

# Codford War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I

31568 PRIVATE

**W. R. WATSON**

N.Z. CANTERBURY REGT.

20TH MARCH, 1917 Age 27



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte W. R. Watson is located in Front Row (Left Hand Side) Grave Plot # 21 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

*(CWGC Reference - Grave # 72 )*

Walter Robert Watson was born on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1889 at Wai-iti, Nelson, New Zealand, the son of Edward Wilfred & Eliza Watson (nee Parkes).

Walter Robert Watson married Beatrice Ellen Godbaz on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1916 at Foxhill, Nelson.

Walter Robert Watson was a 26 year old, married, Farmer from Wai-iti , New Zealand when he enlisted on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1916 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 31568 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Beatrice Ellen Watson of Foxhill, Nelson, New Zealand. Walter had previously served with Waimea Rifles, Volunteers.

Private Walter Robert Watson embarked with 19<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, Canterbury Infantry Battalion, C Company from Wellington, New Zealand on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 1916. Two Ships embarked that day - HMNZT (68) *Maunganui* & HMNZT (69) *Tahiti* – carrying a total of 2,036 men. Pte Watson had been admitted to the Ship's Hospital for 15 days with Measles – from 15<sup>th</sup> November – 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1916. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

Private Walter Robert Watson was marched in to Sling Army Camp, Wiltshire on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

Private Walter Robert Watson was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 with Influenza.

Private Walter Robert Watson died on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Lobar Pneumonia.

A death for Walter R. Watson, aged 27, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Private Walter Robert Watson was buried at St. Mary's New Cemetery, Codford on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1917.

Private Walter Robert Watson 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 Watson's widow – Mrs B. E. Watson (July, 1921 & January, 1922).

The CWGC lists Private Walter Robert Watson, 31568, as the son of Edward Wilfred and Eliza Watson; husband of Beatrice E, Watson, of Foay Hill, Nelson.

(21 pages of Private Walter Robert Watson's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

*Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission & PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand.*

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## Newspaper Reports

### ROLL OF HONOUR

#### DIED OF DISEASE

Canterbury Infantry – Watson, Walter R. (Mrs Beatrice Ellen Watson, Foxhill, Nelson, w.)

*(North Otago Times, Volume CV, Issue 13836, 23 March, 1917)*

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Private Walter Robert Watson has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Private W. R. Watson's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery , Wiltshire.



*(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)*