

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2540 PRIVATE

W. A. CROSSINGHAM

33RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

22ND FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 31

Their Name Liveth

For Evermore

William Arthur CROSSINGHAM

William Arthur Crossingham was born on 9th February, 1885 at Macleay River, New South Wales to parents Richard William John & Amelia May Thorpe Crossingham (nee Townsend). He was baptised on 22nd March, 1885 at Christ Church, Lavender Bay, North Sydney, NSW. On the Baptism Records Richard William John Crossingham was listed as a Lighthouse Keeper & the family lived at South Solitary Island, New South Wales.

William Arthur Crossingham was a 31 year old, single, Farmer from Longreach, Macleay River, NSW when he enlisted at Kempsey, NSW on 21st July, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr R. W. J. Crossingham, Pelican Island, NSW.

Private William Arthur Crossingham was discharged prior to leaving Australia. (Note: On 16th January, 1920 the 2nd Military District recorded on Statement of Service form – “Reason – unobtainable”.)

William Arthur Crossingham was a 31 year old, single, Farmer from Long Reach, Macleay River, New South Wales when he re-enlisted at Rutherford, NSW on 21st September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2540 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Richard William John Crossingham, Pelican Island, Macleay River, NSW. William’s younger brothers – Leonard Sydney Crossingham & George Henry Crossingham both enlisted on 22nd September, 1916.

Private William Arthur Crossingham was posted to “C” Reserve Company, 33rd Battalion at Rutherford on 1st September, 1916 for recruit training. He was written up on 1st November, 1916 for overstaying Final Leave while posted at Rutherford & was fined 30/ & lost 6 days’ pay. Private Crossingham was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 33rd Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 7th November, 1916.

Private William Arthur Crossingham & his younger brothers - Private Leonard Sydney Crossingham & Private George Henry Crossingham all embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on SS *Napier* on 17th November, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 33rd Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 1917.

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.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

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 William Arthur Crossingham was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire on 30th January, 1917 from Australia.

Private William Arthur Crossingham was admitted to King George Hospital, London, England on 8th February, 1917 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was reported to be seriously ill.

Private William Arthur Crossingham died at 9.50 am on 22nd February, 1917 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from Pneumonia.

A death for William A. Crossingham, aged 32, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Base Records wrote to Mr R. Crossingham, Pelican Island, NSW on 25th February, 1917 to advise that Private William Crossingham had been admitted to hospital on 8th February with a “*severe illness not yet diagnosed. Will advise anything further received.*”

Private William Arthur Crossingham was buried on 26th February, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 178828.

From the burial report of Private William Arthur Crossingham - *Coffin was good – Elm. Military Funeral. The remains of the deceased soldier were borne to the graveside by members of the A.I.F. Captain Neale representing the Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London was present at the funeral.*

Relatives present – Two brothers & Aunt. Funeral arrangements were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Base Records wrote to Mr R. W. J. Crossingham, Pelican Island, Macleay River, NSW on 23rd March, 1923 stating that the site of his son’s grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row F Grave 3.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – XI. F. 3. Private William Arthur Crossingham now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private William Arthur Crossingham requested in his Will dated 16th November, 1916 bequeathed all his property to his mother – Amelia Thorpe Crossingham and also appointed her as sole executrix of his Will.

Mrs R. W. J. Crossingham, Pelican Island, wrote to Base Records on 8th March, 1917 requesting the Death Certificate for her son No. 2540 Private W. A. Crossingham.

Base Records replied to Mrs Crossingham on 11th May, 1917 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 2540 Private W. A. Crossingham, 33rd Battalion.

Private William Arthur Crossingham 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 Private Crossingham’s father – Mr R. W. J. Crossingham, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Arthur Crossingham – service number 2540, aged 31, of 33rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Richard William John and Amelia Crossingham, of Pelican Island, Macleay River, New South Wales.

Private W. A. Crossingham is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 122.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

W. Crossingham & his brother G. Crossingham are both remembered on the South West Rocks War Memorial/Cenotaph, located at Livingstone Street & Ocean Drive, South West Rocks, NSW.



South West Rocks War Memorial/Cenotaph (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Penny Smith)



W. Crossingham & his brother G. Crossingham are both remembered on the South West Rocks Memorial Avenue which commemorates those from the district who died in service or were killed in action during World War One. Memorial stones were placed at the site of the trees and stand approximately 60 centimetres tall and are made of concrete. They are painted white, heritage listed and they are maintained by the South West Rocks RSL Club under the Environmental Heritage regulations.

Additional plaques have now been added in the Avenue detailing the military history of the fallen soldiers.

Of the 83 men from this district who enlisted for active service in World War One, 10 did not return. Anzac Day services were held on the corner of Landsborough Street and Sturt Street for many years. This section of what was originally called Sturt Street was renamed Memorial Avenue in reference to the ten memorial tablets which line the street. Originally, eight tablets were each accompanied by the planting (in 1927) of a Norfolk Pine. Only four of these trees remain. The rest were replaced with New Zealand Christmas bush when their growth threatened overhead power lines.



South West Rocks Memorial Avenue (Photos from Monument Australia)



W. A. Crossingham, G. Crossingham & L. S. Crossingham are all remembered on the South West Rocks RSL Club World War 1 Honour Roll, located at 41 McIntyre Street, South West Rocks.



South West Rocks RSL Club World War 1 Honour Roll (Photo from War Memorials Register NSW)

W. A. Crossingham & his brother G. H. Crossingham are both remembered on the Kempsey War Memorial, located at Rudder & Lord Streets, East Kempsey, NSW.





Kempsey War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)

(65 pages of Private William Arthur Crossingham'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



Connected to Private William Arthur Crossingham:

Younger brother – Leonard Sydney Crossingham – Enlisted 22nd September, 1916 as a 25 year old, single, Farmer from Pelican Island, Macleay River, NSW. Embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on SS *Napier* on 17th November, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 33rd Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements as Private 2539.

Wounded in Action (gassed) 7th June, 1917; Wounded in Action 5th October, 1917 (2nd Occasion); Wounded in Action (gassed) 17th April, 1918 (3rd Occasion).

Returned to Australia 12th June, 1919. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal.

He died 14th May, 1964 at Kempsey, NSW.

Younger brother – George Henry Crossingham – Enlisted 22nd September, 1916 as a 25 year old, single, Farmer from Pelican Island, Macleay River, NSW. Embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on SS *Napier* on 17th November, 1916 with the 9th Infantry Brigade, 33rd Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements as Private 2542.

Wounded in action 4th April, 1918.

Died of wounds on 5th April, 1918 at 46th Casualty Clearing Station. Buried in Picquigny British Cemetery, France.

Awarded Military Medal 6th August, 1918. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal.



Newspaper Notices

Australian Casualties

Lists Nos. 277 and 278

New South Wales

Died of Illness

Pte W. A. CROSSINGHAM (Pelican Island), 22/2/17

(*Australian Town and Country Journal*, Sydney, NSW – 14 March, 1917)

Roll of Honor

CROSSINGHAM – In loving memory of Pte W. A. Crossingham, of Pelican Island, who died of pneumonia, King George's Hospital, London, Feb. 22, 1917. Deeply regretted by A.F., Lorn. W. Maitland.

CROSSINGHAM – In loving memory of our Dear Son and Brother, Private William Arthur Crossingham, who died on Active Service at King George's Hospital, London, on February 22nd, 1917, aged 31 and 11 months.

Far away from all who loved him,
In a hero's grave he lies;
And though his body rested,
His memory never dies.

Inserted by his loving parents, brothers and sisters, Mr and Mrs Crossingham, Leonard, George (On Active Service), Edward, Herbert, Alice, Amy, Blanche.

(*The Macleay Chronicle*, Kempsey, NSW – 20 February, 1918)

Roll of Honour

CROSSINGHAM – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, No. 2540 Private William Arthur Crossingham, A.I.F., 33rd Battalion, died of pneumonia in King George's Hospital, England, 22nd February, 1917.

Though nothing can the loss replace
A dear one taken from our side,
Yet in our sorrow we rejoice
To think, 'twas nobly that he died;
And bravely answered Duty's call
To fight for liberty and right,
And battle for oppression's fall.

Inserted by his loving father, sisters, and brothers.

CROSSINGHAM - In loving memory of our dear brother, No. 2540 Private William Arthur Crossingham, A.I.F., 33rd Battalion, died of pneumonia at King George's Hospital, England, 22nd February, 1917.

They laid our Hero down to rest,
In the flag with a Southern Cross;
And we mourn for him as one of the best,
For his death was Australia's loss.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Lucy and Reg. Parish.

(*The Macleay Chronicle*, Kempsey, NSW – 19 February, 1919) & (*Macleay Argus*, Kempsey, NSW – 20 February, 1919)

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*)

Private W. A. Crossingham does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Their Name Liveth For Evermore

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private W. A. Crossingham's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Private W. A. Crossingham's Headstone (Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

