

**Herne Bay Cemetery,  
Herne Bay, Kent  
War Grave**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**1651 SERJEANT**

**R. A. BRABAZON**

**5TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**26TH JUNE, 1918 Age 37**

*R. I. P.*

## Ralph Austin BRABAZON

Ralph Austin Brabazon was born at Mullingar, County Westmeath, Ireland on 14th August, 1879 to parents John and Hannah Jane Brabazon (nee Austin). His birth was registered in the December quarter, 1879 in the district of Mullingar, Westmeath, Ireland.

According to information provided for the Roll of Honour by his wife – Ralph came to Australia when he was 3 years old. The Brabazon family were passengers on the *Earl Dalhousie* which departed from London, via Plymouth on 13th November, 1879 & arrived at the port of Brisbane on 7th February, 1880. The Brabazon family had embarked from Plymouth, England. The family consisted of John Brabazon & Mrs Brabazon & their children – William, Robert, Anne, Jane, Sinen, John, Joseph, Samuel & Infant (assumed to be Ralph).

Mrs Brabazon & four children were listed as passengers in 1881, in steerage, on *Leura* which departed from Sydney & bound for Melbourne, Australia – A. Brabazon (aged 14), Susa. Brabazon (aged 12), Jos. Brabazon (aged 8) & R. Brabazon (aged 2).

John Brabazon, father of Ralph Austin Brabazon, died on 8th November, 1891 at Moonee Ponds, Victoria.

Hannah Jane Brabazon, mother of Ralph Austin Brabazon, died in 1909 at Essendon, Victoria.

The 1909 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Corio, subdivision of Queenscliff, Victoria listed Ralph Austin Brabazon, Soldier, Barracks, Queenscliff.

From the Victoria Police Gazette – 7 July, 1910:

*RALPH BRABAZON, private, Royal Australian Artillery, Portsea, reports stolen from him at the Tasmania Club Hotel, Swanston-street, Melbourne, on the 2nd inst., an 18-ct. gold buckle ring; and a silver card-case, inscribed "Rubie to Brab" on case. – O.4373. 4th July, 1910.*

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Herbert, subdivision of Somerset, Queensland listed Ralph Austin Brabazon, Soldier, Thursday Island.

From the Victoria Police Gazette – December, 31, 1914 & South Australian Police Gazette – January 6, 1915:

### **DESERTERS FROM H. M. SERVICE**

*Royal Australian Garrison Artillery, at Queenscliff, on the 17th inst. :-*

*BRABAZON, RALPH AUSTIN, a gunner, 35 years of age, 5 feet 11 inches high, dark complexion, clean shaven, light-brown hair, grey eyes, has vaccination marks on the right arm.*

Ralph Austin Brabazon was a 34 year old, single, Clerk from Portsea, Victoria when he enlisted on 21st December, 1914 with the 5th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1651 & his religion was Church of England. His next-of-kin was listed as his sister – Susan Austin Brabazon of Hawthorn, Victoria. He was 5 feet 11 inches, Fresh Complexion with grey eyes & fair T.S. hair. Distinctive marks – *minus little toe on right foot. Tatt on left & right forearm.* Ralph Austin Brabazon stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with R.A.G.A. (Royal Australian Garrison Artillery) Victoria.

Private Ralph Austin Brabazon was posted to Depot Camp on 21st December, 1914. He was promoted to Sergeant on 1st January, 1915.

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was posted to 3rd Reinforcements, 5th Battalion as Regimental Sergeant Major on 1st February, 1915.

Ralph Austin Brabazon married Adelaide Cain in 1915 & she was made next-of-kin – Mrs Adelaide Brabazon, of Portsea, Victoria. (In May, 1917 the new address for Mrs Adelaide Brabazon was noted as 55 Alma Road, St. Kilda, Victoria).

Newspaper Notice from The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria 24 February, 1915:

## **MARRIAGES**

*BRABAZON – CAIN – On the 15th February, 1915, at St. Francis' Church, Melbourne, by the Rev. Father Vincent Willis, Ralph Austin, youngest son of the late John Brabazon, Mullingar, Count West Meath, Ireland, to Adeliade, third daughter of John Cain, Portsea.*

Regimental Sergeant Major Ralph Austin Brabazon embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Runic (A54)* on 19th February, 1915 & disembarked at Egypt on 3rd April, 1915.

Regimental Sergeant Major Ralph Austin Brabazon reverted to the rank of Private on being taken on strength of his Unit with 5th Battalion on 26th May, 1915 while posted at Anzac.

Private Ralph Austin Brabazon was promoted to Lance Corporal on 16th July, 1915 while posted at Anzac.

Lance Corporal Ralph Austin Brabazon was promoted to Corporal on 23rd July, 1915 while posted at Anzac.

Corporal Ralph Austin Brabazon was promoted to Sergeant on 1st September, 1915 while posted at Anzac.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was sent sick to Hospital at Lemnos on 19th September, 1915. He was transferred & admitted to No. 3 Australian Stationary Hospital at Mudros West the same day. He was transferred again to No. 2 Stationary Hospital at Mudros West & admitted with Diarrhoea. Sergeant Brabazon was discharged to duty on 4th October, 1915 & rejoined his Battalion in the same day.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was admitted to No. 2 Field Ambulance then transferred to No. 2 Stationary Hospital at Mudros on 9th October, 1915, with Diarrhoea again. He was transferred to No. 3 Australian General Hospital at Lemnos on 16th October, 1915 with dysentery. Sergeant Brabazon was discharged to Details on 28th October, 1915.

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was to be Temporary C.S.M. on 29th October, 1915 vice 390 C.S.M. Finch sick since 5th September, 1915.

On 24th November, 1915 Temporary C.S.M. Ralph Austin Brabazon was found to be drunk on line of march while on active service. His rank reverted to the permanent rank of Sergeant.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon disembarked at Alexandria on 7th January, 1916 from *Empress of Britain*, after the evacuation from Gallipoli.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was taken to 2nd Field Ambulance on 20th January, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir with Gastritis then transferred to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station. He was admitted to No. 2 Australian General Hospital at Cairo on 24th January, 1916. Sergeant Brabazon was transferred to No. 3 Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 15th February, 1916 & discharged to duty on 26th February, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon joined Overseas Base Depot from Hospital at Ghezireh on 26th February, 1916 & rejoined his Battalion at Serapeum on 5th March, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon proceeded from Tel-el-Kebir on 18th April, 1916 to Alexandria.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon embarked from Alexandria on *Caledonia* on 9th May, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 17th May, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon joined 1st Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 20th May, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was taken to Hospital on 29th May, 1916. He was admitted to 26th General Hospital in France with Pyrexia. Sergeant Brabazon embarked from Boulogne, France for England on Hospital Ship *Caledonian* on 12th June, 1916 with Influenza.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, England on 13th June, 1916 with Bronchitis. He was transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, Middlesex, England on 16th June, 1916.

Sergeant Brabazon was transferred again on 27th June, 1916 to Woodcote Park Convalescent Hospital at Epsom. He was discharged to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 25th September, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was taken on strength at No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 26th September, 1916.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was marched in to Infantry Draft Depot from No. 1 Command Depot on 3rd February, 1917.

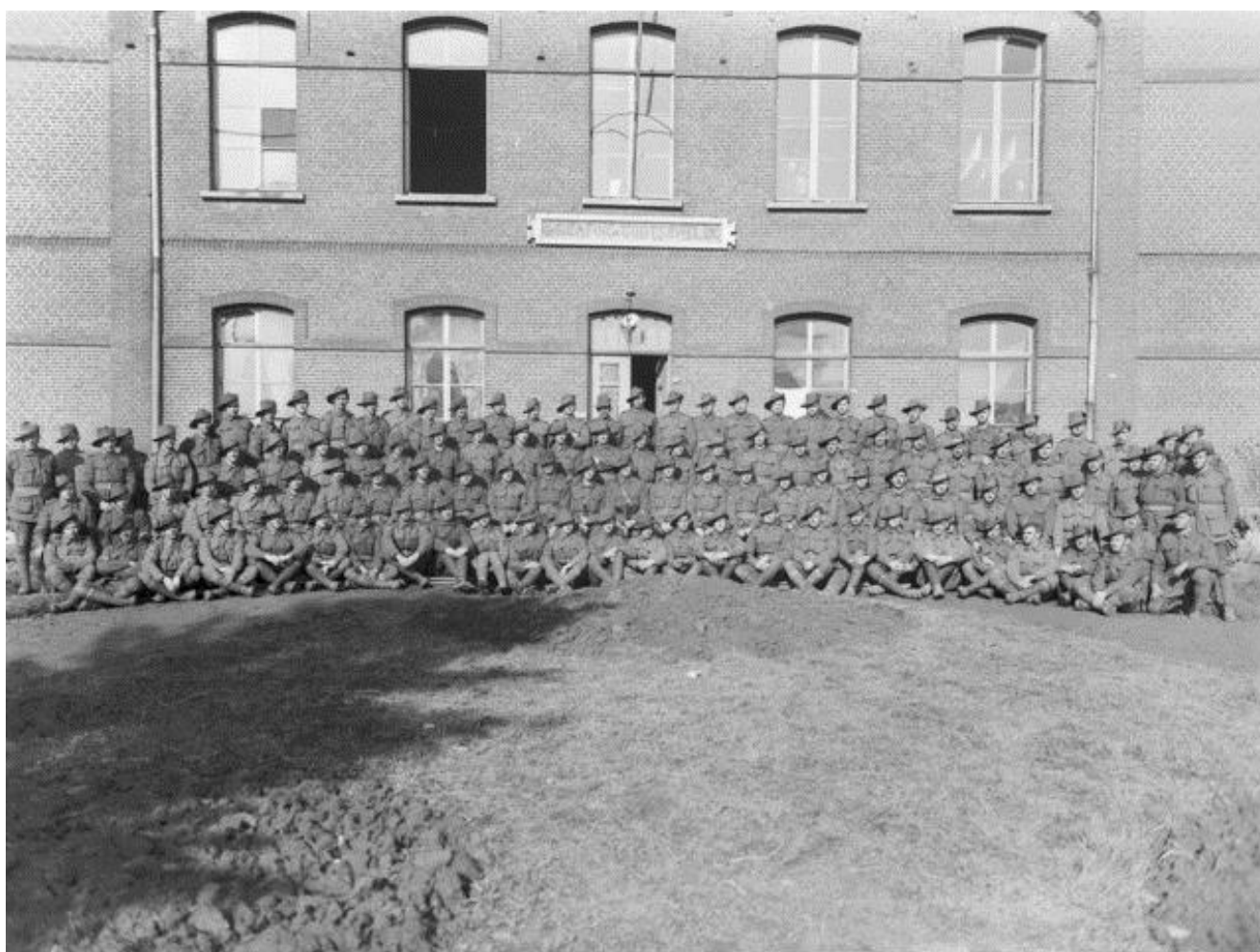
Sergeant Ralph Brabazon proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 10th June, 1917. He was joined 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 11th June, 1917.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon rejoined his Unit in France on 21st June, 1917.

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was wounded in action on 20th September, 1917. He was taken to 6th Australian Field Ambulance with shrapnel wounds to head then transferred to 10th Casualty Clearing Station. On 21st September, 1917 he was transferred to No. 5 Ambulance Train. Sergeant Brabazon was admitted to 25th General Hospital Hardelet on 21st September, 1917. He was discharged to Base Details on 13th October, 1917.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon was marched in to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 18th October, 1917.

Sergeant Ralph Brabazon rejoined his Unit in the field on 1st November, 1917.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E01815

**Locre, Belgium. 21 February 1918. Group portrait of the NCOs of the 5th Battalion  
Sgt. R. A. Brabazon – 3rd Row - 14th from left**

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was wounded in action (2nd occasion) on 14th June, 1918. He was taken to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance with gunshot wounds to thigh & forearm then transferred to 15th Casualty Clearing Station. Sergeant Brabazon was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian General Hospital at Boulogne on 15th June, 1918. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Cambria* on 17th June, 1918 with gunshot wounds to thigh.

#### War Diary – 5th Battalion

*France – 14th June, 1918*

*Patrol of Lieut. CONWAY & 3 OR's left our lines at E 11 B 9.9 to locate an enemy M.G. which was giving trouble. Patrol was unable to locate position. No Man's Land reported in good condition. Patrol report attached. During a raid by the 88th Brigade on our right, our right post co-operated by bringing to bear fire from two L Gs on suspected M.G. post near Copse to be raided. Right post killed three of the enemy who were observed in front. These men were in full marching orders & belonged to 205th R.I.R. LIEUT. R. C. G. HAMILTO wounded – 13 OR's wounded. 3 OR killed – 1 OR died of wounds. 1 OR wounded (remained on duty) 3 OR's Missing. Lieut. H. C. Morrison & 5 OR's to XV CORPS School. Lieut. W. T. MEIKLE returned from 2nd ARMY School.*

(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

#### **5th Battalion**

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion was heavily involved in operations against the German Army. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders then returning to the Somme for winter.

In 1917, the battalion participated in the operations that followed-up the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line, and then returned to Belgium to join the great offensive launched to the east of Ypres. In March and April 1918, the battalion helped to stop the German spring offensive. It subsequently participated in the great Allied offensive launched near Amiens on 8 August 1918. The advance by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war".

The battalion continued operations until late September 1918.

*(Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was admitted to Military Hospital, Herne Bay, Kent, England on 17th June, 1918 with gunshot wounds to side & arm (severe).



**Military Hospital, Herne Bay**



Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon died at 5.45 am on 26th June, 1918 at Military Hospital, Herne Bay, Kent, England from wounds received in action – gunshot wounds to buttock & side.

A death for Ralph A. Brabazon, aged 37, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Blean, Kent, England.

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was buried at 2 pm on 28th June, 1918 in Herne Bay Cemetery, Herne Bay, Kent, England – Plot number T. 110. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sergeant Brabazon - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag and surmounted with several beautiful wreaths. Wreaths were sent by Miss M. Sexton, Representative Australian Red Cross Society, Herne Bay, Australian Comrades (Patients in Military Hospital, Herne Bay), Matron and Sisters of Hospital, Canadian Red Cross Society, Herne Bay, and Miss Grace, Herne Bay. Prior to the interment a service was held by the Rev. Giles Daubeny in the Chapel at the Cemetery. A party of Australians (patients in the Military Hospital, Herne Bay) and several of the Nursing Staff followed the remains to the Cemetery. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Probate Details – *In the Supreme Court of Victoria in its Probate Jurisdiction – In the WILL and ESTATE of RALPH AUSTIN BRABAZON formerly of – Portsea in the State of Victoria a member of the Victorian Military Forces but latterly a member of the Australian Forces on service abroad deceased. Granted 5 June, 1919.*

Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sergeant Brabazon's widow – Mrs Adelaide Brabazon, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon – service number 1651, aged 37, of 5th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of John and Hannah Jane Austin Brabazon; husband of Adelaide Brabazon, of Portsea, Victoria, Australia. Born in West Meath, Ireland.

Sergeant R. A. Brabazon is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 43.



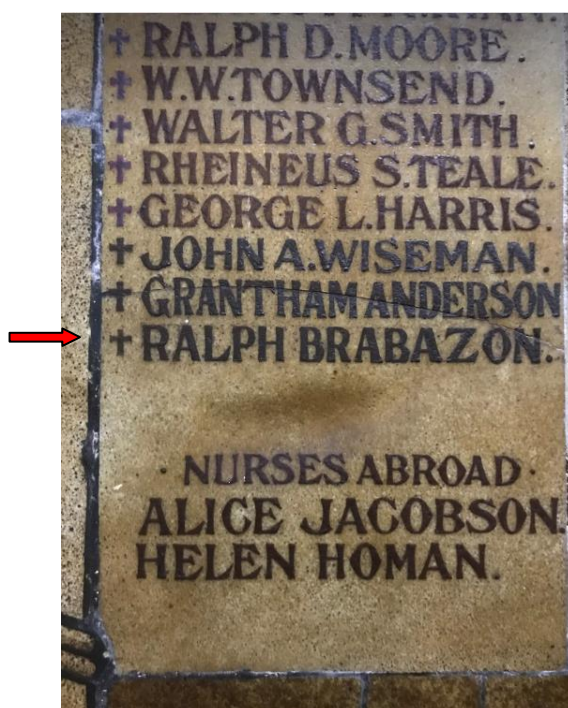
*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Ralph Brabazon is remembered on the St. Thomas' Anglican Church Honour Roll (framed mosaic), located at 760 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.



**St. Thomas' Anglican Church Honour Roll**

*(Photo courtesy of St. Thomas' Anglican Church, Moonee Ponds – Vicar Vanessa Bennett)*

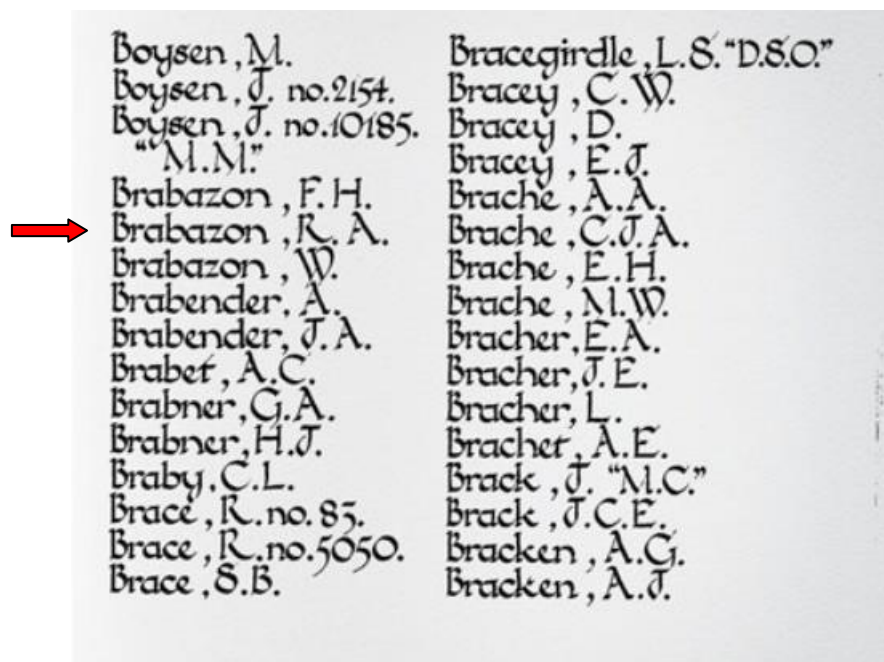


R. Brabazon is remembered on St. Thomas' Anglican Church Honour Roll (timber), located at 760 Mt. Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.



Moonee Ponds Anglican Church Honour Roll (Photo from VHD Heritage)

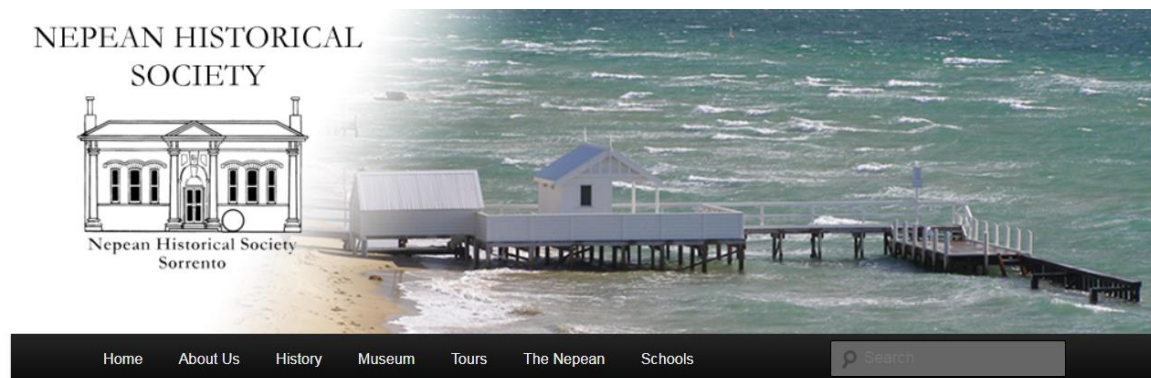
R. A. Brabazon is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.







Ralph Austin Brabazon is remembered by the Nepean Historical Society, Sorrento's website.



(98 pages of Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon'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 & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

#### **LIST NO. 348**

#### **Victoria**

#### **WOUNDED**

Sgt. R. A. Brabazon, St. Kilda

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 2 November, 1917)

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### **AUSTRALIANS ON SERVICE**

#### **KILLED**

BRABAZON – Mrs Brabazon, Portsea, has been officially notified that her husband, Sgt. Ralph Austin Brabazon, 5th Battalion, died from gunshot wounds in arm at Herne Bay Military Hospital on June 25. He enlisted in December, 1914, and has been on active service over 3 ½ years – an Anzac.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 5 July, 1918)

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#### **DIED ON SERVICE**

BRABAZON – On the 25th June, at Herne Bay Military Hospital, of wounds received in action, Sergeant-Major Ralph Austin Brabazon, Portsea, youngest son of the late John and H. I. Brabazon, of Johnston House, Country Westmeath, Ireland, loved brother of S. Brabazon (Malvern), Mrs D. W. C. Shiress (Sydney) and the late Mrs W. J. Grantham, of Kerferd street, East Malvern, after 3 ½ years active service, Egypt, Gallipoli, France, aged 37 years.

An Anzac.

Honoured, loved, mourned.

BRABAZON – Officially reported died of wounds at HERNES Bay Military Hospital, June 25, 1918, after 3 ½ years active service, Sergeant Ralph Austin Brabazon, 5th Battalion, dearly loved husband of Adelaide Brabazon, Portsea, aged 37 years. R.I.P.

God's will be done.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 July, 1918) & (*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 July, 1918)

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### **THE 416TH CASUALTY LIST**

#### **VICTORIAN NAMES**

#### **DIED OF WOUNDS**

Sergeant R. A. Brabazon, Portsea.

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 13 July, 1918)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

BRABAZON – In proud and loving memory of my gallant husband, Ralph, who laid down his life for his country on June 25, 1918, after three and a half years' service. R.I.P.

My Anzac hero.

*(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 26 June, 1919)*

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### 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. 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)*

Serjeant R. A. Brabazon does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*R. I. P.*



## Herne Bay Cemetery, Herne Bay, Kent, England

Herne Bay Cemetery, Herne Bay contains 58 Commonwealth War Graves – 25 relating to World War 1 & 33 from World War 2.

During the early months of the 1939-1945 War ground was set aside by the local authorities about 40 yards north of the 1914-1918 plot for service war graves. This was not generally used, and the majority of the graves are in various parts of the cemetery, in positions chosen by those responsible for the interments. One sailor and one Merchant Navy seaman are not identified. *(Information & photo from CWGC)*



Chapel at Herne Bay Cemetery *(Photo by julia&keld)*



Photo of Serjeant R. A. Brabazon's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Herne Bay Cemetery, Herne Bay, Kent, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Kyle Tallett)*

