

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 45

GEORGE FERGUSON GRANT 1894 - 1919



Turriff

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Cover illustration:

The village of Turriff in Aberdeenshire, Scotland where George Ferguson Grant was born and was buried.

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
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Private George Ferguson Grant

George Ferguson Grant was born 20 July 1894 in Turriff, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, the son of George and Annabella Ferguson Grant. The family migrated to Australia and lived at Charters Towers. George attended Townsville Grammar School where he was a member of the school cadet corps and studied French, Latin, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Mechanics and Inorganic Chemistry. Passes in these subjects allowed him to matriculate in March 1914 in the Faculty of Science at the University of Queensland. While studying there he lived at Emmanuel College, Spring Hill. He later transferred to Melbourne University enrolling as a medical student and serving in the Melbourne University Rifles. At Melbourne on 10 October 1917 he enlisted to serve overseas in the Australian Imperial Force and began training in the Army Medical Corps at Broadmeadows. He was 23 years 3 months old when he enlisted, 5 feet 10¼ inches (178cm) tall, 159 lbs (72kg) in weight, of sallow complexion with blue eyes and brown hair. He showed his religious denomination as Presbyterian and next-of-kin, his father, by then living at Park Road, Eagle Junction.

Private Grant embarked from Adelaide on SS *Gaika* for active service on 6 August 1918 and arrived at London on 13 October after spending time in the troopship's hospital during the voyage.



SS Gaika

The SS Gaika was a Union Steamship Company vessel. She was built in 1896 being 6,287 gross tonnes. During the Boer War she was used as a troop transport ship. She was transferred to the Union-Castle Steamship Company in 1900 and eventually scrapped in 1928.

State Library of Victoria. gr003122

He remained in England for duties in the Australian Army Medical Corps but while on leave on 30 October he was admitted to hospital and later sent to Burdon Military Hospital, Weymouth with influenza then pneumonia which caused his death on 25 February 1919. Mr and Mrs Grant of Eagle Junction could not attend their son's funeral but arrangements were made by George's uncles in Scotland for George's burial at Turriff, his birthplace 24 years earlier.

Mr and Mrs Grant received a letter containing details of their son's interment. It said in part, "The late soldier was accorded a military funeral, band, bugler and pall bearers being in attendance, same being supplied by the 5th Gordons Regiment. He was interred in a private family grave by his uncle, resident in Scotland. Many beautiful wreaths were sent from uncles – Messrs William and Charles Grant, cousins – Corporal Grant and Chas Grant and Private Drie, AIF who were present at the funeral and the hospital staff and nurses. Captain Ritchie and many Imperial Soldiers were present at the funeral and AIF Headquarters London were represented. Chaplain the Rev H Douglas Swan of Turriff conducted the burial service at the close of which the 'Last Post' was sounded."



**In Memory of
Private GEORGE FERGUSON GRANT**

**21748, Details, Australian Army Medical Corps
who died age 24
on 25 February 1919
Son of George and Annabella Ferguson Grant,
of Kent Rd., Wooloowin, Brisbane.
Born at Turriff, Aberdeenshire,
Scotland.
Remembered with honour
TURRIFF CEMETERY**

Correspondence continued. The Officer in charge of Base Records was asked to supply copies of the certificate of death to the AMP Society¹ and the IOR.² A small parcel of George's belongings was sent to his parents who were asked to acknowledge its receipt. In her reply, Mrs Grant said, "As this is the only item I have received of my late son's effects, would you kindly let me know where I could write concerning same. My boy took a violin away with him which we would like to have. Trusting this will receive attention, I am, yours sincerely, Annabella F Grant."

It was on 21 June 1920 when Mr Grant wrote again, "Yours of 11th June to hand re my deceased son's violin in case which you state has been short landed from SS *Booral*. I have written to your office already seeking information about my son's belongings and I also have had my brothers in Scotland in communication with the headquarters in London with reference to same, but so far we have received nothing but a small pocket book and fountain pen. We wanted badly to get his violin and his wristlet watch and his kit back but so far have heard nothing of either until the receipt of your disappointing communication. The value of this particular violin was £50 but that money could not buy it if I had it in my possession as my deceased son's sister wants it and no money could buy it. Trusting to hear that you have recovered it by this time and that you will be able to forward same to this address, I remain, yours sincerely, George Grant, Father of the deceased Grant George F, No 21748, AMC Reinforcements." In a letter dated 9 July 1920 Mr and Mrs Grant were advised the violin and case had been located and would be forwarded to them.

¹. Australian Mutual Provident Society

². Independent Order of Rechabites, Charters Towers Tent

George Ferguson Grant whose short life began in Turriff, Scotland spent his youth in Australian schools and universities. He is remembered with gratitude on honour boards at the Australian War Memorial at Canberra, Townsville Grammar School, Emmanuel College, Saint Andrew's Uniting Church and the University of Queensland in Brisbane and the Melbourne University. His home town in Aberdeenshire remembers him too in the words inscribed on his grave at the Turriff Cemetery: "THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE."

Select Bibliography

National Archives of Australia, AIF service records

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

AWM Roll of Honour cards, 1914-1918 War

First World War Embarkation Rolls

Faces of the Fallen, Records and Archives Management Services, University of Queensland, 2014

The Brisbane Courier, 8 January 1914, page 3

Rev EN Merrington, *Memoirs*, unpublished, c 1948, page 69

Compiled by Noel E Adsett, Brisbane, March 2015



Lest we forget