

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



2881 PRIVATE

A. J. COUCHMAN

51ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

15TH FEBRUARY, 1917

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte A. J. Couchman is located in Main First Row

Grave Plot # 4 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)

(CWGC Reference - Grave # 48)

Arthur John Couchman was born in Dartford, Kent, England in 1887. His birth was registered in the June quarter of 1887. He was a 29 year old, married, Labourer from Thompson Road, North Fremantle, Western Australia when he enlisted on 10th July, 1916 with the 51st Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2881 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Sarah M. Couchman of Thompson Road, North Fremantle, Western Australia. Arthur J Couchman had married Sarah M McAlinden in Fremantle, Western Australia in 1916.

Pte Arthur John Couchman embarked from Fremantle on HMAT *Argyllshire (A8)* on 9th November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 10th January, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Pte Arthur Couchman was marched in to 13th Training Battalion at Codford. He was admitted sick to New Zealand Hospital at Codford on 11th February, 1917.

Pte Arthur John Couchman died at 5.30 p.m. on 15th February, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand Group Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Broncho-pneumonia.

A death for Arthur J Couchman, aged 29, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

From the burial report of Pte Arthur John Couchman – he was buried on 21st February, 1917 at Codford Cemetery, Grave No. 48.

Pte Arthur John Couchman requested in his Will, dated 2nd November, 1916 that he appoints his wife Sarah Mary Couchman as the Executrix & bequeaths all his real or personal estate to her as well.

Private A. J. Couchman is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 152.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Pte A. J. Couchman was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A letter included in Pte Couchman's Service Record File shows that Officer in Charge of Base Records was unable to locate the whereabouts of Pte Couchman's widow. As a result his British War Medal, Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque sent to "Untraceables".

(53 pages of Pte Arthur John Couchman's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives

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Newspaper Reports

DEATHS

COUCHMAN – On February 15, in Codford Hospital, England, of bronchial pneumonia, Private A. J. Couchman, 7/51st Battallion, dearly beloved husband of Mrs S. M. Couchman, of Thompson-road, North Fremantle, and late East Kirupp. Deeply mourned. English and Irish papers please copy.

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia, Wednesday 28th February, 1917 & Western Mail, Perth, Western Australia, Friday 2nd March, 1917)

W.A. CASUALTIES

DEATHS

A. J. COUCHMAN, North Fremantle, died of illness.

(The Daily News, Perth, Western Australia, Saturday 3rd March, 1917)

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 Codford 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 A. J. Couchman does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte A. J. Couchman's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery (below)



(Photo courtesy of Andrea Charlesworth)