

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I

75618 PRIVATE

W. J. WESTERBY

N.Z. MEDICAL CORPS

30TH AUGUST, 1918 Age 30



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte W. J. Westerby is located in Last Row (Left Hand Side)
Grave Plot # 97 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

(CWGC Reference - Grave # 118)

William James Westerby was born on 5th August, 1888 at Wellington, New Zealand, the son of Edward Valentine Westerby & Elizabeth Holmes Westerby (nee Vernon). (His father had been born in England & his mother had been born in Wellington, N.Z.).

William James Westerby, Storeman, 131 Hanson Street, Wellington, was listed on the New Zealand WW1 Reserve Rolls for 1916-1917.

William James Westerby married Lily May Hearle on 1st November, 1917 at Wellington.

William James Westerby was a 29 year old, married, Storeman with Railway Dept., from Wellington, New Zealand when he enlisted on 4th October, 1917 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 75618 & his religion was Church of Christ. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs L. M. Westerby of 99 Constable Street, Wellington, New Zealand. William Westerby had previously tried to enlist in October, 1916 but was found medically unfit.

Private William James Westerby embarked on Duty on Hospital Ship No. 2 *Marama* (Fourth Charter & 6th departure from N.Z.) from Wellington, New Zealand on 1st June, 1918. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 1st August, 1918.

Private William James Westerby was marched in for duty to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire on 15th August, 1918.

Private William James Westerby was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital on 23rd August, 1918 – “Not Yet Determined”. He was reported dangerously ill on 29th August, 1918 with Pneumonia.

Private William James Westerby died on 30th August, 1918 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Pneumonia.

A death for William J. Westerby, aged 31, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Private William James Westerby was buried at St. Mary's New Cemetery, Codford on 2nd September, 1918.

Private William James Westerby was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medals as he had entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Westerby's widow who had remarried – Mrs L. M. Munn of Northcote, Auckland (July, 1921 & February, 1922). Lillie May Westerby married Arthur Thomas Munn in 1920. (** more information at end on the tragic death of Mrs Lily May Munn, formerly Westerby.)

The CWGC lists Private William James Westerby, 75618, as the husband of Lillie M. Munn (formerly Westerby) of Greytown, Wellington.

(13 pages of Pte William James Westerby'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

NEW ZEALAND'S ROLL OF HONOUR

WESTERBY – Died of pneumonia, Codford Hospital, England, on the 30th August, 1918, Private William James Westerby, beloved husband of Lillie May Westerby, aged 30 years.

(Evening Post, Volume XCVI, Issue 56, 3 September, 1918)

N.Z. CASUALTIES

WELLINGTON MILITARY DISTRICT

The following reported died of sickness:-

Private W. J. Westerby, Wellington

(Wanganui Chronicle, Volume LXVI, Issue 17369, 4 September, 1918)

BEREAVEMENT NOTICES

MRS W. J. WESTERBY wishes to Thank all kind friends who sent telegrams and letters of sympathy in her recent sad bereavement in the loss of her dear husband, Private William J. Westerby, who died in Codford Hospital on the 30th August, 1918.

(Evening Post, Volume XCVI, Issue 60, 7 September, 1918)

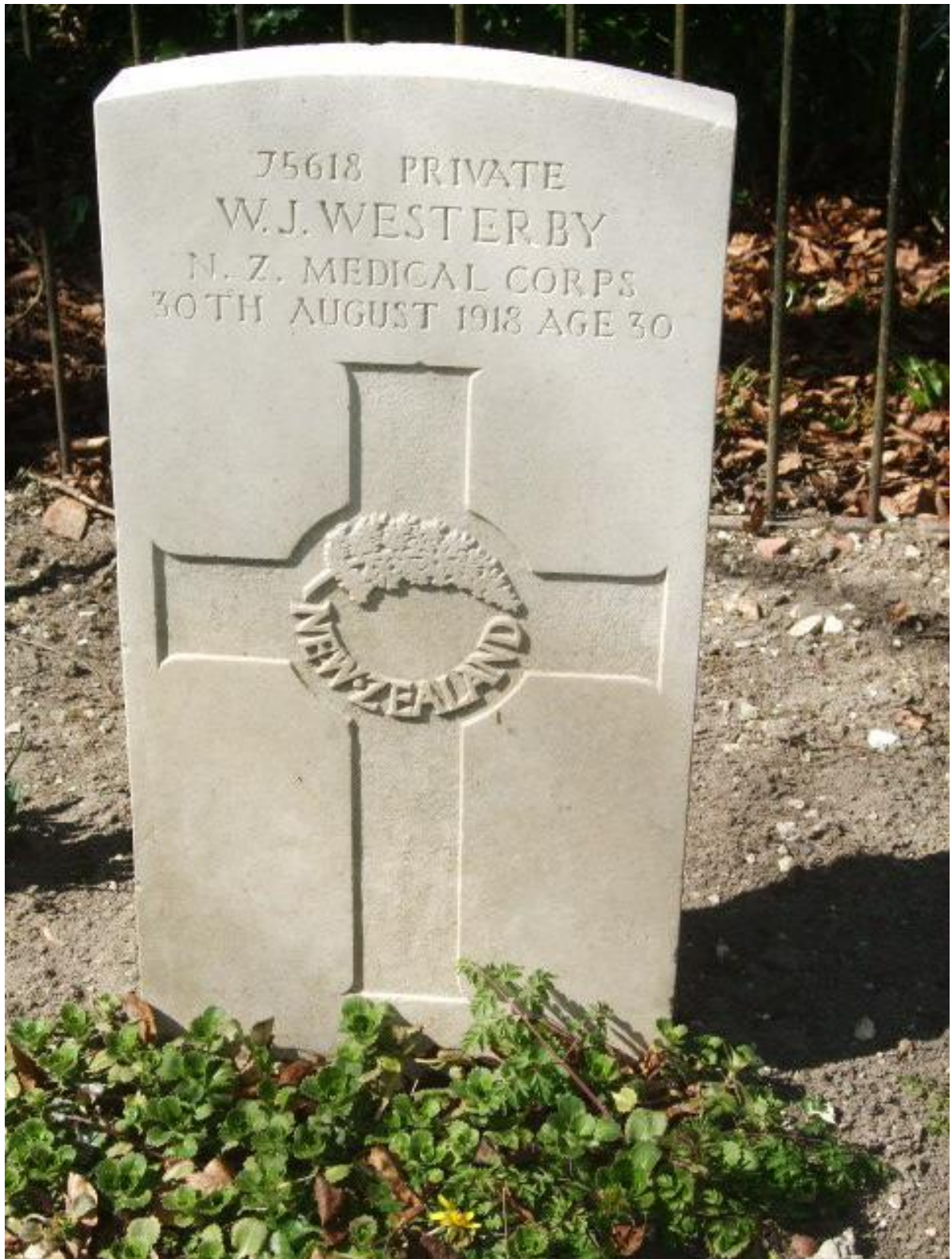
BEREAVEMENT NOTICES

Mrs E. Westerby and Family of No. 131, Hanson-street, wish to tender their Sincere Thanks to all kind friends for sympathy shown to them in their recent sad bereavement; also for letters and telegrams received.

(Evening Post, Volume XCVI, Issue 62, 10 September, 1918)

Private William James Westerby has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Private W. J. Westerby's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)

MURDER CHARGE.

Evidence Against Husband.

AUCKLAND (N.Z.), Monday.

The Police Court was crowded when Arthur Thomas Munn, a former member of the Northcote Borough Council, was charged with murdering his wife. Lillie May Munn, at Northcote, on February 11.

Deceased's mother said her daughter had a lovely disposition, and was cheerful and bright.

The three children Munn had by his first wife said that Munn often ill-treated his wife. They often saw Mrs Munn crying. Deceased did all she could for her husband.

Mrs Munn, it was stated, signed a will on January 9 leaving everything to Munn

An advertising clerk in the Auckland "Star" office stated that Munn inserted an advertisement in the "Star" on October 10, reading - "Gent., 40, lonely, wishes to meet companionable woman, without means preferable, view to matrimony."

A widow named Stuck, who answered the advertisement, described how Munn visited her, and took her for motor drives. When his wife died Munn asked witness to keep house for him and also to marry him.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW, Australia – Tuesday 1 April, 1930)

Extract from a report “Don’t Leave Me, Neighbour’s Sensational Story of Sick Woman’s Outburst”

.....The mother of the dead woman, Sarah Lillie Campbell, residing at Constable Street, Wellington said her daughter was born in Wellington and was married to Mitchell Westerby somewhere about November, 1917.

Westerby, she continued, went to the war, and died of pneumonia in England. There were no children by that marriage.

Her daughter married Munn on March 12, 1920 and lived with him at Northcote.

.....

(NZ Truth, Issue 1270, 3 April, 1930) {OPC Note – “Mitchell” should be William James Westerby}

MUNN HANGED

Arthur Thomas Munn, convicted of murdering his wife at Northcote on 11th February, was hanged in Mount Eden prison at 8 o'clock this morning.

In his last utterance he requested that a statement made by him in writing (and now in the hands of the prison authorities) be published.

(*Evening Post*, Volume CX, Issue 25, 29 July, 1930)

A total of 85 people were executed under New Zealand's capital punishment system while it was in force.

Arthur Thomas Munn was the 71st person to be executed. He was executed on 29th July, 1930 at Auckland. A Northcote man convicted of poisoning his wife Lillie in order to inherit her property and marry his mistress.



Arthur Thomas Munn

From the Northcote Point Walk brochure – North Shore City Heritage trails:

22 HOUSE

12 Richmond Ave

This Victorian villa was the scene of a murder in 1930. Arthur Thomas Munn poisoned his second wife Lillie, shortly after she made a will leaving him everything, including the house. He had struck up a relationship with another woman. Lillie Munn's death aroused the suspicions of the young Dr Dudding, who later became a medical legend in the district, leading to Munn's arrest and execution several months later.
