

# Durrington War Graves

## World War 1



*Lest We Forget*



**1733 PRIVATE**

**J. W. WHITTAKER**

**39TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**18TH SEPTEMBER, 1916 Age 19**

*At Rest*

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte J. W. Whittaker is located in Grave Plot # 106  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## James William WHITTAKER

James William Whittaker was born in 1897 at Corowa, New South Wales to parents James Edward & Elizabeth Whittaker (nee Hose).

James William Whittaker was an 18 year old, single, Boundary Rider from Chepstowe, Victoria when he enlisted on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1916 with the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 1733 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr James Edward Whittaker of Mt Emu Estate, Chepstowe, Victoria. James Whittaker had served 3 years with Senior Cadets.

Pte James William Whittaker embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ascanius* (A49) on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 & disembarked at England (no other details recorded such as port or date).

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.

Pte James William Whittaker was taken on strength with 10<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion.

Pte James William Whittaker was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1916 with Tonsillitis.

Pte James William Whittaker was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 with Diptheria.

Pte James William Whittaker was reported dangerously ill with Measles on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1916.

Private James William Whittaker died at 9 p.m. on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 at Brimstone Bottom Isolation Hospital, Tidworth from Broncho Pneumonia (& Measles).

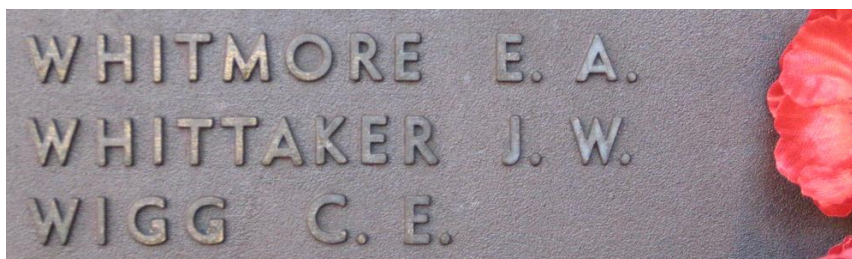
A death for James W. Whittaker, aged 19, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Pewsey, Wiltshire.

Private James William Whittaker was buried on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1916 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 106 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Pte James William Whittaker was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Whittaker's father – Mr J. E. Whittaker (sent March, 1922 & July, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private James William Whittaker – service number 1733 as being 19 years old & served with 39th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James Edward Whittaker of Mount Emil, Chepstowe, Victoria, and the late Elizabeth Whittaker. Born at Corowa, New South Wales.

Private J. W. Whittaker is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 130.

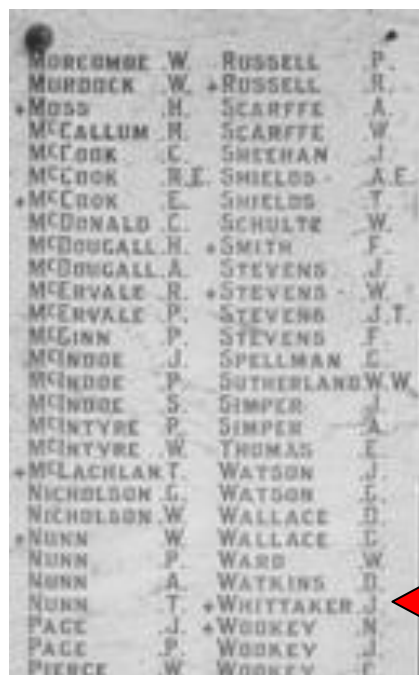


(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

J. Whittaker is also remembered on the Snake Valley War Memorial Shrine located on Linton Carngham Road, Snake Valley, Victoria.



Snake Valley War Memorial Shrine

(30 pages of Pte James William 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) & National Archives

## Newspaper Reports

### FOR THE EMPIRE

The 231<sup>st</sup> and 232<sup>nd</sup> Casualty Lists contain the names of Private J. W. Whittaker, of Chepstowe (died of illness) and Private F. Hallihan, Waterloo (missing).

*(Ripponshire Advocate, Victoria – Saturday 14 October, 1916)*

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### DIED ON SERVICE

WHITTAKER – Died on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, of pneumonia, at Delhi Hospital, Tidworth, Private J. W. Whittaker, eldest son of J. E. and Elizabeth Whittaker, Mt Emu, aged 18 years and 11 months.

*(The Australasian, Melbourne, Victoria – Saturday 14 October, 1916)*

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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 at Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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)*

Pte J. W. Whittaker does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*At Rest*



**Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire** *(Photo by Dave Healing 2013)*

Photo of Pte J. W. Whittaker's Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



*(Photo © Ian King - with permission)*