

**Earlham Road Cemetery,
Norwich, Norfolk
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



284 PRIVATE

F. GILLESPIE

32ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

11TH SEPTEMBER, 1916 Age 21

Well Done

Thou Good And Faithful

Servant

Frank GILLESPIE

Frank Gillespie was born at Peterborough, South Australia on 30th June, 1895 to parents Thomas Henry and Amelia Gillespie (nee Atkins). (Frank Gillespie stated on his Attestation Papers that he was born at Petersburg, South Australia).

Frank Gillespie attended Warnertown & Solomon State Schools.

Newspaper item – *The Area's Express*, Booyoolee, South Australia – 4 November, 1910:

A CLEVER LAD.—*The following paragraph appeared in the correspondence columns of Wednesday's "Register" :— From "Rectus" : — "I have seen paragraphs calling attention to records in connection with the Primary examination, but I think the following record is unbeaten:- Frank Gillespie, a pupil of the Solomontown School, passed the Primary examination in six subjects — English, arithmetic, history, Latin, algebra, and geometry—in August 1906, when he was 11 years and 1 month old. His school career was extraordinary. He entered the Warnertown School when he was seven years old. He passed through the junior and i. classes in the first year, ii. and iii. in the second year, iv. and v. in the third year. He gained a junior scholarship, and entered the Solomontown School at the beginning of 1906. There he prepared for the Primary exam., and after seven months' tuition passed it successfully, even though three of the subjects were new to him. Thus in four years, or half the usual period he climbed the ladder from the junior, or infants', class to the Primary exam."*

Thomas Henry Gillespie, father of Frank Gillespie, died in 1915.

Frank Gillespie was a 20 year old, single, Railway Clerk when he enlisted in Adelaide, South Australia on 4th August, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 284 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Amelia Gillespie, Port Lincoln, South Australia. As Frank Gillespie was under the age of 21, his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. Mrs Amelia Gillespie, mother of Frank Gillespie, signed her consent. Her husband was listed as deceased. Frank's younger brother – Clive Gillespie, Railway Employee, aged 18, also enlisted the same day.

Frank Gillespie was posted to "D" Company, 3rd Depot Battalion as Private on 5th August, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to No. 1 Depot – 32nd Battalion "A" Company at Mitcham on 1st September, 1915. Private Gillespie was transferred to "D" Company, 32nd Battalion as Bugler on 1st October, 1915.

Private Frank Gillespie embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Geelong* on 28th October, 1915 with the 32nd Battalion Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 18th December, 1915.

Private Frank Gillespie embarked from Alexandria on 17th June, 1916 on H.M.A.T. *Transylvania* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 23rd June, 1916.

Private Frank Gillespie was wounded in action in France on 19th July, 1916. He was admitted to 8th Field Ambulance on 20th July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to cheek and leg then transferred to 8th Casualty Clearing Station on the same day. Pte Gillespie was transferred to 17th Ambulance Train on 21st July, 1916 & admitted to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 21st July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to face. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St David* on 15th August, 1916 with gunshot wounds to chest.

A Telegram was sent on 5th August, 1916 by Base Records to Mrs Gillespie advising that her son Private Frank Gillespie was wounded.

A Telegram was sent on 17th August, 1916 by Base Records to Mrs Gillespie advising that her son Private Frank Gillespie was in the 13th General Hospital suffering from gun shot wound in face.

32nd Battalion

The 32nd Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Mitcham, on the outskirts of Adelaide, on 9 August 1915. Only two companies were raised from South Australian enlistees - another two were formed in Western Australia and joined the battalion at the end of September. The battalion sailed from Adelaide on 18 November 1915.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt, and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916. The 32nd Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916, having only entered the front-line trenches 3 days previously. The attack was a disastrous introduction to battle for the 32nd - it suffered 718 casualties, almost 75 per cent of the battalion's total strength, but closer to 90 per cent of its actual fighting strength. Although it still spent periods in the front line, the 32nd played no major offensive role for the rest of the year.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 32nd Battalion

19th July, 1916:

A & C Coys repairing Trenches

2 pm – B & D Coys left billets at FLEURBAIX and took up

4.15 pm - position in 300 Trench

5.30 pm – A & C Coys closed to night to take up positions for attack

5.45 pm – B & D Coys arrived in front line in position for attack

5.53 pm – 1st wave went over parapet.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Frank Gillespie was admitted to Military Hospital at Norwich, England on 15th August, 1916 with Haemothorax (severe).



A Telegram was sent on 29th August, 1916 by Base Records to Mrs Gillespie advising that her son Private Frank Gillespie was dangerously ill. A Telegram was sent on 19th September, 1916 by Base Records to Mrs Gillespie advising that her son had been admitted to Norfolk & Norwich Hospital on 15th August suffering from Haemothorax.

Private Frank Gillespie died on 11th September, 1916 at Military Hospital, Norwich, England from wounds received in action in France, cardiac failure & lung haemothorax.

[Note: There appears to be some discrepancy with the date of death for Private Frank Gillespie. The Casualty Form-Active Service, Field Service Form, Statement of Service form & a notice of death form – signed by the Secretary of Norfolk & Norwich Hospital in the Service Record file of the late Pte Frank Gillespie as well as The Australian War Memorial & the Commonwealth War Graves Commission - all have the date of death as 11th September, 1916. The War Gratuity form & a copy of notification from Commandant A.I.F. sent on 10th September, 1916 in the Service Record file of the late Pte Frank Gillespie has the date of death as 10th September, 1916 as does the Red Cross wounded & missing file (see extract below).]

A death for Frank Gillespie, aged 21, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Norwich, Norfolk, England.

Private Frank Gillespie was buried in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England – Section 26, Grave No. 253.

Mrs Gillespie, mother of Private Frank Gillespie, received a telegram stating that her son had died on 11th August, 1916. This was queried by Mrs Gillespie as she had been notified that her son had been admitted to Norfolk & Norwich Hospital on 15th August, 1916 – 4 days after he had supposedly died. Mrs Gillespie also wrote in her letter to Major Hardie, Military Department, Keswick “....Also as far as we know Frank was not in the 26th Battalion, he has not advised us of any change and we have letters from him since he was wounded, and in his last letter he stated that he was getting along alright and was still at Boulogne. We were also advised that he had been wounded in the face whereas according to his own statement he was wounded by shrapnel in the arm, leg and chest. Would you kindly try & let have some further particulars, or at least some information that will tell us the correct date of his death, as it seems hardly possible that he should have died six weeks ago and the information just reached us....”

A letter from Base Records, dated 28th February, 1917, to Mrs A. Gillespie, mother of the late Pte Frank Gillespie, states “he died on 11th August 1916 at Military Hospital, Norwich, England, of wounds received in action in France, and was buried in Morwich Cemetery, Section 26, Grave No. 253.”

A letter was sent on 20th April, 1920 from Base Records to Mrs A. Gillespie, Port Lincoln, South Australia, mother of the late Private Frank Gillespie, advising that “now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from the former site, and re-interred in Grave No.680 Section 54, Norwich Cemetery, Norwich. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.”

Private Frank Gillespie has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Frank Gillespie contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relatives to obtain the fullest details possible into his wounds, death and burial. A reply was sent from the O.C. of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital which reads: “Bugler F. Gillespie – Admitted to 13th General Hospital 21-7-16. Admitted to Norwich Hospital 15-8-15. Died at Norwich Hospital 10-9-16. Death due to a gunshot wound of lung, haemothorax and cardiac failure and this was notified to the O. i/c Australian Records 130 Horseferry Road, on the 11th ult. I have this week been in communication with the brother of the deceased, 3698 Pte C. Gillespie, 32 A.I.F., (B Coy) who is at present serving in France, and have informed him of the death of his brother.” Answering another enquiry for 284 Bugler Frank Gillespie the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital replied with the following: “... I am quite at a loss to understand this, as I have already answered two enquiries from you on this subject, on the 13th and 23rd October respectively. In order that there may be no more doubt as to your receiving this information, I beg to inform you that Bugler Gillespie was admitted to this Hospital on August 11th, suffering from gun shot wound of lung. His condition was very serious on his admission, but the Sister of the Ward reported to me that although he had relatives in Bristol he did not wish them to be sent for, as he had never seen them and they would be quite strangers to him. I have since communicated with this relative, Mr W. D. Emmott, of 36 Bracknock Road, Knowle, Bristol. Private Gillespie died very peacefully on the 10th September and was buried with military honours at Norwich Cemetery.....”

A War Pension was granted to Amelia Gillespie, widowed mother of the late Private Frank Gillespie, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 10th November, 1916. A War Pension for Hazel Shirley Gillespie, sister of the late Private Frank

Gillespie, & John Neil Gillespie, brother of the late Private Frank Gillespie, were both rejected on the grounds that claimant was not a dependant of the deceased member of the Forces.

Mrs A. Gillespie, mother of the late Private Frank Gillespie, had written to Base Records in April, 1919, enquiring into the personal effects of her son. Base Records replied in December stating that they had made enquires to Norfolk and Norwich Hospital & were advised that *“a brother of this man, namely, 2698 Private C. Gillespie “D” Coy, 32nd A.I.F. visited this Hospital early in October, 1916, whilst home on leave from France and took away the few personal belonging we had belong to the deceased man.”*

Private Frank Gillespie was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Gillespie’s mother – Mrs A. Gillespie, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frank Gillespie – service number 284, aged 21, of 32nd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Amelia Gillespie and the late Thomas Henry Gillespie, of Port Lincoln, South Australia.

Private F. Gillespie is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 120.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. Gillespie is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

F. Gillespie is remembered on Honour Board located in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Tasman Terrace, Port Lincoln, South Australia.



Honour Roll in Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Port Lincoln



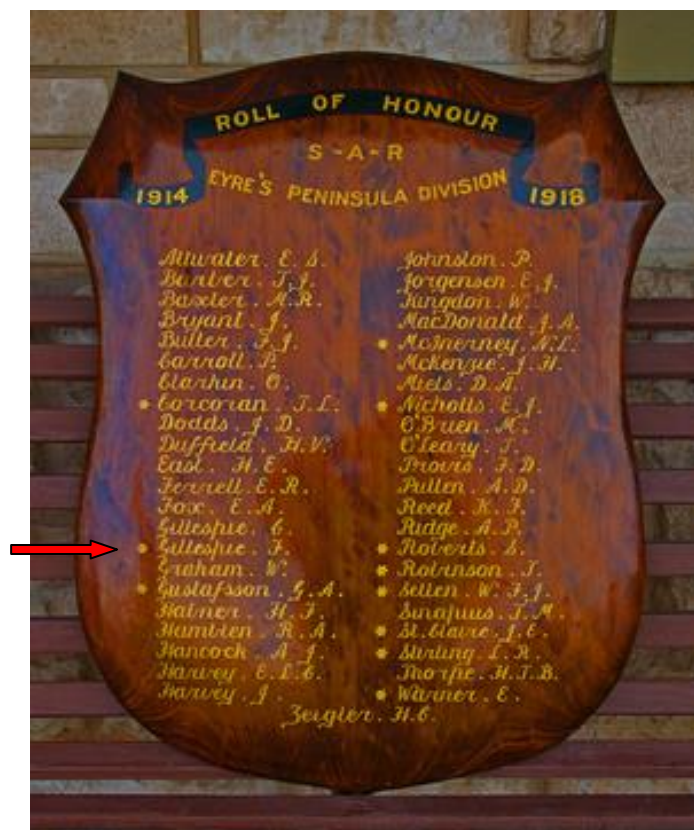
Port Lincoln Soldiers Memorial Civic Hall (Photo by Bahnfreund)

F. Gillespie is remembered on the Port Lincoln R.S.L. Garden of Remembrance monument in the centre of the Happy Valley Cemetery, Happy Valley Road and Bernard Place, Port Lincoln, South Australia.



Port Lincoln R.S.L. Garden of Remembrance monument

F. Gillespie is remembered on the Roll of Honour, S.A.R. Eyre's Peninsula Division located at Railway Place, Port Lincoln, South Australia.



Roll of Honour, S.A.R. Eyre's Peninsula Division

(60 pages of Pte Frank Gillespie'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



Connected to Private Frank Gillespie:

Older brother – Pte Tom Leslie Gillespie, 3647, 50th Battalion. Enlisted 13th September, 1915. Wounded in action 16th August, 1916. Prisoner of War – 20th December, 1917. Returned & disembarked in Australia on 19th March, 1919. Entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal.

Younger brother - Pte Clive Gillespie, 3698, 32nd Battalion (B. Coy). Enlisted 4th August, 1919. Awarded Military Medal for conspicuous courage and devotion to duty. Returned & disembarked in Australia on 27th May, 1919. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05111.004

Private Frank Gillespie



Newspaper Notices

THE AUSTRALIANS

210th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ILL

Pte F. GILLESPIE, Port Lincoln (dang.)

(*The Register*, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 September, 1916)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

GILLESPIE – ON the 11th August, at Norwich, died of wounds received in action, Franck, the third beloved son of the late T. H. and Mrs A. Gillespie, of Port Lincoln.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 29 September, 1916)

THE WAR

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

.....

Port Lincoln went into mourning on Friday in honor of four soldiers who have been reported as fallen in France. They were Private William H. Miller, employed by the Adelaide S.S. Company, and was secretary of the rifle club, a member of the Flinders Brass Band, and an active worker in the I.O.O.F. M.U. and Masonic Lodge. Bugler Frank Gillespie, who was in the clerical staff of the Railway Department, and was a member of the Flinders Brass Band and Port Lincoln Orchestra, and has two brothers in action. Private E. A. Wather stone, whose two brothers have been killed in action, and who was at one time employed by Mr. Lance Rose, of this town, who is also on active service in France, and Private Bert Pullin who was in the railway gang at Cummins. Several men leave to-night for camp, including Messrs. A. Allen, J. Bryant, A. Woods, M. Ryan, W. Richardson, and E. Garrett.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 26 September, 1916)

THE AUSTRALIANS

235th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte F. GILLESPIE, Port Lincoln (Sept. 10) (prev. rep)

(Observer, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 October, 1916)

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

A very pathetic letter has been received by Mrs. Gillespie, of Port Lincoln, concerning the death of her son, which was the result of injuries received in battle. The letter, which is signed Alfred W. Daynes. P.P.G.M., is as follows:—"I much regret thus seeking your acquaintance, but the circumstances warrant my writing to you. Possibly ere this reaches you, you will have intimation of your sad loss in death of your son in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital from shell shock sustained while on service in France. In my capacity as a member of the board of management of that institution I came across your son in one of the wards, and a day or two before his death, attracted by an Oddfellow's jewel I always wear on my watchguard, he told me that he was a member of the Manchester Unity and had taken some interest in the work at Port Lincoln. I should have liked to have talked with him further on the subject, but I was to be disappointed, for although on three occasions I visited his bed, twice I found him in such a serious condition that I dare not venture on general topics, and once he was calmly sleeping, and I would not wake him. The next day he died (Sunday last). Although everything was done for him, and he was very grateful for the attention paid him, we, who are accustomed to much suffering, knew from the first that there was small hope for him. To-day we buried him in the soldiers' plot of the Norwich Cemetery. He was borne to the Grave by six members of the Royal Field Artillery and the chaplain of the hospital (the Rev. J. Huxly), and, in company with the Grand Master of the Norwich District, M.U. (Bro. J. Andrews), I attended the funeral, as I thought that a brother Oddfellow claimed the respect and sympathy we were able to offer. It was a strange and sad gathering—seven soldiers, two Oddfellows, and the chaplain (also an Oddfellow) by the silent grave of one practically unknown to anyone, in fact, absolutely unknown to all save the chaplain and myself. But we did our best, and I am writing this to let you know that your dear son was not hurried into a lonely grave without the presence of some who honored him as a soldier, and of some who

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honored him as a social worker. My wife desires me to say that she will take on the duty of occasionally visiting the grave and placing a few flowers thereon. I trust that the blow will be sustained by you in the same heroic way in which your son so gallantly met his death, and that the remembrance of the great sacrifice made in the great cause we are fighting for will enable you to look back with hope and pride on the life so untimely ended. One feels some diffidence in writing to a stranger on such a serious matter, but I thought it only right that I should address you and let you know how and where he ended his life, and that he now lies surrounded by many comrades who, like him, have made the sacrifice."

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 13 November, 1916)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

GILLESPIE – In loving memory of my dear cousin, Frank, who died at Norwich, England, from wounds received at Pozieres, 10th September, 1916. He gave his life, his best, his all – Ever remembered by his sincere cousin, Hylda.

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 11 September, 1917)

& *(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 11 September, 1917)*

& *(The Chronicle, Adelaide, South Australia – 15 September, 1917)*

For King and Empire

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

"The path of duty was the way to glory."

..... Pte Frank Gillespie,

(Australian Christian Commonwealth, South Australia – 14 September, 1917)

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 F. Gillespie does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Well Done

Thou Good And Faithful Servant

Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England

Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich contains 533 Commonwealth War Graves.

The cemetery was laid out in 1856 and casualties of the South African War were buried in the oldest part. Nearly half of the 1914-1918 burials are to be found in two military plots; one in the North-Eastern part and the other in the Western part of the burial ground. Ground immediately adjoining the latter was reserved for service burials of the 1939-1945 War and is now combined with it to form the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 War Graves Plot. The Cross of Sacrifice, which honours the servicemen of both Wars who are buried in the cemetery, stands in the plot, and carved upon two of the panels of its base are the dates 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. There are now nearly 350, 1914-1918 and nearly 200, 1939-1945 war casualties commemorated in this site. In addition, a special memorial is erected to one soldier buried among civilian air raid victims in a grave on which it was not possible to erect a headstone.

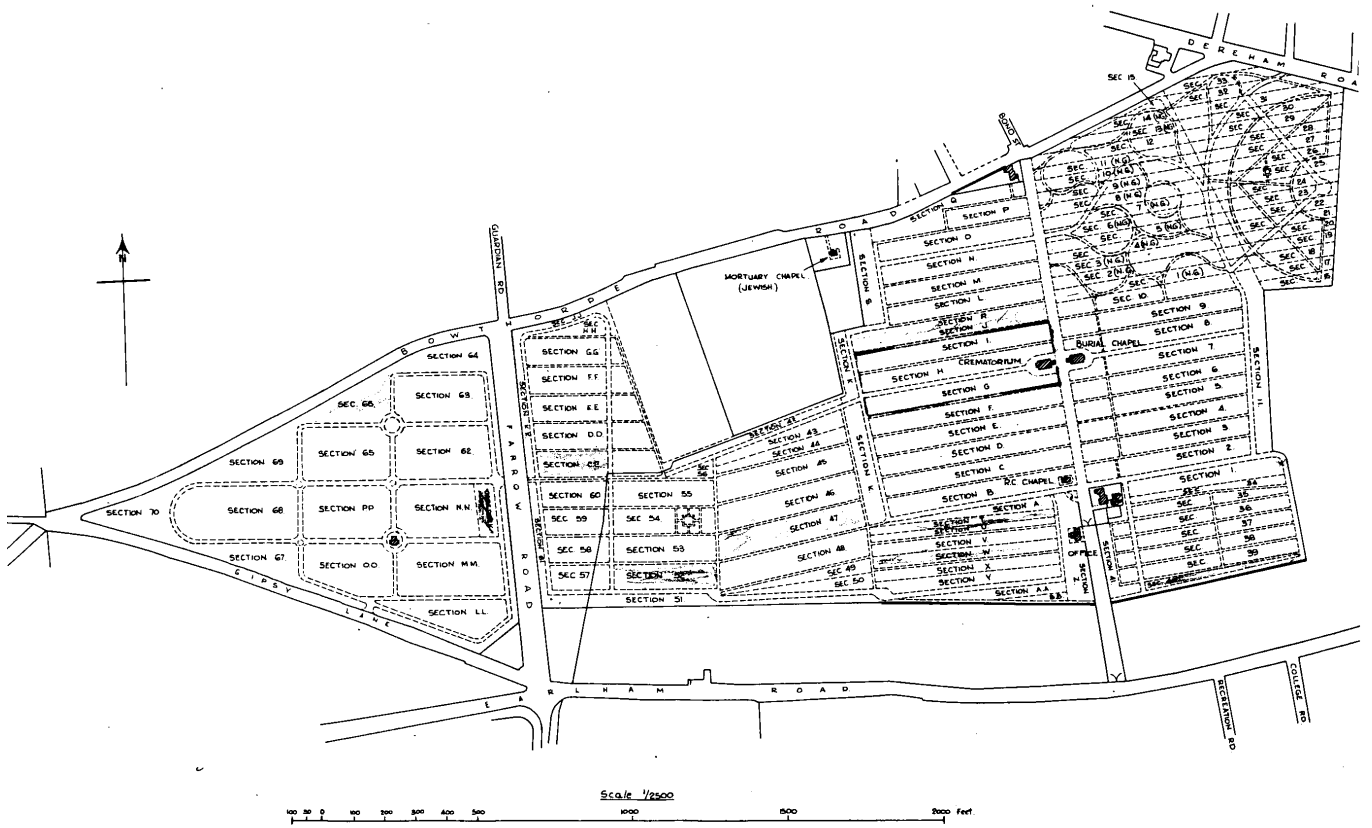
(Information & photo from CWGC)



Photo of Private F. Gillespie's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Earlam Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England.



(Photo by Jennifer Hart – Find a Grave)



Map of Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England

