

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



1011 PRIVATE

F. T. WEBSTER

39TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

4TH AUGUST, 1916 Age 22

Though For Ever Parted

Ever Present

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte F. T. Webster is located in Grave Plot # 98
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

Frank Thomas WEBSTER

Frank Thomas Webster was born at Glenpatrick, Elmhurst, Victoria in 1893 to parents James Henry and Louisa Webster. He was a 22 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Glenpatrick, Victoria when he enlisted on 3rd March, 1916 with the 10th Infantry Brigade, 39th Infantry Battalion "C" Company of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 1011 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Louisa Webster of Glenpatrick, via Elmhurst, Victoria.

Pte Frank Thomas Webster embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 27th May, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 18th July, 1916.

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 Frank Thomas Webster was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 27th July, 1916 suffering from Influenza.

Private Frank Thomas Webster died on 4th August, 1916 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Pneumonia.

A death for Male Webster, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private Frank Thomas Webster was buried on 7th August, 1916 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 98 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Pte F. T. Webster contains a request from the Red Cross, on behalf of his family regarding his last days, death & place of burial. Two replies were sent. The first reply was from Acting Matron, Fargo Military Hospital which reads:

"1011, Private F. T. Webster, 39th Battn. A.I.F. died in this hospital of pneumonia on August 4th, 1916 at 11.30 pm. He was only in hospital about 8 days and was very ill right from the day of admission. He was not conscious at the time of his death nor did he leave any messages for his friends, but I am sure they will be glad to know that he was not conscious of his sufferings. I remember him quite well, he was such a nice boy, and a very good patient. We were all sorry that all our care could not save him. He is buried at Durrington Church, Wilts, and the number of his grave is (98). I have spoken to two or three of the sisters who worked in his ward and they all remember him quite well and all say what a dear lad he was and what a good patient."

The second letter was written by the Assistant Matron who wrote:

"1011 Pte F. T. Webster 39th Battn. A.I.F. was admitted to Hospital 27.7.16 he did not suffer a great deal of pain, was very bright and much loved by all in the ward. Died of pneumonia on 4.8.16 buried at Durrington Wilts, grave No. 98 right hand side of cemetery path. Please do not apologise for asking for information. We all feel so very, very sorry for this lad so far away from home and know how very worried his relatives must be. The Sister in whose ward an Australian dies always writes to his relatives of no friend or relatives have been with him at the time of his death, but I expect his people have not heard yet. It seems so sad to

see these strong young men, going under with pneumonia, due I suppose to this changeable climate. They do not seem to have the resistive power that Englishmen have. We are so sorry and wish we could do more for them, but we do all we possibly can to help them pull through. Hoping the above is what you require.

The late Pte Frank Thomas Webster's parents did not receive a telegram advising them of their son's death. They found out that their son had died only from the Casualty list in the newspaper. Enquiries were made & the fault was with an Operator with The Postmaster General's Department who failed to deliver the telegram on.

Pte Frank Thomas Webster 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 Webster's father – Mr J. H. Webster (sent February, 1922 & July, 1922)

Private F. T. Webster is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 132.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frank Thomas Webster – service number 1011, as being 22 years old & served with 39th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James Henry and Louisa Webster, of Glenpatrick, Elmhurst, Victoria, Australia.

Frank Webster is also remembered on his parents' headstone which is located in Elmhurst Cemetery, Victoria.



(Photo courtesy of Carol's Headstone [Photographs](#))

(34 pages of Pte Frank Thomas Webster'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

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Newspaper Reports

THE 202ND CASUALTY LIST

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private F. T. Webster, Glenpatrick

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – Saturday 2 September, 1916)

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 F. T. Webster does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Though For Ever Parted Ever Present

Photo of Pte F. T. Webster's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)