

**St. George's Churchyard,
Fovant, Wiltshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



18994 PRIVATE

R. A. WHITTON

AUST. ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

25TH OCTOBER, 1918 Age 38

He Lives With Us

In Memory Still

And Will For Ever More

Robert Alfred WHITTON

Robert Alfred Whitton was born at Kimberley, South Africa on 14th February, 1880 to parents Robert Alfred and Hannah Whitton (nee Clark).

Information provided by his wife for the Roll of Honour states that Robert Whitton served right through the Boer War then joined the South African Police for 5 years.

According to information supplied for the Roll of Honour, Robert Alfred Whitton came to Australia when he was 28 years old. Robert Whitton, Policeman, aged 28, was a passenger on *Marathon* which had departed from London, England & arrived at the port of Brisbane, Queensland, Australia on 9th November, 1908.

Robert Alfred Whitton married Miss Edith May Thompson on 29th June, 1911 in the Queenton Presbyterian Church, Queensland.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kennedy, subdivision of Charters Towers, Queensland listed Robert Alfred Whitton, Miner & his wife Edith May Whitton, Home Duties of Nagle Street. Also listed at Nagle Street was John Clark Whitton.

Births were registered for the following children of Robert & Edith Whitton – Trixie Louvain Whitton (born 1915) & Walter Clark Whitton (born 1916).

The 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Oxley, subdivision of Woolloongabba, Queensland listed Robert Alfred Whitton, Labourer & his wife Edith May Whitton, Home Duties of Agnes Street, Reis Estate.

Robert Alfred Whitton was a 37 year old, married, Miner from South Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 14th July, 1917 with the Army Medical Corps, General Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 18994 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs E. M. Whitton, Brisbane Street, off Ipswich Road, South Brisbane, Queensland. Robert Whitton stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to defective vision.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton was posted to Australian Medical Corps on 23rd July, 1917 for recruit training.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton was admitted to the Clearing Hospital at Enoggera with mumps from 19th October, 1917 until 5th November, 1917.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton embarked from Sydney, NSW on SS *Field Marshal* on 19th June, 1918 & disembarked at London, England on 26th August, 1918.

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 Robert Alfred Whitton was marched in to Australian Army Medical Corps Training Depot at Fovant, Wiltshire on 27th August, 1918.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton was sent sick to No. 2 Group Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 15th October, 1918 then transferred & admitted to Military Hospital at Fovant on 19th October, 1918. He was reported as seriously ill with pneumonia on 22nd October, 1918.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton died at 8.45 am on 25th October, 1918 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for Robert A. Whitton, aged 38, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton was buried on 31st October, 1918 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England, – Plot number I. B. 2. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Whitton - *Coffin was polished Elm with brass mounts. Deceased was buried with full Military honors.*

The funeral was preceded by a Firing Party and Band from the 2nd Australian Training Brigade. Six of deceased's late Unit comrades acted as Pall bearers. 2 Officers and about 50 N.C.O.'s and Men from his late Unit followed the remains and were present at the graveside ceremony. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.

Mrs Edith Whitton, widow of the late Private Robert Alfred Whitton, wrote to Base Records in January, 1924 stating she had been advised to apply for the Victory Medal in respect of the services of her late husband. She stated she had received "the other medal long ago". Base Records replied that she was not entitled to the Victory Medal as Pte Whitton did not serve on the strength of a unit in a theatre of war.

Private Robert Alfred Whitton 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 Whitton's widow - Mrs E. M. Whitton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Robert Alfred Whitton – service number 18994, aged 38, of Australian Army Medical Corps. He was the son of Robert Alfred and Hannah Whitton; husband of Edith May Whitton, of Brisbane St., off Ipswich Rd., South Brisbane, Queensland. Born at Kimberley, South Africa.

Private R. A. Whitton 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.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

R. A. Whitton is remembered on the Yeronga Cenotaph/War Memorial, located on Ipswich Road, Yeronga, Queensland.



Yeronga Cenotaph/War Memorial (Photos from *Monument Australia* – Russell Byers & Diane Watson)



R. A. Whitton is remembered with a plaque in the Yeronga Memorial Park & Honour Avenue located at Park Road & Honour Avenue, Yeronga, Queensland. The Honour Avenue was a memorial to the soldiers from the Stephens Shire which began in 1917. It was a row of 96 alternating flame trees & weeping figs that lined the newly-created avenue through the Yeronga Memorial Park. However, it seems that a tree was not planted in honour of Pte Whitton as he had not died from wounds received in battle. A plaque (No. 92) was installed in the memory of Pte Robert Alfred Whitton in April, 2012 & planted with ornamental grasses.



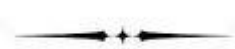
Yeronga Memorial Park & Honour Avenue (Photos courtesy of [Dr Richard Walding](#))



Plaque installed for Anzac Day 2012 (left) & plants with plaque in January 2015 (right)

(49 pages of Pte Robert Alfred Whitton'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

ROLL OF HONOUR

WHITTON – On the 25th October, 1918, at Fovant Military Hospital, Private Robert Alfred Whitton, A.A.M.C., A.I.F., late of Queenton, from bronchial pneumonia.

(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland – 12 November, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS Nos. 448 and 449

Died from Other Causes

R. A. Whitton (South Brisbane – illness)

(The Capricornian, Rockhampton, Queensland – 7 December, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

WHITTON – In loving memory of my dear husband, Pte Robert Alfred Whitton, A.M.C., who passed away at Fovant Military Hospital, England, October 25, 1918.

Our loved one is gone, but not forgotten,
And, as dawns another year,
In my lonely hours of thinking,
Thought of him are always near.

Inserted by his loving wife and children.

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 25 October, 1919)

ROLL OF HONOUR

WHITTON – In loving memory of my dear husband and our dear daddy, Private Robert A. Whitton, A.M.C., died of illness, Fovant Military Hospital, England, October 25th, 1918.

Sadly missed

Inserted by his loving wife and family.

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 25 October, 1921)

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 R. A. Whitton does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Lives With Us In Memory Still And Will For Ever More

St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England

There was a 600 bed hutted military hospital at Fovant during the First World War, and the concentration of Australian depots and training camps in the area is reflected in the 63 First World War burials in this churchyard. The war graves form two groups, one west of the church and the other at the east end. There is also one burial of the Second World War. There are 44 War Graves belonging to those who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1.
(Information from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00 299

(Photo c 1919)





St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at front & rear (*Churchyard photos courtesy of Andrew Stacey*)



Photo of Private R. A. Whitton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.





Cross of Sacrifice (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)