Brookwood Military Cemetery, Brookwood, Surrey, England War Graves



World War 1



194 PRIVATE

A. C. M. FLEMMING

51ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

17TH NOVEMBER, 1917 Age 21

Rest In Peace

Alfred Claude Matthew FLEMMING

Alfred Matthew Flemming was born at Coo-ee Creek, Tasmania on 13th June, 1896 to parents Robert & Mary Ann Flemming (nee Whisker). His birth was registered in the district of Emu Bay, Tasmania as Alfred Matthew Flemming.

| | | | 189 | 76 | BIRTHS in the DISTRICT of | |
|---------|-------------|----------------|------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number. | When born. | Name, if any. | Sex. | Name and Surname of Father. | Name and Maiden Surname of Mother. | Rank or Profession of Father. |
| 908 | (1) 13 June | alfred Matthew | make | Robert Fleruning | (4) formerly whichen | Labourer |
| | a) Burnie | | | | (4) | 1 0 |

[Note: There is a discrepancy with the surname Flemming or Fleming. The CWGC & Australia War Memorial Roll of Honour have the surname as Flemming, whilst the AWM Embarkation Roll has the surname as Fleming. The Birth records show the surname as Flemming, however the Attestation Papers for the Australian Imperial Force have the surname as Fleming. His surname has been recorded as Fleming on all his Service Record file forms, however there are examples of his parents' signatures in the Service Record file & they have both signed as Flemming. A Memorial Notice placed in the newspaper in 1918 by his parents has the surname as Fleming. I have referred to him throughout this research by the surname which is listed on his headstone.]

Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming attended Elliott State School, Tasmania.

Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was a 19 year old, single, Farm Labourer from Burnie, Tasmania when he enlisted at Claremont, Tasmania on 8th February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Robert Flemming, Elliot, via Burnie, Tasmania.

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming, Service number 194, embarked from Hobart, Tasmania on HMAT *Berrima* (A35) on 1st July, 1916 with the 10th Infantry Brigade, 40th Infantry Battalion "A" Company. (No date recorded of where or when he disembarked in England) (Note: His surname was listed as Fleming on the Embarkation Roll)

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 Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming proceeded overseas to France from 3rd Training Battalion in England on 22nd September, 1916 to join 12th Battalion. He was marched in to Australian Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 24th September, 1916.

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was taken on strength of 51st Battalion in the Field on 16th October, 1916 from Reinforcements & from 12th Battalion.

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was wounded in action on 2nd April, 1917. He was admitted to 4th Australian Field Ambulance on 2nd April, 1917 with G.S.W (gunshot wound/s) to right Fingers. Private Flemming was transferred & admitted to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station on 2nd April, 1917. He was transferred & admitted to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 4th April, 1917. Private Flemming was transferred to 1st Convalescent Depot at Boulogne on 6th April, 1917. He was marched in 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 20th April, 1917 & proceeded from there to join his Unit on 30th April, 1917. Private Flemming rejoined his Unit in the Field on 1st May, 1917.

Base Records advised Mr R. Fleming, Elliott, via Burnie, Tasmania, on 24th April, 1917 that Private A. C. M. Fleming had been reported as wounded "... the nature of which and the name of the hospital to which he has been admitted are not at present known here, but on receipt of further information, you will be promptly notified...."

51st Battalion

The 51st Battalion was raised in Egypt in the first week of March 1916, as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 11th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 11th, the 51st was predominantly composed of men from Western Australia. The battalion became part of the 13th Brigade of the newly-formed 4th Australian Division.

Arriving in France on 12 June 1916, the 51st moved into the trenches of the Western Front within a fortnight. It fought in its first major battle at Mouquet Farm in August and September, and suffered casualties equivalent to a third of its strength in both of the attacks (14 August and 3 September) it launched. After Mouquet Farm, the battalion saw out the rest of the year, alternating between front-line duty, and training and labouring behind the line. This routine continued through the bleak winter of 1916-17.

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. On 2 April it attacked at Noreuil, a village which had been fortified to delay the Australian advance.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 51st Battalion

Vaux-Vracourt – 1/2nd April, 1917:

A, B& D Coys moved into position for advance and attack on NOREUIL vide Bn Order No. 18. Copy attached Marked I. Report on operations attached marked II.

Battalion Order No. 18:

In conjunction with troops on Right and Left the Battalion will on the morning of 2nd April 1917 advance and capture the high ground N.E. of road NOREUIL-LONGATTE. The 50th Battalion will be on our right, the 20th Brigade on our left will co-operate and capture LONGATTE, The 49th Battalion will move up to Sunken Road North of VRAUCOURT, and become Brigade Reserve.

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(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was wounded in action (2nd Occasion) – Gassed on 15th October, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 15th October, 1917 – G.S.P. (Gassed – shell poisoning). Private Flemming was transferred to 2nd Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 15th October, 1917 then transferred & admitted to 30th General Hospital at Calais on 16th October, 1917. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Ville de Liege* on 12th November, 1917.

51st Battalion

Later in the year, the focus of the AIF's operations moved to the Ypres sector in Belgium. There the battalion fought in the battle of Messines between 7 and 12 June and the battle of Polygon Wood between 26 and 27 September. Another winter of trench routine followed.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary - 51st Battalion

Front Line - 14/15 October, 1917:

Relieving Coys of 52nd Bn arrived at Bn HQ just after 6 pm

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Relief completed by 10.30 pm only 2 casualties.

Dispositions as handed over on relief are shown on att'd sketch marked VI.

After relief A & D Coys moved to TOKIO Ridge, B & C to ANZAC Ridge.

Bn HQ to SANS SOUCI (J.2.a.3.5) vide Bn order No 43 copy attch marked VII

ANZAC Ridge barraged with gas shells between 11 & 2 am.

15th October, 1917:

A & D Coys move back to ANZAC Ridge with B & C Coys, Detailed instructions issued regarding the treatment and prevention of sore feet as this very prevalent owing to the wet & cold experience up in the line.

. . .

Summary of Casualties period 10 – 16th inclusive

| | Offrs | 0. <i>R.</i> 's |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Killed in action | 2 | 49 |
| Wounded - do - | 5 (a) | 125 |
| Evacuated to Hosp sick | 2 | 56 |
| Totals | 9 | 230 |
| (a) 2 since died of wounds | | |

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Base Records advised Mr R. Fleming, Elliott, via Burnie, Tasmania, on 8th November, 1917 that Private A. C. M. Fleming had been admitted to 30th General Hospital, Calais, France on 17th October, 1917 "suffering from Shell gassed, severe."

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was admitted to Bethnal Green Military Hospital, Cambridge Road, London, England on 13th November, 1917 - Gassed.

Base Records advised Mr R. Fleming, Elliott, Burnie, Tasmania, on 16th November, 1917 that Private Alfred Fleming was dangerously ill.

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming died at 12.50 am on 17th November, 1917 at Military Hospital, Bethnal Green, London, England from wounds – Shell Gas poisoning & Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for Alfred C. M. <u>Fleming</u>, aged 21, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Bethnal Green, London, England.

Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was buried at 1.30 pm on 20th November, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 180062.

From the burial report of Private Alfred Claude Matthew Fleming - Coffin was good polished Elm. Brass mountings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag. Band, Firing Party, Buglers and Pallbearers were supplied by the 3rd London Regiment (Reserve Batt) stationed at Blackdown. The grave will be turfed immediately, and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.

Base Records wrote to Mr R. Fleming on 28th March, 1923 stating that the site of his son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row E Grave 23.

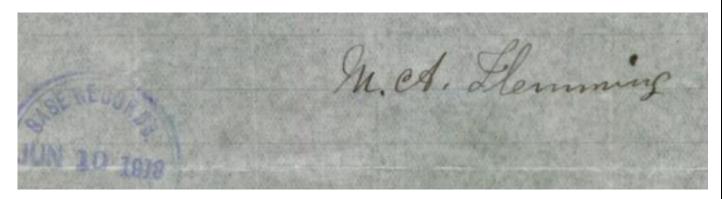
This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - XI. B. 23 Private A. C. M. Flemming now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Will, extracted from Pay Book of Private A. Fleming, 51st Battalion, dated 29th March, 1917, reads: "In the event of my death I give to my Mother Mary Fleming everything that I possess including all Military pay owing to me by the A.I.F. the address of Mary Fleming is Elliot (Somerset), Tasmania." (Note: another form for Private A. C. M. Fleming's Will, states "Will in custody of William Hicks, vis Burnie, Tasmania.")

The Grand Lodge of Tasmania - Commonwealth Lodge No. 9 Burnie, Tasmania wrote to Base Records on 2nd January, 1918 with the following letter: "Some time age Mrs Fleming of Elliott received word that her son A. C. Fleming No 194 was killed or died from wounds. If this is authentic would you kindly supply one with an official Document on her behalf as we have to have one when they are making their claim on the Lodge for Funeral Benefits."

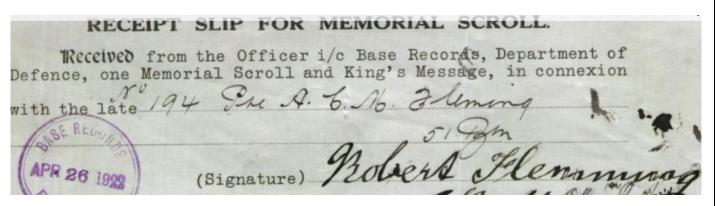
Base Records replied to The General Secretary, Grand Lodge of Tasmania on 4th February, 1918 – five certificates of report of death – one being for No. 194 Private A. C. M. Fleming, 51st Battalion.

M. A. Flemming, Elliott, mother of the late Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming, wrote to Base Records on 6th June, 1918 advising "I received the following articles I thought I would get his Idebility Medal and his back pay I haven't had that yet." (Note: She signed as "Flemming")



Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Flemming's father – Mr R. Flemming, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent April, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

[Note: Robert Flemming, father of the late Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming, signed as "Flemming" as receipt for the Memorial Scroll & King's Message.]



The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming – service number 194, aged 21, of 51st Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Robert & Mary A. Flemming, of Elliott, Burnie Tasmania.

Private A. C. M. Flemming is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 152.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. C. Flemming is remembered on the Elliott Roll of Honour, located in Elliott Community Centre, 829 Murchison Highway, Elliott, Tasmania.

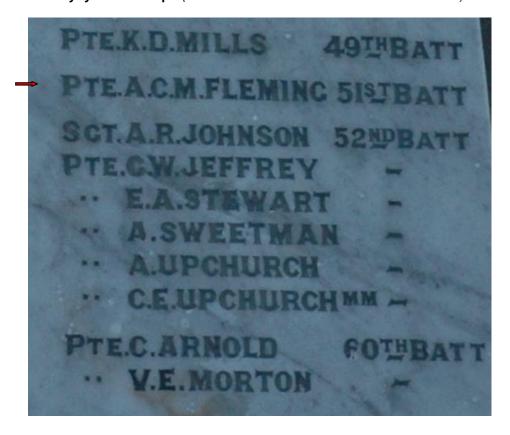


Elliott Roll of Honour (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)

A. C. M. Fleming is remembered on the Wynyard Cenotaph, located in Gutteridge Gardens, Park Street, Wynyard, Tasmania.



Wynyard Cenotaph (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)



A. C. Fleming is remembered on the Wynyard District Honour Roll, located in Waratah-Wynyard Council Chambers, 21 Saunders Street, Wynyard, Tasmania.



Wynyard District Honour Roll (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)



Alfred Claude M. Flemming is remembered on the Wall of Remembrance, at the War Memorial, Cecilia Street, St. Helens, Tasmania. The Wall of Remembrance commemorates those from Tasmania who died in service or were killed in action in World War One.

Front Inscription

Tasmania's World War One Roll of Honour, 1914 - 1918

The names of 3165 soldiers, sailors and airmen who were Tasmanian by birth or residence and died from their service in WW1 are commemorated on these walls. Their names appear alphabetically, grouped by the year of death. These men served with Australian, New Zealand and British units.

"What these men did nothing can alter now. The good and the bad, the greatness and the smallness of their story will stand. Whatever of glory it contains nothing now can lessen. It rises, as it will always rise, above the mists of ages, a monument to great hearted men; and for their nation, a possession forever."



Wall of Remembrance, St. Helens, Tasmania (Photo from Places of Pride - Henry Moulds)





(50 pages of Private Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming'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



Alfred Claude Matthew Flemming

Newspaper Notices

ENTERED CAMP

The undermentioned 19 men joined the Claremont Camp on Wednesday:-A. C. M. Fleming......

These men bring the number who have enlisted since January 7 up to 541.

(The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania – 11 February, 1916)

Roll of Honour

Casualty Lists - Nos. 371 - 372

Tasmanian Casualties

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte A. C. M. FLEMING, Elliott, 17/11/17

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania - 18 December, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

FLEMING – In loving memory of Pte A. C. M. Fleming, who gave his life for the Empire in France, November 17, 1917, aged 20 years.

No loved one stood around him,

To bid a fond farewell:

No word of comfort could we give

To him we loved so well.

-Inserted by his sorrowing parents Robert and Mrs Fleming, sister and brothers, Elliott.

(The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times, Tasmania -18 November, 1918)

THE FALLEN BRAVE

TABLE CAPE MEMORIAL

A meeting of the Table Cape soldiers' memorial committee was held in the Council Chambers on Monday night, when a considerable time was spent in considering and compiling a list of those who died on active service, with a view to having the names engraved upon the monument to be erected at the Park.

. . . .

The list contains the names of all soldiers from Table Cape who are known to the committee to have died on active service, but the secretary will be pleased to received any corrections necessary, and also the names of any who made the supreme sacrifice but are not included in the list, which is as follows:-

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51ST BATTALION

Pte A. C. M. Fleming

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(Advocate, Burnie, Tasmania – 27 August, 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 A. C. M. Flemming does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Rest In Peace

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.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



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.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of lan Fletcher)



Australian War Graves (Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)

Photo of Private A. C. M. Flemming's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of lan Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of lan Fletcher – Jan 2021)

