battle ended in a disastrous defeat, and over 50 per cent casualties for the 34th.

For the next five months the 34th alternated between periods of rest, training, labouring, and service in the line. When the German Army launched its last great offensive in the spring of 1918, the battalion was part of the force deployed to defend the approach to Amiens around Villers-Bretonneux. It took part in a counter-attack at Hangard Wood on 30 March, and helped to defeat a major drive on Villers- Bretonneux on 4 April.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Fred Whittaker was attached to I.O.M. Section (Inspector Ordnance Machinery), A.A.O.C. (Australian Army Ordnance Corps) for Course of Instruction from 34th Battalion on 9th August, 1918 ex Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill.

Private Fred Whittaker was transferred & taken on strength of I.O.M. (Inspector Ordnance Machinery) Section, A.A.O.C. (Australian Army Ordnance Corps) at Woolwich on 4th September, 1918 from 34th Battalion. He was appointed Fitter on the same day.

Australian Army Ordnance Corps

The Australian Army Ordnance Corps (A.A.O.C.) is the Corps within the Australian Army concerned with supply and administration, as well as the demolition and disposal of explosives and salvage of battle-damaged equipment.

Private (rank as per Casualty Form Active Service) Fred Whittaker proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone per SS *Arundel* on 24th September, 1918. He was marched in & taken on strength of A.A.O.C. B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) at Boulogne, France on 25th September, 1918. Private Whittaker was marched out to 22nd O.M.W. on 26th September, 1918 & was attached for duty with 22nd O.M.W. in the Field on 27th September, 1918.

Private Fred Whittaker reported sick on 4th October, 1918. He was admitted to 55th Casualty Clearing Station on 4th October, 1918 then transferred & admitted to 3rd General Hospital on 23rd October, 1918 with Conjunctivitis. Private Whittaker was discharged to 1st Australian Convalescent Depot on 2nd November, 1918.

Private Fred Whittaker was admitted to 2nd General Hospital at Havre, France on 2nd January, 1919 with an accidental fracture of Spine. He was reported to be dangerously ill. Private Whittaker was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* on 19th January, 1919.

Army Form W. 3428.

REPORT ON ACCIDENTAL OR SELF-INFLICTED INJURIES.

To be rendered in accordance with instructions on the back of this form.

<p>1. Number, Rank, Name, and Unit of injured man. 2676. Pte. WHITTAKER. F. A.A.O.C.</p>	<p>Date of Casualty. 1.1.1919.</p>
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2. Nature, Location, and Severity of injury. (*N.B. Field Ambulance to be notified at once if wound is believed to be self-inflicted.*) **Fracture Simple Spine region of 6th to 12 Dorsal Vertebrae. Serious.**
(Sgd) R.M. Rowe. Capt. R.A.M.C.
Severe and likely to interfere with future efficiency as a Soldier.

3. Short statement of the circumstances of the case. (Signed statements of witnesses to be attached to this form.)
Pte Whittaker was getting on a tram car when he was pushed and fell under a car passing in the opposite direction and dragged about 50 yards.
Witnesses not available.
A Court of Inquiry has not been held.

4. Commanding officer's opinion as to whether the man was:—

(a) In the performance of military duty.	No.
(b) To blame.	Yes, in that he was A.W.L.
(c) Whether any other person was to blame.	No.

(Sgd) H.C. Nott. Lt. Col.
Commanding 1st. Aust. Con. Depot.

Date **23.1.19.**

5. (a) Opinion of G.O.C. Brigade. **Not on duty and to blame in that he was**
(b) Disciplinary action taken or proposed, whether against injured man or another. **absent without leave.**

(Sgd) A.R. Minowes? Brig. Gen.
Commanding Harve. Brigade Base.

Date **29.1.19.**

Private Fred Whittaker was admitted to Southwark Military Hospital, East Dulwich Grove, London, England on 20th January, 1919 with an accidental fracture of Spine.

Fred Whittaker, Patient, made the following statement "*Patient states that at Havre on the 1st Jan, 1919, he was getting on a tram car and someone gave him a violent push and he fell under the front of a car passing in the opposite direction and was dragged about 50 yards.*"

On 24th January, 1919 Private Fred Whittaker's condition was reported to be stationary.

Private Fred Whittaker died at 5.10 am on 8th March, 1919 at Southwark Military Hospital, East Dulwich Grove, London, England from injuries accidentally received – fracture of Spine & Bronchitis.

A death for Fred Whittaker, aged 40, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Camberwell, London, England.

Private Fred Whittaker was buried on 13th March, 1919 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 183227.

From the burial report of Private Fred Whittaker - *Coffin was Elm, brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and conveyed to the graveside, surmounted by many beautiful wreaths sent from:- (Sister) B. & C. Whittaker, (Nephews) J. & N. Whittaker, Mrs M. S. Hepner, Mr & Mrs Chambers and many others. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and Chap Rev F. L. Suggett, C.F. of the A.I.F. Headquarters, London, conducted the burial service. 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 or Friends at Funeral – (Brother) Mr J. Whittaker. (Sister) Miss I. & C. Whittaker, (Sister-in-law) Mrs J. Whittaker, (Brother & Sister-in-law) Mr & Mrs W. F. Chambers.

A typed slip of paper in the Service Record file for Private Fred Whittaker reads:

"Brookwood Military Cemetery Plot 4 Row I. Grave 5."

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. I. 5. Private F. Whittaker now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Newspaper article – *Haslingden Gazette*, Haslingden, Lancashire, England – 15 March, 1919:

Late Private Fred Whittaker

SAD END OF BRAVE ACCRINGTON MAN

FATAL RESULT OF ACCIDENT IN FRANCE

Many people in Accrington have heard with extreme regret that last Saturday the death occurred in a London Hospital of Pte Fred Whittaker, of the Australian Imperial Forces, who before leaving Accrington for Australia some six or seven years ago, resided with his sisters and brother at 10, Industrial-terrace, Hope-street.

Pte Fred Whittaker was the son of the late Mr Roger Whittaker, and was formerly employed as a fitter by Messrs. Howard and Bullough. Joining the Colonial Forces about two and a half years ago, Pte Whittaker had passed safely through some of the most severe fighting in France, only to be most seriously injured in a tram car accident in a French town on New Year's Day. According to the report that came through, Pte Fred Whittaker was attempting to board a car during a heavy rush of traffic when he was thrown down on the road, caught by a passing car on the other side of lines, and dragged a distance of eighteen or twenty yards. He was picked up unconscious, and it was found that he was suffering from a fractured spine. For three weeks Pte Whittaker was under treatment in a French hospital, and he was afterwards removed to London, where he was visited by his two sisters from Accrington. We are sorry to say that from the first there was little hope of his recovery. Pte Whittaker was 41 years of age, and was well known in Accrington; indeed so well known was he that since the report of his death came through there have

been numerous enquiries. Up to going abroad he was a member of Christ Church Choir. He was unmarried and great sympathy has been expressed with his sisters and brother at the loss which has befallen them. Whilst in Australia, he had followed the occupation of a mechanic, and it was understood that after the war he intended to return to Accrington. The army authorities made the offer of a military funeral in London. At first the relatives were desirous that the interment should take place at Accrington, but when the relatives got to know that the authorities had made arrangements for a military funeral at Brookwood the family agreed. Consequently, the funeral took place at Brookwood on Thursday, at 11 o'clock.

The Public Trust Office, Sydney, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 8th July, 1919 requesting a certificate in duplicate relating to the death of No. 2876 F. Whittaker, A.A.O.C.

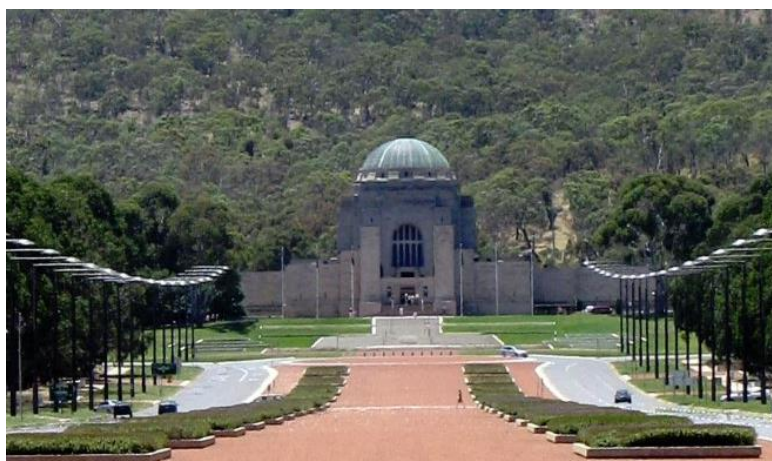
Private Fred Whittaker was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Whittaker's sister – Miss I. Whittaker, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in England in November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Fred Whittaker – service number 2876, aged 40, of Australian Army Ordnance Corps. He was the son of Roger & Alice Whittaker.

Private F. Whittaker is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 184.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



F. Whittaker is remembered on the Accrington War Memorial, located in Oak Hill Park, Manchester Road, Accrington, Lancashire, England.



Accrington War Memorial (Photos from IWM – Lisa Jennings)





(60 pages of Private Fred Whittaker'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

463rd CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED, OF OTHER CAUSES

Fttr FRED WHITTAKER, England (injuries)

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 17 April, 1919)

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 F. Whittaker does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Thy Will Be Done

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918. Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00190

c January, 1919



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private F. Whittaker's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

