

**Hollybrook Memorial,
Southampton, Hampshire, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3263 PRIVATE

N. ABBOTT

33RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

3RD AUGUST, 1918

Norman ABBOTT

Norman Cecil Abbott was born at Balmain, Sydney, New South Wales on 13th December, 1887 to parents Robert John & Rachel Abbott (nee Clarke). His birth was registered in 1888 & he was baptised on 15th February, 1888. Robert John Abbott was listed as a Carpenter.

From New South Wales Police Gazette – 24th December, 1902:

Sydney – A warrant has been issued by the Water Police Bench for the arrest of Norman Cecil Abbott, charged under the Industrial Schools Act. Offender is 15 years of age, 5 feet 4 inches high, medium build, fair complexion; dressed in shabby clothes, and soft brown hat, small scar on jaw.

From the New South Wales Gaol Description & Entrance Books:

Norman Abbott alias Norman Cecil Abbott. Photo taken Parramatta 25th July, 1905.

Native Place – Balmain

Year of birth – 13 December, 1887.

Trade or occupation – Dealer

Religion – Church of England

Education - Read & Write

Height, without shoes – 5 feet $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

Weight – 120 lbs

Color of hair – Fair

Color of eyes – Hazel

Marks or special features – Tattoo spot and outline of flag outside left forearm NA inside left forearm, Tattoo spots on all fingers left hand. Heart & arrow tattooed right forearm. Small scar under right eye. Brown mole over left armpit. Flesh moles between shoulders.

The following convictions were recorded under the above details for Norman Abbott: (Note: H.L. = hard labour):

Where and When	Offence	Sentence
Water P.C. 19/1/03	Stealing	Sureties or 3 months H. L.
Water P.C. 22/12/03	Stealing	3 Months H. L.
Water P.C. 22/12/03	Having supposed stolen property	1 month H.L.
Water P.C. 25/4/04	Stealing	3 Months H. L.
Water P.C. 20/10/04	Stealing	3 “ “
“ “	Stealing	3 “ “
“ “	Assault	6 “ “



New South Wales Gaol Description & Entrance Books Photo taken Parramatta 25th July, 1905.

[Another incident was found in *NSW Police Gazettes* for 1906 – Insufficient information to identify him as Norman Cecil Abbott the soldier. “*Norman Abbott (18), charged with stealing a counterpane, &c., value £1, the property of Mary Costello, has been arrested by Constable Bourke, Sydney Police. Committed for trial at Quarter Sessions. Bail allowed.*”]

Norman Cecil Abbott married Ida Dorothy Smith in Sydney, NSW in 1917.

Norman Abbott was a 29 year old, married, Labourer from East Sydney, NSW when he enlisted on 20th March, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3263 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Ida Dorothy Abbott, 6 Stream Street, East Sydney, NSW. Norman Abbott was 5 feet 8 inches & 144 lbs. He had hazel eyes & brown hair. Other distinctive marks – scar over right eye, scar left face, Tattoo of a heart on right forearm & a tattoo “N A” on left forearm. Norman Abbott’s postal address was listed as 76 Burton Street, Darlinghurst, Sydney, NSW on Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force form.

Private Norman Abbott was posted as a recruit on 20th March, 1917. He was transferred to R.A.S.G (Royal Agricultural Show Ground) Camp, Sydney, NSW on 23rd March, 1917 with Machine Gun Reinforcements. Private Abbott was transferred to “B” Company, 20th Reinforcements of 17th Battalion on 14th June, 1917 then transferred to 8th Reinforcements of 33rd Battalion on 22nd June, 1917.

Private Norman Abbott embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Port Melbourne (A16)* on 16th July, 1917 with the 33rd Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Liverpool, England on 16th September, 1917.

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 Norman Abbott was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire, England on 16th September, 1917 from Australia.

A D.C.M. (District Court Martial) was held at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 16th November, 1917 where Private Norman Abbott was charged with "*Acting as sentinel leaving his post before he was properly relieved*" at Fovant, Wiltshire, England on 2nd November, 1917. He was arrested on 2nd November, 1917 & pled not guilty. Finding – Guilty. Sentence – to undergo Detention for 1 day on 16th November, 1917. Period under charge – 14 days. Private Abbott forfeited a total of 15 days' pay.

Private Norman Abbott was written up for an Offence at Fovant, Wiltshire, England – 1. AWL (absent without leave) from 08.30 to 13.20 hrs on 28th November, 1917 & 2. "*Neglecting to obey an order given personally by his superior officer in the execution of his office in that he when ordered to go on parade by Lt. Payne did not do so.*" He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment No. 2.

Private Norman Abbott was written up for an Offence on 6th December, 1917 at Fovant, Wiltshire, England – "*Neglecting to obey a Standing Order in that he whilst undergoing F./P. No. 2 was found drinking in the Canteen.*" He was awarded 1 day Field Punishment No. 2.

Private Norman Abbott was sent sick to Hurdcott Hospital, Wiltshire on 8th December, 1917 from 9th Training Battalion. He was admitted to No. 3 Command Depot, Hurdcott, Group Hospital on 8th December, 1917 with Mumps. Private Abbott was discharged on 29th December, 1917.

Private Norman Abbott was marched in to 9th Training Battalion from Hurdcott Hospital on 30th December, 1917.

Private Norman Abbott proceeded overseas to France via Southampton from 9th Training Battalion at Fovant on 18th February, 1918.

Private Norman Abbott was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 19th February, 1918. He was marched out to his Unit from A.I.B.D. on 21st February, 1918 & was taken on strength of 33rd Battalion in the Field on 26th February, 1918.

33rd Battalion

The 33rd Battalion was formed in January 1916 at a camp established at the Armidale showground in New South Wales. The bulk of the battalion's recruits were drawn from the New England region and thus it was dubbed "New England's Own". The Battalion's first, and only, commanding officer was Lieutenant Colonel Leslie Morshead, who would become famous as the commander of the 9th Australian Division during the Second World War.....

For the next five months the 33rd alternated between periods of rest, training, labouring, and service in the line. When the German Army launched its last great offensive in the spring of 1918, the Battalion was part of the force deployed to defend the approaches to Amiens around Villers-Bretonneux. It took part in a counter-attack at Hangard Wood on 30 March, and helped to defeat a major drive on Villers-Bretonneux on 4 April.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Norman Abbott was wounded in action (gassed) on 17th April, 1918. He was admitted to 55th Field Ambulance on 17th April, 1918 after being Gassed then transferred to Casualty Clearing Station. Private Abbott was admitted to 3rd General Hospital at Le Treport on 20th April, 1918. He was transferred to Convalescent Depot on 11th May, 1918 then admitted to 1st Australian Convalescent Depot at Havre, France on 12th May, 1918.

War Diary – 33rd Battalion

Villers Bretonneux – 17th April, 1918

Dull day – Visibility poor. The enemy commenced a very heavy bombardment of gas shells of all calibres up to 5.9's at 4 pm paying most attention to the forward portion of the town. Direct hits were obtained on A. Cos. billets, penetrating into the cellars where the men were asleep, and gassing a number before respirators could be adjusted. The bombardment lasted the whole day but was most intense between 4 am and 1 pm. No gas was detected in the region of the Posts until late in the afternoon when a number of shells fell short of the village. These ceased at 6 pm

and the enemy gave his attention to dropping shells at intervals in different parts of the town. The enemy did not discontinue his usual shelling with H. E. although it was not so pronounced as previously. Our casualties through hag were heavy being 13 Officers, 26 N.C.O.'s and 268 men. The gas used seem to be a mixture as men were affected in the eyes, chest and stomach.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Norman Abbott was written up for a Crime on 29th May, 1918 – 1. W.O.A.S. (Whilst on Active Service) in town without a pass contrary to B.S.O. 27(3) 2. Absent from 9.30 pm until apprehended by the Military Police at 11.10 pm (1 hour 40 minutes) on 26th May, 1918. He was awarded a forfeiture of 14 days' pay.

Private Norman Abbott was discharged to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Rouelles on 29th May, 1918.

Private Norman Abbott was written up for a Crime on 3rd June, 1918 - AWL (absent without leave) from 9.30 pm on 31st May, 1918 until 10 pm on 2nd June, 1918. He was awarded 20 days Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited a total of 23 days' pay.

Private Norman Abbott was marched out to Front on 8th June, 1918 from A.I.B.D. at Rouelles, France & rejoined 33rd Battalion in the Field on 9th June, 1918.

Private Norman Abbott was written up for a Crime on 10th July, 1918 – AWL (absent without leave) from 9 am on 4th July, 1918 until apprehended by Military Police in the vicinity of Berteaucourt at 9 am on 5th July, 1918. He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment No. 2 by C. O. 33rd Battalion & forfeited 9 days' pay.

Private Norman Abbott was wounded in action (2nd occasion) on 25th July, 1918. He was admitted to 10th Australian Field Ambulance on 25th July, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) fractured finger. Private Abbott was transferred & admitted to 47th Casualty Clearing Station on 25th July, 1918 then transferred & admitted to 3rd General Hospital at Le Treport on 27th July, 1918. He was listed for transfer to England on 1st August, 1918 then embarked for England on H.M.A.T. *Warilda* from France on 2nd August, 1918.

War Diary – 33rd Battalion

In the Line SAILLY LAURETTE SECTOR – 25th July, 1918

Fine day with good visibility. At 2.15 am the enemy opened a violent bombardment on and around our right post and support Line which was followed by a raid by two parties of Bosche. The Battalion added another small victory to its now splendid record by handling the raiders so roughly that not one man reached our post. The raiders were identified as belonging to the 201st R.I.R., 43rd Division. See Special Report. Battalion Headquarters was subjected to a small concentration of 5.9's at 11 am and 4.30 pm. Most of the shells burst well behind and no damage was done. Arrangements completed for minor Operation which is to eventuate at 12 midnight on the night 26th/27th July.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Norman Abbott was reported missing believed drowned at Sea from Ambulance Transport on 3rd August, 1918.

A Court of Enquiry was held at Headquarters London on 26th September, 1918. Private Norman Abbott who was previously reported missing, believed drowned was now reported as Died at Sea, as a result of enemy action in the torpedoing & sinking of H.M.A.T. *Warilda* on 3rd August, 1918.

Private Norman Abbott died on 3rd August, 1918 at Sea as a result of enemy action in the torpedoing & sinking of H.M.A.T. *Warilda*.

Extract from World War One Channel Wrecks – Vessels Lost in The English Channel 1914 – 1918 (by Neil Maw):

Country: British. Date sunk: 3/8/18 Owners: Adelaide SS Co. Agents: Yuill's Ltd, 120 Fenchurch St, London. In Government service as 'ambulance transport'. Cargo: 614 wounded soldiers, 117 crew, 70 RAMC staff. Armed: 1 x 4in quick fire gun. Position NW by N of Antifer (50 18 00N; 0018 00W). Master's name James Sim (Southern Australian ticket) Crew: 120. Crew nationality: - Gunners: James Carter, LS FRF; William Barton, LS FRF; John Read, LS FRF.

Warilda was an Australian steamer, registered at Port Adelaide but requisitioned by the British government for use as a hospital ship. She was loaded with injured soldiers. The holds of the Warilda had been hastily converted into wards and the lowest ward was I-Ward containing 102 patients. I-Ward was purposely allocated to walking wounded with the idea that if the ship had to be evacuated they could get on deck more quickly. It was a good idea but few were to survive in I-Ward.

She left Havre on August 2, 1918, and was being escorted by two destroyers to Southampton, HMS P39, commanded by Lieutenant J. W. Durnford, RN, and HMS P45, commanded by Lieutenant Rudolph Thompson RN. They made good progress, at 15 knots, steering north 10 degrees east.

Even though it was a cloudy and dark night, the second mate on watch on the bridge spotted the shape of a submarine about 100 yds off the port bow at 1.35 am. He shouted to the helmsman to turn directly towards the submarine with the intention of ramming it. A few seconds later the master arrived on the bridge and endorsed the second officer's actions but the submarine was too fast and too manoeuvrable. The helm was put hard over again, this time to bring the enemy directly astern. The master watched intently to see what the German commander intended to do, when suddenly a white streak appeared from it followed seconds later by a deafening explosion deep on the port side between the engine room and, tragically, number four hold....I-Ward.

The force of the explosion caused a great deal of damage. One engine had been knocked out of action, and the engine room began to fill rapidly. But the scene in I-Ward was one of utter carnage. The explosion had occurred directly under the ward and had killed most of the patients outright. Survivors of the blast were drowned by the sudden inrush of water as the ward completely filled, setting Warilda heavily down by the stern. At least 101 patients died in I-Ward.

The master realised that if the engine room bulkhead held he would stand a chance of getting the rest of the people off. He ordered all the patients to be assembled on the promenade deck and the boats to be lowered down to them. Several boats were soon ready to go but the master shouted that no boat was to leave until the way had gone off the ship. One engine was still running even though the water was up to the cylinder heads, but slowly it slowed as the steam ran out and at last Warilda came to a halt. The first boat with wounded and nurses in it reached the water evenly but for some inexplicable reason the front fall jammed and swamped the boat resulting in the loss of two nurses. Most of the boats got clear although another on the port side fouled the Otter mine defence boom and overturned, with the loss of two officers, eight male patients and four crew.

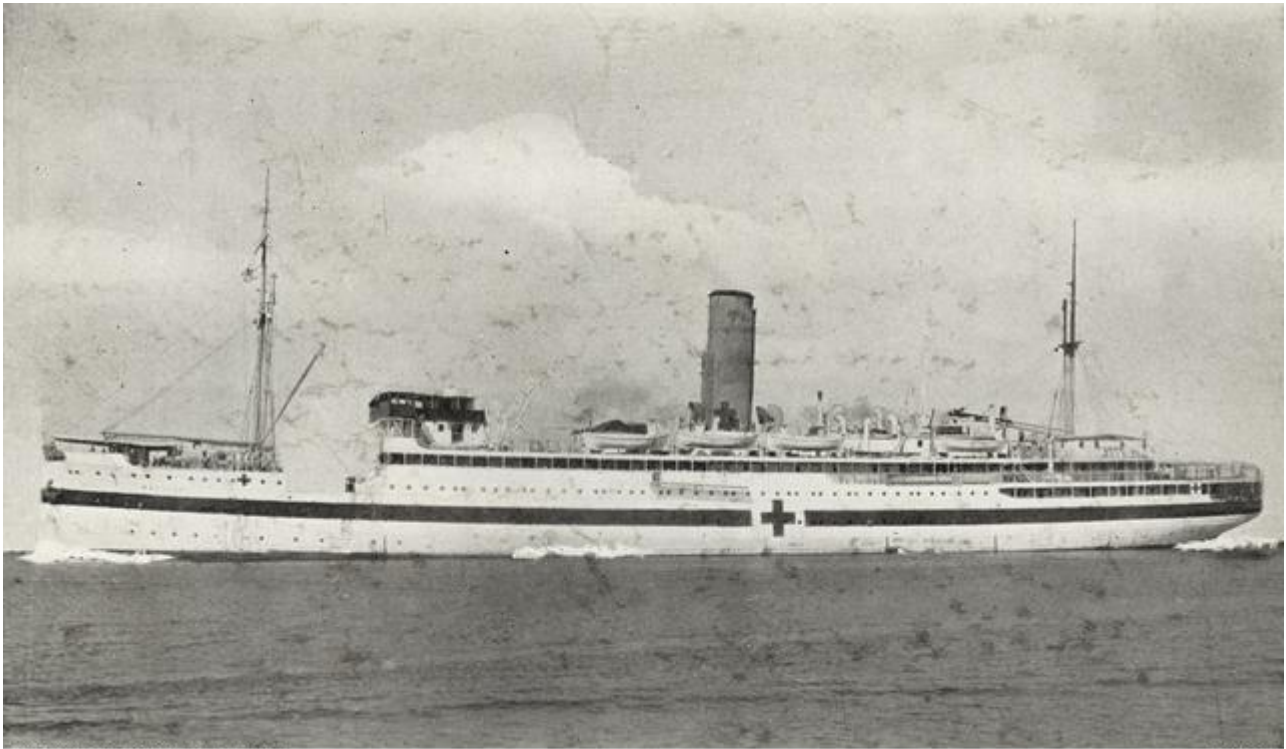
HMS P39 came alongside the stricken steamer and took off the rest of the patients and crew. It was no easy task. Most of the remaining patients were unable to walk so a bosun's chair was rigged, and the patients were winched across by hand. Two men in particular, Lance Corporal Booth, number 100015 and Pte Hamber, number 102681, were mentioned for their actions.

After Warilda had been cleared of survivors the commander of P39 decided it might be worth trying to take the steamer in tow and lines were attached. But after 10 minutes towing the steamer could not take the pressure put upon her weakened bulkheads and she sank at 4.10am.

The Court of Enquiry was held on board HMS Victory at Portsmouth was told that 113 patients, one nurse, two RAMC staff and seven crew died in the sinking, but found no negligence.

UC-49 was the submarine involved, commanded by Oberleutnant H. Kükenthal.

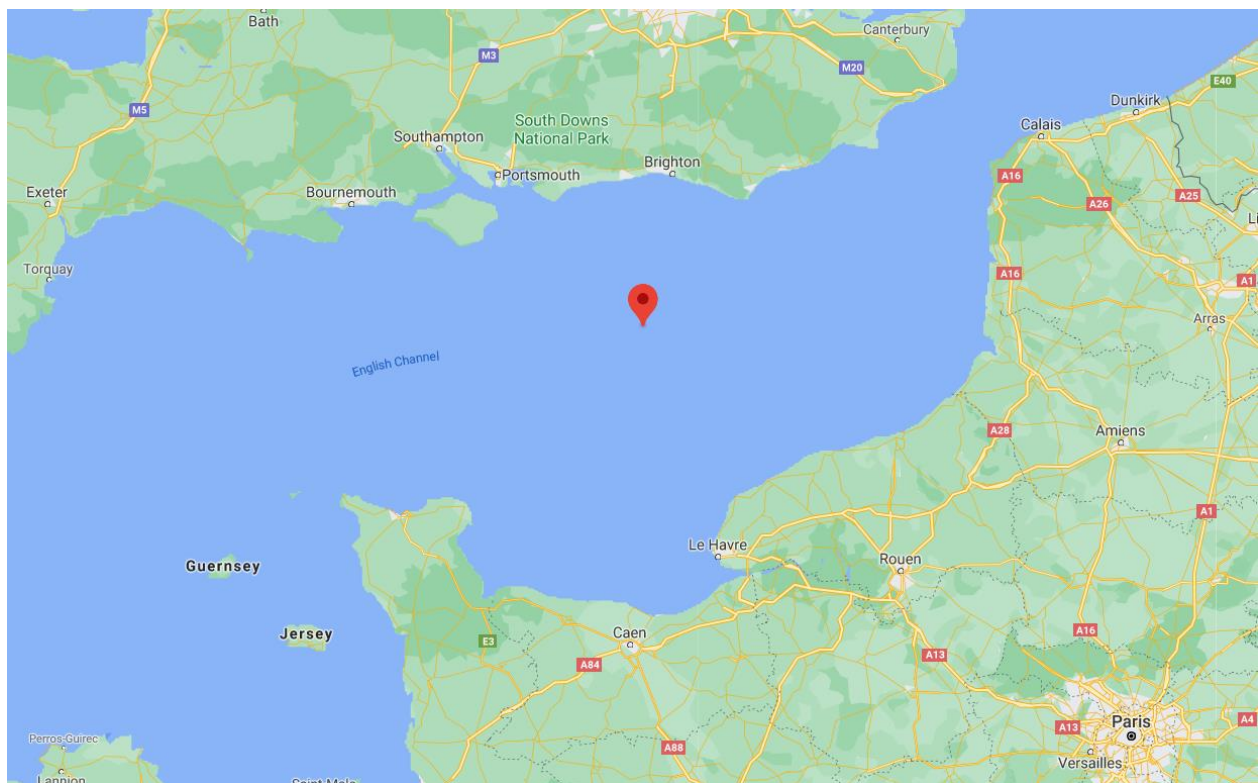
(With thanks to Empire Attendant (Twitter) for sharing this with me.)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H04201

Her Majesty's Hospital Ship *Warilda*



Location of H.M.A.T. *Warilda*

Private Norman Abbott is commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England as he has no grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Private Norman Abbott requested in his Will, dated 14th June, 1917, that in the event of his death the whole of his property and effects be given to his wife – Ida Dorothy Abbott, 6 Stream Street, East Sydney, NSW.

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Private Norman Abbott was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Abbott's widow – Mrs I. D. Abbott, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent May, 1922 & Plaque redirected due to return mail. Mrs Abbott signed for Plaque in October, 1930).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Norman Abbott – service number 3263, of 33rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

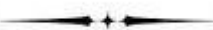
Private N. C. Abbott is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 121.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(55 pages of Private Norman Abbott'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



Newspaper Notices

401st CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

WOUNDED

Pte NORMAN ABBOTT, East Sydney (gas)

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 21 May, 1918)

TO-DAY'S WIRES

Amongst the New South Wales soldiers believed to have been drowned when the Warilda was torpedoed were Privates Charles Power (Wagga), Norman Abbott (Sydney), Robert Purcell (Redfern) and John Roxburgh (Manly).

(Wellington Times, NSW – 12 August, 1918)

TORPEDOED WARILDA

LIST OF AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

The names of the 15 Australian soldiers who are believed to have been drowned through the torpedoing of the hospital ship Warilda, and the towns in which their relations reside, are as follow:-

Private Robt. Oakley Clardige, 41st Battalion, Gympie.

Private Eric John Laidlaw, 31st Battalion, Dalby.

Private Arthur Lawson, Mechanical Transport Company, Charters Towers.

Private Norman Abbott, 33rd Battalion, East Sydney.

Private Norman Power, 42nd Battalion, late 15th Battalion, Wagga.

Private Robert Henry Purcell, 17th Battalion, Redfern.

Private John Roxburgh, 38th Battalion, Manly.

Private Thomas Faulks, 29th Battalion, Korong Vale (V.).

Private Donald McIntyre, 37th Battalion, Sutherland Creek (V.).

Driver H. O. Richardson, 18th A.S.C., Creswick (V.).

Lieut. Albert Herbert Moss, 2nd D.A.C., Smithfield (S.A.).

Private Victor Hugo Pike, 5th Pioneers, Tungkille (S.A.).

Private Ernest Wilkins, 32nd Battalion, Glanville

Private Paul Retell, 5th Pioneers, Albany (W.A.).

Lance-corporal G.S. L. Wall, 37th Battalion, of Longwak, Victoria, was drowned and his body recovered.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 12 August, 1918)

WARILDA VICTIMS

Several From This State

There were 15 Australians on the torpedoed Warilda, reported missing, and they are believed to have drowned. They include:

Pte Charles Norman Power, of the 42nd Battalion, whose father, Mr W. Power, lives at Mangoplah, Wagga.

Private Norman Abbott, of the 33rd Battalion. His widow, Mrs I. D. Abbott, lives at 6 Stream-street, East Sydney.

Private Robert Henry Purcell, 17th Battalion, whose widow, Mrs L. M. Purcell, lives at 3 Calder-road, Redfern.

Private Robert Roxburgh, 38th Battalion, whose father, Mr W. Roxburgh, lives at 88 Sydney-road, Manly.

(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 12 August, 1918)



A Warilda Victim

Pte Norman Cecil Abbott, son of Mrs Abbott, of 76 Burton-street, Sydney. He was born in Balmain in 1890. He fought in France for some months, was gassed, and upon his recovery was again sent to the front, where he was wounded and invalided to England, only to meet his death by drowning.

(*Sydney Mail*, NSW – 4 September, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

ABBOTT – August 3, 1918, drowned at sea while being invalided to England on the Warilda, Private Norman Cecil Abbott, 30 years and 10 months, the dearly loved husband of Ida Dorothy Abbott.

The hope for ever blighted
That he would return again,
For my dear husband in a foreign land
Lies number with the slain.
For cause, for right, for freedom,
He answered his country's call,
And beneath the Empire's banner
Sacrificed his life, his all.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 3 Oct, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

ABBOTT – In loving memory of our dear brother, Pte N. C. Abbott, who was drowned at sea August 3rd, 1918, in hospital ship Warilda.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Mr and Mrs W. Stuart.

(Northern Star, Lismore, NSW – 2 August, 1919)

On Active Service

ABBOTT – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Norman, who sacrificed his life for the Empire when the Warilda was torpedoed by the enemy, August 3, 1918. Inserted by his sorrowing mother, sister Ada and brother Lance, and sister-in-law Stella Abbott.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 4 August, 1919)



Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England

The Hollybrook Memorial is situated in Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery behind the plot of First World War graves near the main entrance.

The Hollybrook Memorial commemorates by name almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces* whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports or other vessels torpedoed or mined in home waters (*Officers and men of the Commonwealth's navies who have no grave but the sea are commemorated on memorials elsewhere). The memorial also bears the names of those who were lost or buried at sea, or who died at home but whose bodies could not be recovered for burial. Almost one third of the names on the memorial are those of officers and men of the South African Native Labour Corps, who died when the troop transport Mendi sank in the Channel following a collision on 21 February 1917. Other vessels sunk with significant loss of life were: HS Anglia, a hospital ship sunk by mine off Dover on 17 November 1915. SS Citta Di Palermo, an Italian transport carrying Commonwealth troops, sunk by mine off Brindisi on 8 January 1916. In rescuing survivors, two Royal Naval Otranto drifters were themselves mined and blown up. HMTs Donegal and Warilda, ambulance transports torpedoed and sunk between Le Havre and Southampton on 17 April 1917 and 3 August 1918. HS Glenart Castle, a hospital ship torpedoed and sunk off Lundy on 26 February 1918. SS Galway Castle, torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic on 12 September 1918. RMS Leinster, the Irish mail boat, torpedoed and sunk in the Irish Sea on 10 October 1918. Among those commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial is Field Marshall Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, who died when the battle cruiser HMS Hampshire was mined and sunk off Scapa Flow on 5 June 1916.

The memorial was designed by T. Newham and unveiled by Sir William Robertson on 10 December 1930.

There are approximately 162 Australian World War 1 Service Personnel commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice



Name Panels behind Cross of Sacrifice



CWGC Graves in Hollybrook Cemetery with Cross of Sacrifice & Hollybrook Memorial

(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Private N. Abbott's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by Charlie – Find a Grave)