

**Southern Cemetery,
Manchester, Lancashire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



518 PRIVATE

M. DOWSON

16TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

22ND MAY, 1915

Michael DOWSON

Michael Dowson was born at Sailor's Hill, Daylesford, Victoria on 7th January, 1893 to parents James & Margaret Dowson (nee Bell).

James Dowson, father of Michael Dowson, died on 25th February, 1898 at Daylesford, Victoria.

Michael Dowson attended Musk Vale State School.

Margaret Dowson, sister of Michael Dowson, died on 19th March, 1907. James Alfred Dowson, brother of Michael Dowson, died on 6th September, 1907.

Michael Dowson was a 22 year old, single, Miner when he enlisted at Helena Vale, Western Australia on 25th September, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 518 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Margaret Dowson, of Sailor's Hill, Daylesford, Victoria.

Private Michael Dowson embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 22nd December, 1914 with 16th Infantry Battalion "A" Company.

Private Michael Dowson proceeded to join the M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) at Gallipoli Peninsula on 12th April, 1915.

Private Michael Dowson was wounded in action on 2nd May, 1915 at Gallipoli with a gunshot wound to right knee. He was transferred to England on 3rd May, 1915 on Hospital Ship *Goorkha*.

16th Battalion

The 16th Battalion AIF was raised from 16 September 1914, six weeks after the outbreak of the First World War. Three-quarters of the battalion were recruited in Western Australia, and the rest in South Australia. With the 13th, 14th and 15th Battalions it formed the 4th Brigade commanded by Colonel John Monash.

The South Australian and Western Australian recruits were united when the battalion trained together in Victoria. They embarked for overseas on Boxing Day. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt arriving in early February 1915. Australia already had an AIF division there, the 1st. When the 4th Brigade arrived in Egypt it became part of the New Zealand and Australian Division. The 4th Brigade landed at ANZAC late in the afternoon of 25 April 1915.

A week after the landing the 16th was thrown into the attack on Bloody Angle suffering many casualties. From May to August the battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC beachhead, and in August the 4th Brigade attacked Hill 971. The hill was taken at great cost, although Turkish reinforcements forced the Australians to withdraw. The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December....

(Battalion information from The Australian War Memorial)

Private Michael Dowson died on 22nd May, 1915 at 2nd Western General Hospital, Manchester, Lancashire, England from wounds received in action at the Dardanelles – Shrapnel wound to knee & secondary Haemorrhage.

A death for Michael Dawson, aged 22, was registered in the June quarter, 1915 in the district of Chorlton, Lancashire, England.

Private Michael Dowson was buried on 27th May, 1915 in Southern Cemetery, Manchester, Lancashire, England – Plot number 390.

A letter was sent to Mrs M. Dawson of Sailor's Hill, Daylesford, Victoria, dated 29th May which reads:

"With reference to the report of the regrettable loss of your son, the late No. 518, Private M. Dowson, 16th Battalion, I am now in receipt of advice from Australian Imperial Force Headquarters, London, dated 21st February, 1919, as follows:-

- *“In the Southern Cemetery at Manchester there were buried in common graves nine deceased members of the Australian Imperial Force. The remains of these have now been exhumed from the common graves and in each case have been re-interred in separate single graves in virgin soil in a site specially set aside as an Australian plot. The work was successfully carried out last week under the supervision of a senior Non-commissioned Officer from these Headquarters, and the new graves have since been marked by the provision of the standard oak cross enamelled white with black lettering. Photographs of the new graves will be taken at an early date and sent to you for transmission to the next-of-kin.”*

Your son is now buried in Grave No. 212, Section Q.”

A War Pension was granted to Margaret Dowson of 16 Alfred Street, Richmond, mother of the late Private Michael Dowson. It was increased from 4/- to 40/- per fortnight from 22nd July, 1915.

A letter was received at Base Records on 22nd August, 1918 from Margaret Dowson, mother of the late Private Michael Dowson, thanking them for the photograph of her son’s grave.

Private Michael Dowson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

The 1914/15 Star was received & signed for by Margaret Dowson on 18th October, 1920. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Dowson’s mother - Mrs Margaret Dowson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent March, 1922). The British War Medal was despatched to Mrs Dowson in April, 1924 but returned & marked unclaimable & deceased. Letters were sent from Base Records in May, 1924 to Selina M. Dowson, sister of late Private Dowson & to Mr Robert, Dowson, brother of the late Private Dowson, asking for details regarding their parents & if they were deceased. Base Records advised they were trying to locate the closest next-of-kin in order to be able to dispose of the British War Medal. Base Records advised that under the Deceased Soldiers’ Estates Act of 1918 that the mementoes must go to the next-of kin in the following order of relationship – father, mother, eldest surviving brother..... Advice was received that Mrs Margaret Dowson had died in October, 1923. The British War Medal was despatched to Mr Richard Dowson of Leonara, West Australia in July, 1924, as the eldest brother & closest next-of-kin.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Michael Dowson – service number 518, of 16th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James and Margaret Dowson, of Sailor’s Hill, Daylesford, Victoria, Australia.

Private M. Dowson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 79.



Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

M. Dowson is remembered on the Musk Vale State School Honour Board located at the Daylesford Primary School, Vincent Street, Daylesford, Victoria.



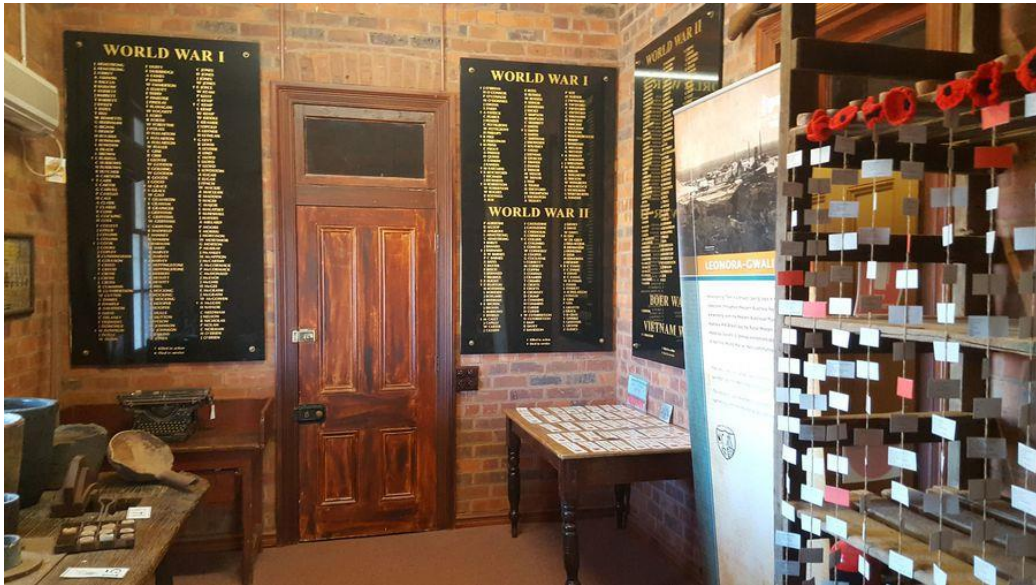
Musk Vale State School Honour Board

M. Dowson is remembered on the Daylesford War Memorial located at Burke Square, Daylesford, Victoria.



Daylesford War Memorial (Photos by Mattinbgn)

M. Dowson is remembered on the Leonora Honour Roll, located in Leonora Shire Offices, 16 Tower Street, Leonora, Western Australia.



Leonora Honour Roll (Photos from VWMA – Tony Ledger)



M. Dowson is remembered on the Leonora Road Board District Roll of Honour, located in Gwalia Historical Museum, Tower Street, Leonora, Western Australia.



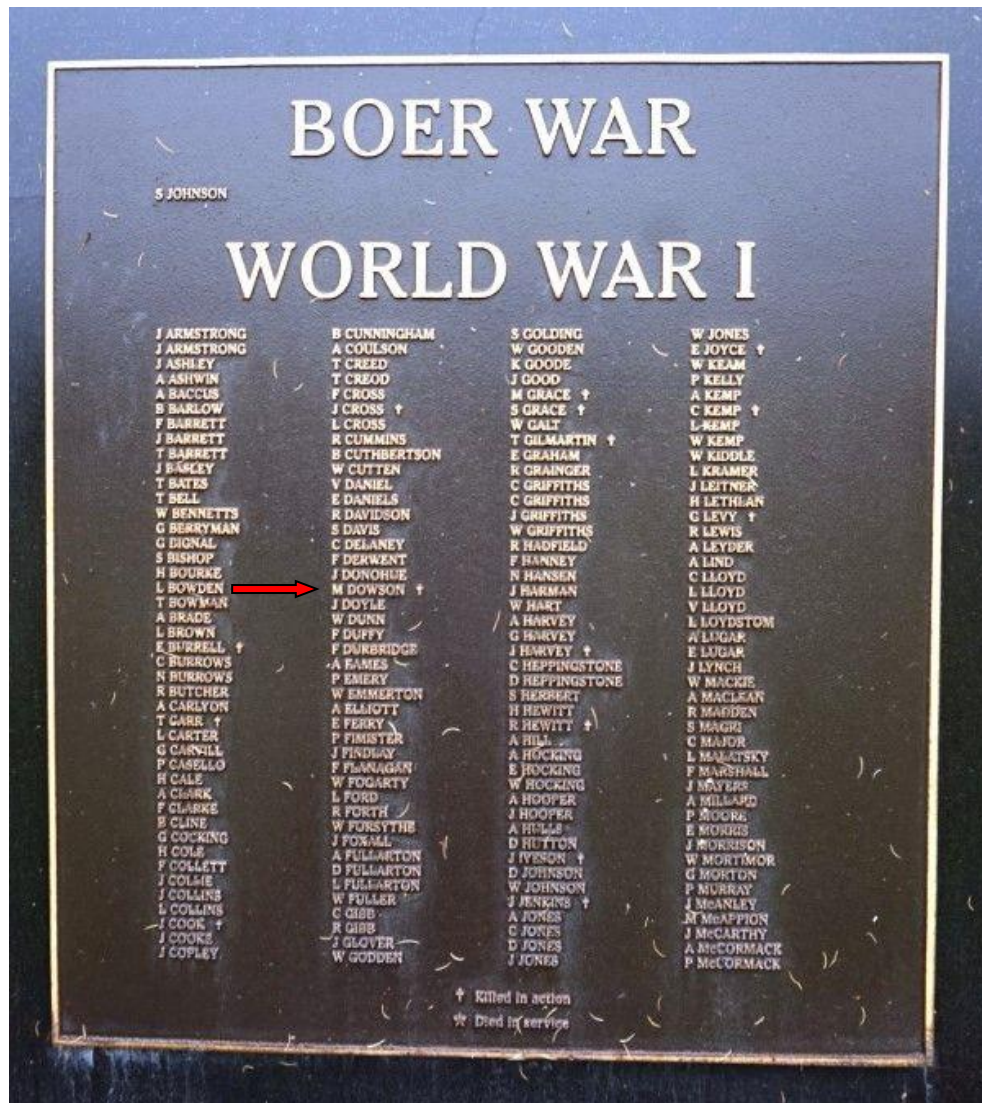
Leonora Road Board District Roll of Honour (Photos from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)



M. Dowson is remembered on the Leonora War Memorial, located in Leonora Memorial Park, Tower Street, Leonora, Western Australia.



Leonora War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)



M. Dowson is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

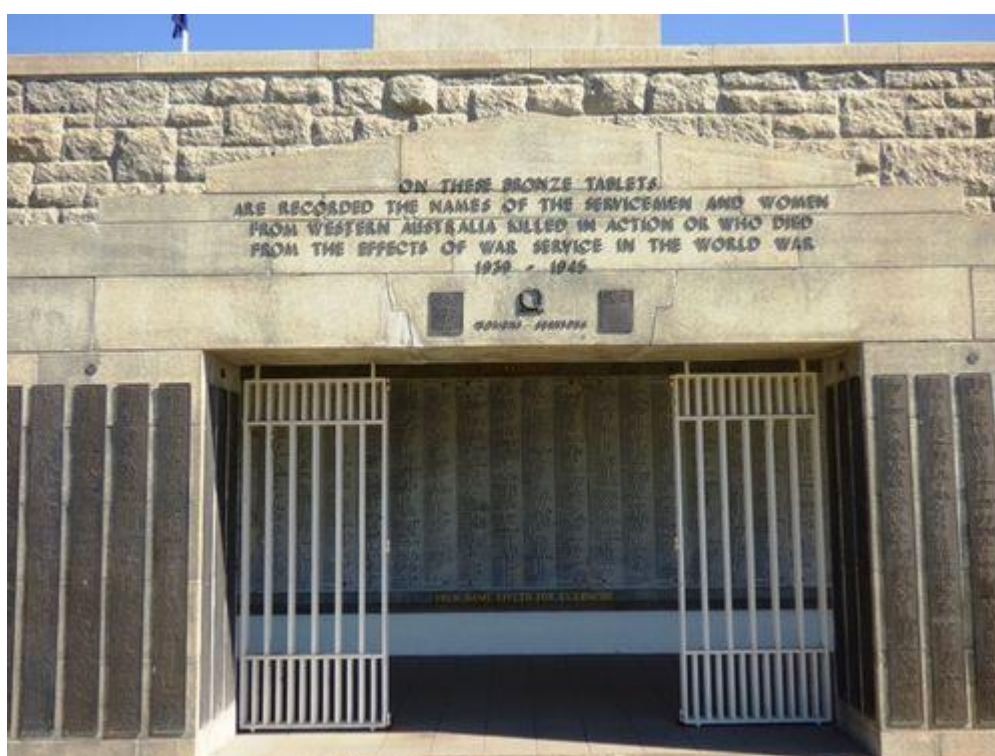
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)

& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)





16th Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

(57 pages of Private Michael Dowson'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

THE WAR

PRIVATE DOWSON WOUNDED

News has been received that Private Michel Dowson, who enlisted with the 16th Battalion in Western Australia, has been wounded in action at the Dardanelles. The young man was working as a miner in Daylesford for some time and was much respected. His parents live at Sailor's Hill.

(Daylesford Advocate, Yandoit, Glenlyon and Eganstown Chronicle, Victoria – 25 May, 1915)

EMPIRE'S SACRIFICE

DAYLESFORD'S DEAD

News was received by telegram on Sunday of the death from wounds received in the Dardanelles campaign of Private Michael Dowson. Pte Dowson was a native of Daylesford, where his parents resided for many years. Later they removed to Melbourne, and his mother now lives at Port Melbourne. Private Dowson enlisted in West Australia, and after a course of training at Broadmeadows went to Egypt with one of the later contingents. He was about 25 years of age. He is a grandson of Cr. Bell, of Sailor's Hill, a brother of Mrs Bradbury, of Sailor's Falls, and a nephew of Mrs T. Hoath, of Sailor's Hill.

(Daylesford Advocate, Yandoit, Glenlyon and Eganstown Chronicle, Victoria – 8 June, 1915)



Private Michael Dowson



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 M. Dowson does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Southern Cemetery, Manchester, Lancashire, England

During the First World War, Manchester contained between thirty and forty war hospitals, including the 2nd Western General Hospital and the Nell Lane Military Hospital for prisoners of war. Many of those buried in the cemeteries and churchyards of the city died in these hospitals. During the Second World War, there was a Royal Air Force Station at Heaton Park, Manchester.

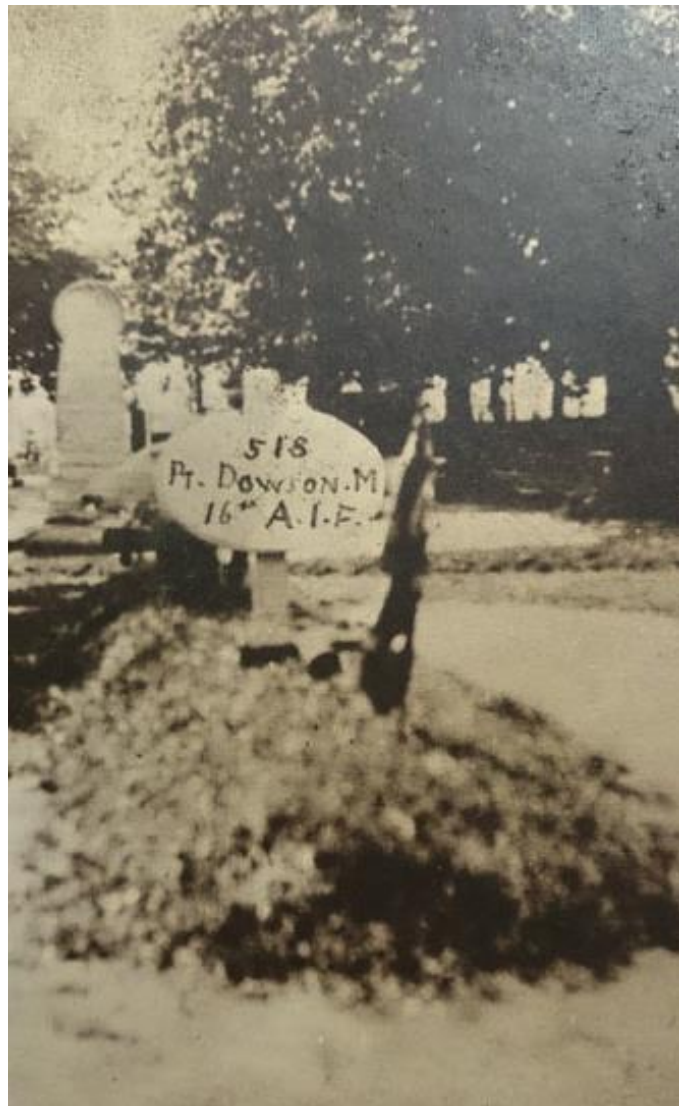
Manchester Southern Cemetery contains burials of both wars, the majority of them scattered. There are also separate plots for First and Second World War burials, but in neither case are the graves marked individually; instead, each plot has a Screen Wall bearing the names of those buried there. Each plot has a Cross of Sacrifice. In all, 803 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War, including 1 unidentified, and 475 from the Second World War, including 3 unidentified, are now commemorated in the cemetery; there is also 1 non-war service grave.

The Screen Wall in the Second World War plot also bears the names of 177 servicemen and women whose remains were cremated. Further memorials in this plot commemorate 17 Polish servicemen buried there, and a number of casualties of both wars buried in other cemeteries and churchyards in the Manchester area whose graves could no longer be maintained.

Casualties buried in the following cemeteries and churchyards are now alternatively commemorated on Screen Wall Memorials in Manchester Southern Cemetery:

Ashton-under-Lyne (St Michael) Churchyard Extension
Birch-in-Rusholme (St James) Churchyard
Bury (Brunswick) United Methodist Cemetery
Cheetham Hill (St Luke) Churchyard
Eccles (St Mary) Churchyard
Ecclestone (St Thomas) Churchyard Extension
Edgeworth Congregational Chapelyard
Hey (or Lees) (St. John the Baptist) Churchyard Extension
Manchester General Cemetery
Newton Heath (All Saints) Church Cemetery
Openshaw (St Barnabas) Churchyard
Swinton Unitarian Chapelyard.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Original Grave Marker for Pte M. Dowson



Southern Cemetery, Manchester – showing the 14 Australian War Graves from WW1



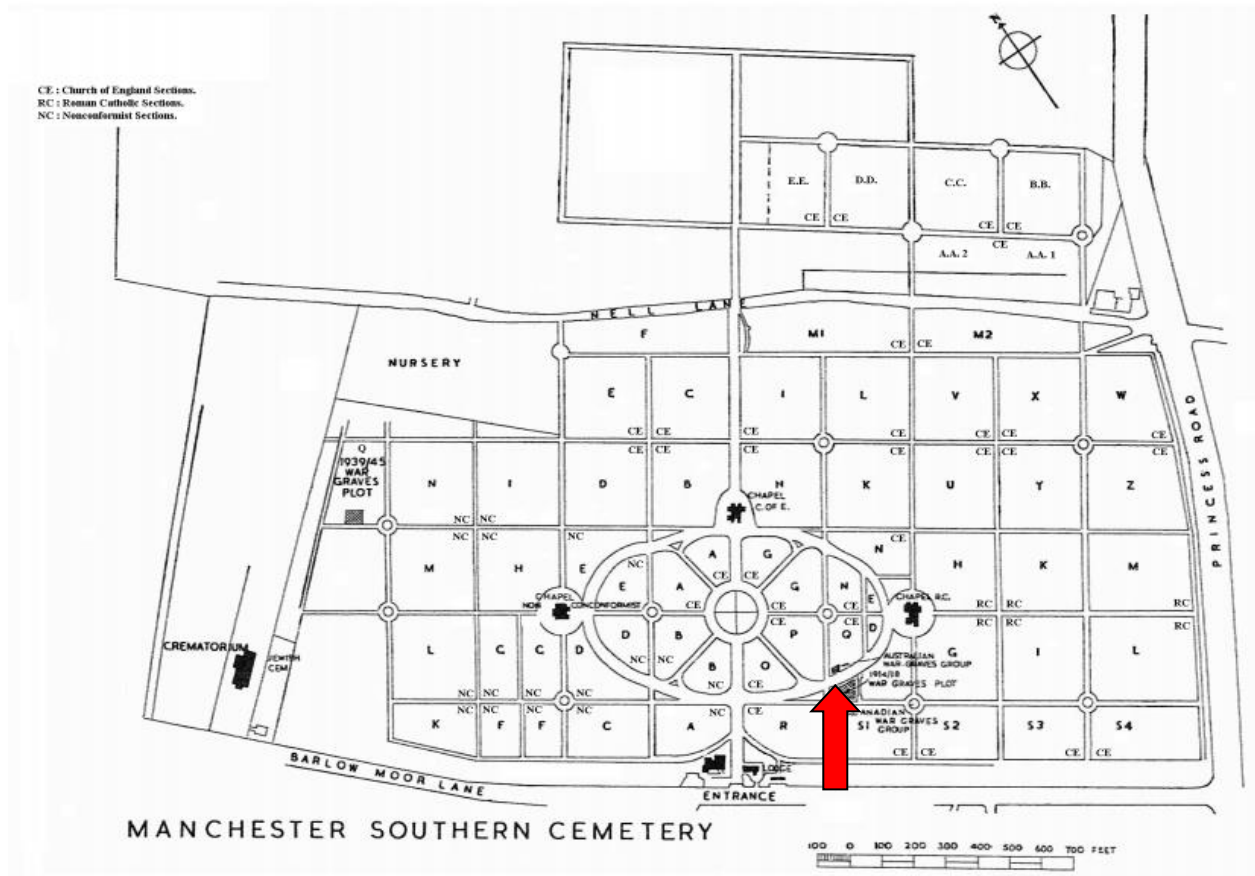
Photo of Private M. Dowson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Southern Cemetery, Manchester, Lancashire, England.



(Photo from Billion Graves – Mary Griffin)



(Photo courtesy of Mike Berrell)



Southern Cemetery, Manchester (Australian War Graves Group marked with arrow)

