

**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard,  
Harefield, Middlesex, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3152 PRIVATE**

**M. GRUBNAU**

**46TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**23RD JUNE, 1918**

*Hope To Meet My Pilot*

*Face To Face*

*When I Have Crossed The Bar*

*"Tennyson"*

## Michael GRUBNAU

Michael Grubnau was born at Coolgardie, Western Australia around 1894 to parents Robert & Mary Catharine Grubnau (nee Carroll). He was baptised in the Swan Shire, Western Australia on 6th January, 1903.

Robert Grubnau, father of Michael Grubnau, died in 1896 at Coolgardie, Western Australia.

Michael Grubnau attended State School, James Street, Perth, Western Australia.

The 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division on Kalgoorlie, subdivision of Mount Margaret, Western Australia recorded Michael Grubnau, Stockman, Erlistoun Station.

Michael Grubnau was a 23 year old, single, Stockman, from Earlston Station, via Beria, Western Australia when he enlisted at Blackboy Hill, Western Australia on 22nd November, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3152 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Miss Dora Grubnau, Cottesloe, Western Australia.

Private Michael Grubnau was posted to 93 Depot on 22nd November, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 8th Reinforcements of 46th Battalion on 2nd December, 1916.

Private Michael Grubnau embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Persic (A34)* on 29th December, 1916 with the 46th Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 3rd March, 1917.

Private Michael Grubnau had been written up for an Offence while on Troopship A34 on 19th January, 1917. "*1. Absenting himself from Church Parade 2. Insolence to an N.C.O.*" He was awarded 48 hours detention by Lieutenant A. V. Harefield O.C. 46th Battalion.

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 Michael Grubnau was marched into 12th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire – No. 14 Camp on 4th March, 1917 from Australia.

Private Michael Grubnau was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 31st May, 1917 with ear trouble. He was discharged on 5th June, 1917 & was to report to Depot. Private Grubnau was marched in to 12th Training Battalion from Hospital on 6th June, 1917.

Private Michael Grubnau proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 25th June, 1917 from 12th Training Battalion at Codford. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 26th June, 1917. Private Grubnau was marched out to his Unit on 15th July, 1917 & was taken on strength of 46th Battalion in the Field on 19th July, 1917 from Reinforcements.

Private Michael Grubnau reported sick on 8th September, 1917. He was admitted to 12th Australian Field Ambulance on 8th September, 1917 with Chronic Otitis Media. Private Grubnau was transferred on 9th September, 1917 & admitted to 39th Stationary Hospital at Aires, France. He was discharged on 22nd September, 1917 to Base but was admitted the same day to 2nd Australian General Hospital at Wimereux with Chronic Otitis Media. Private Grubnau was transferred to England on 23rd September, 1917.

### 46th Battalion

The 46th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 24 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its new recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 14th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 14th, the new battalion was composed mostly of men from Victoria, although some of the reinforcements hailed from New South Wales and Western Australia.....

On 11 April it took part in the attack mounted against the heavily defended village of Bullecourt - part of the formidable Hindenburg Line to which the Germans had retreated during February and March. Devoid of surprise, and dependent upon the support of unreliable tanks, the attack had little chance of success; after managing to fight through to it's objectives, the 46th was forced to withdraw with heavy casualties. Later in the year, the focus of the

AIF's operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium where the 46th took part in the battles of Messines and Passchendaele.....

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Private Michael Grubnau was admitted to Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, Norwich, England on 23rd September, 1917 with Otitis Media – severe. He was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, England on 1st October, 1917. Private Grubnau was discharged to furlo from 8th October, 1917 & was to report to Depot at Codford on 22nd October, 1917.

Miss Dora Grubnau, Cottesloe, Western Australia, sister of Private Michael Grubnau, was advised by Base Records on 5th October, 1917 that Private Michael Grubnau was ill. A further communication later that day reported he had been admitted to Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, England on 23rd September with Otitis Media – severe. Miss D. Grubnau was advised by Base Records on 18th October, 1917 that Private Michael Grubnau was convalescent.

Private Michael Grubnau was sent sick to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, on 13th January, 1918 from No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire. He was later admitted to the Hospital – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). Private Grubnau was discharged to Training Depot on 4th February, 1918. He was marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 4th February, 1918 from Hospital.

Private Michael Grubnau was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 11th March, 1918 from No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott.

Private Michael Grubnau was sent sick to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield on 18th April, 1918 from No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth. He was admitted on 19th April, 1918 suffering from Chronic Suppurative Otitis Media.

Mrs D. Grubnau, Cottesloe, Western Australia, was advised by Base Records on 25th May, 1918 that Private Michael Grubnau was seriously ill – progress report expected. Advice was received later on 25th May, 1918 stating that Private Michael Grubnau had been admitted to First Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, England on 19th April – chronic Suppurative Otitis Media & was seriously ill on 3rd May.

Miss Dora Grubnau, Cottesloe, Western Australia, was advised on 6th June, 1918 by Base Records that Private Michael Grubnau's condition was stationary. She was advised on 20th June, 1918 that Private Michael Grubnau had Tubercle of Lung & was dangerously ill on 10th June – further progress report expected.

Private Michael Grubnau died at 7.55 am on 23rd June, 1918 at 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from (primary) Tubercle of Lung; (secondary) Tubercle of Middle Ear.

A death for Michael Grubnau, aged 24, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private Michael Grubnau was buried at 10.30 am on 25th June, 1918 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Plot number Aust. 55 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Michael Grubnau - *Coffin was good condition. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag. The officer in charge was Hon. Capt, & Qr. Mtr. J. F. S. Murray, "M.C." Chaplains Rec A. P. Bladen and T. Terry officiated at the graveside, A few of the staff and patients of the hospital attended. A wreath was given by C. Billyard-Leake Esq., Harefield. Administrative Headquarters A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Miss D. Grubnau, Overton Lodge, Broome St., Cottesloe, Western Australia, wrote to Base Records on 2nd September, 1918 requesting two Death Certificates for her brother Private Michael Grubnau, No. 3152, 46th Battalion, "...as I have to forward one to the Supreme Court & I would like one for myself to keep..."

Base Records replied to Miss D. Grubnau on 14th September, 1918 enclosing a certificate of death of the late No. 3152 Private Michael Grubnau, 46th Battalion. "...A Certificate of report of Death was forwarded to you on 3rd instant."

Dora Grubnau, sister of the late Private Michael Grubnau & nominated as the next-of-kin, signed as receipt for the personal effects of her late brother on 15th January, 1919

Base Records contacted Miss D. Grubnau, Overton Lodge, Broome St., Cottesloe, Western Australia on 11th May, 1921 stating that she was noted on the records of the late No. 3152 Private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion as the next of kin, but were enquiring if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked if his mother was alive or if he had any brother (stating the eldest) or any sister older than her (stating the eldest) due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Laura Grubnau, Hastings, No. 64 Brome Street, Cottesloe, wrote to Base Records on 27th May, 1921: "*Your letter to hand about my brother the late No 3152 Private M. Grubnau who left me as next of kin as I was his only single sister. We have found out since his death that we have a Mother living. She has been no Mother to any of us since the boy was 2 ½ years old for the last twenty three years. It is two years ago since we found out she was alive we thought she must have been dead but our first meeting was on July 9th two years ago when my brother returned on the boat July 8th by the Somila Sgt T. Grubnau, she saw his name in the paper. So I think my eldest sister who was the only Mother he had is entitled to his War Medal but of course that is for you to say. My Mother's address is Mrs M. Scales 406 Newcastle Street, Perth. My eldest sister's address is Mrs H. Eckett, Bay Road, North Fremantle. This statement is perfectly true.*"

Base Records wrote to Mr T. Grubnau, M.M., (late 11th Btn), c/o Miss L. Grubnau, 64 Broome Street, Cottesloe, W.A., on 20th June, 1921 with the following: "*I understand you are the only surviving brother of the late No. 3152 Private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion, and shall be glad to learn whether you desire that deceased's war medals shall be sent to you, or whether you would care to authorize me to hand them over to your eldest sister, Miss Laura Grubnau, who was nominated as next-of-kin. I understand your mother is alive, but from your sister's statement it would appear that she has no moral rights to these mementos. I shall be glad if you can confirm this at the same time that you advise me of the disposal of the medals..*"

T. Grubnau, No 1035, 11th Battalion, 193 Oxford St, Leederville, replied to Base Records in July, 1921 with the following: "*... I wish to state my Mother has no claim on them as we had no idea of her whereabouts for over twenty years. I would be very grateful to you if you would forward his war decorations to me at your earliest opportunity.*"

Base Records replied to Mr T. Grubnau on 4th August, 1921 with the following: "*....and am prepared to hand over to you the war medals, etc. of your brother, the late No. 3152, private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion, but only on the distinct understanding that they will be preserved with due care as memorials of his service, and produced to this Department should your mother at any time prefer a claim which his upheld by the Minister. If you are agreeable to accept them under these conditions, kindly complete the attached Declaration before a J. P., and return to me at your earliest convenience.*"

Mr Theodore Grubnau, M.M. of 193 Oxford Street, Leederville, Western Australia signed at Statutory Declaration on 15th August, 1921 stating he "*will preserve with due care, any war medals or other items due on account of the services rendered by my brother, the late No. 3152, Private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, and will produce them to the Department of Defence upon receipt of its demand in writing, should they be required for the purpose of being handed to someone having prior claims.*"

Base Records wrote to Mrs F. Eckett, Bay Road, North Fremantle, Western Australia, on 5th November, 1921, asking for the present address of Mr T. Grubnau, brother of the late No. 3152 Private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion, "*...as a communication forwarded to him at 193 Oxford Street, Leederville, W.A., has been returned unclaimed.*"

Base Records wrote to Mrs A. Eckett, Bay Road, North Fremantle, Western Australia, on 23rd November, 1921 acknowledging receipt of her communication on 14th November. "*A memorial Scroll in respect of the late soldier was transmitted to Mr T. Grubnau, M.M., but the covering letter and King's Message (attached hereto) were returned unclaimed from 193 Oxford Street, Leederville, W.A. As the Scroll has not been returned, I shall be obliged if enquiries be made at the Leederville Post Office. When the Memento has been located kindly request your bother to acknowledge receipt of same.*"

5th Military District Base, Perth, Western Australia wrote to Base Records on 16th December, 1921 regarding the late 3152 Private M. Grubnau, 46th Battalion stating *"The attached memo has been handed into this office and verbal notification given that the present address of Mr T. Grubnau is 26 Fairfield St, Mt. Hawthorn, W.A."*

Private Michael Grubnau was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Grubnau's brother – Mr T. Grubnau M.M., (under bond) as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921. Plaque sent November, 1922 & signed for as receipt on 28th November, 1922).

A Memo located in Service Record file of the late Private Michael Grubnau reads *"Communication, dated 28.11.22, received from Mr T. Grubnau, 30 Raglan Street, Mt. Lawley, W.A., re gratuity. Referred to D.F.O., 5th D.B., on 12.12.22. Change of address noted, and formal acknowledgement sent."*

Miss M. A. Grubnau, 25 Willis Street, Victoria Park, Western Australian, wrote to Base Records on 23rd February, 1948, asking *"...if the Gratuity Bond of Michael Mitchell Grubnau of the 46th Btn & whose No was 3152 has been collected as yet, as you see me being my Mother's Trustee she told me that it had to be collected & that I was insisted to it, as you see my Mother has passed away & am in great need of it, so will you please look into this matter for me & let me know as soon as possible, thanking you for an early reply. P.S. Gratuity Bond is £11 Pounds."*

Base Records replied to Miss M. A. Grubnau on 27th February, 1948 stating *"... the issue of the War Gratuity in respect of the abovenamed, and in reply you are advised all matter relating to finance are, in the case of this soldier, dealt with by the District Finance Officer, District Accounts Office, Swan Barracks, Perth, to whom you should direct your enquiry."*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Michael Grubnau– service number 3152, of 46th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Robert & Mary Grubnau, of Coolgardie, Western Australia.

Private M. Grubnau is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 141.



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

M. Grubnau & his brother T. Grubnau are both remembered on the Swan Boys Orphanage Honour Board, located at 58 Yule Avenue, Swanleigh, Middle Swan, Western Australia.



### Swan Boys Orphanage Honour Board

(Photo from Monument Australia – Lara Lynch)

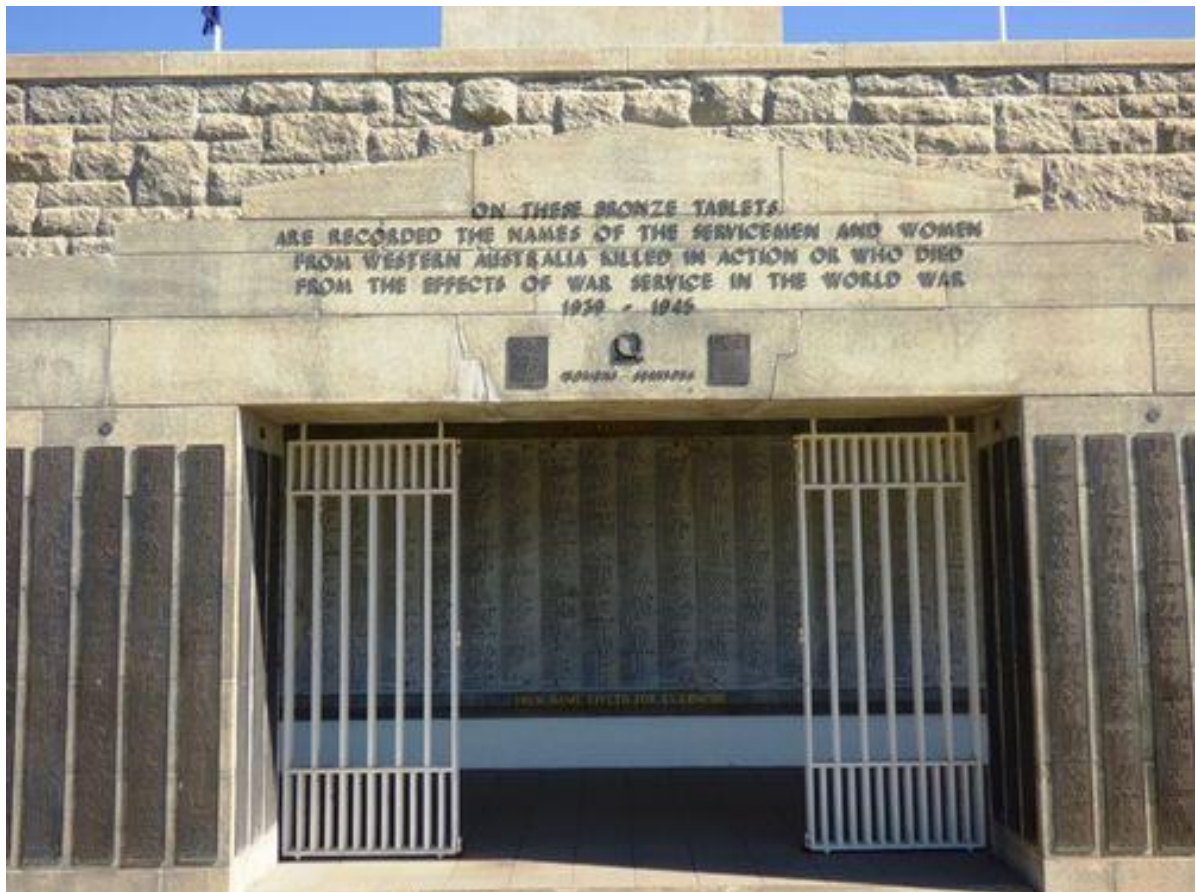
M. Grubnau is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica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



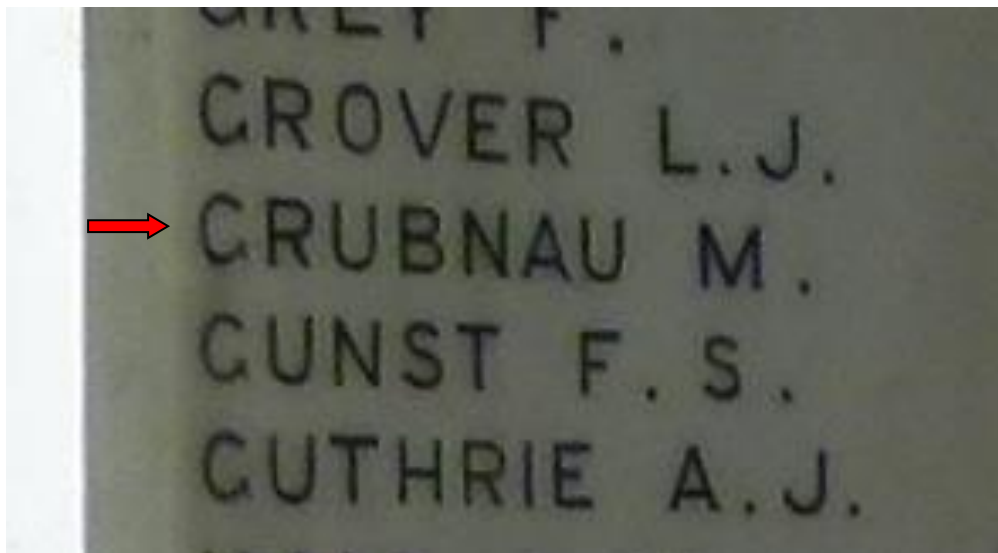
**Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)  
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names**

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





Other Corps Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)





The Laverton War Memorial, located in Don Leahy Memorial Park, MacPherson Place, Laverton, Western Australia does not list individual names. Michael Grubnau was a Stockman at Earlston Station, via Beria, Western Australia when he enlisted. Beria is now an abandoned town in the Goldfields-Esperence region of Western Australia, 8 klms north of Laverton.



Laverton War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia)

M. Grubnau is remembered on the Australian Soldiers' Memorial in St. Mary the Virgin Church, Church Hill, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield (Photo from War Memorials Online – B. Wood)



(72 pages of Private Michael Grubnau'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**

### **W.A. Casualties**

#### **415th OFFICIAL LIST**

#### **DIED, OTHER CAUSES**

Michael Grubnau, Cottesloe, illness, previously reported ill, second occasion.

(*The Daily News*, Perth, Western Australia – 8 July, 1918)

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### **PROBATES AND ADMINISTRATIONS**

The following list was issued from the Supreme Court yesterday:-

Probates.

Michael Grubnau, late of Laverton to Laura Grubnau, £139

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 27 September, 1918)

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## IN MEMORIAM

GRUBNAU – In sad but loving memory of my dearly beloved brother Matt (late 46th Battalion), who died in Harefield Hospital, 23rd June, 1917.

-Inserted by his sorrowing brother, Theo. R. Grubnau.

*(Kalgoorlie Miner, Western Australia – 22 June, 1920)*

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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)*

Private M. Grubnau does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*Hope To Meet My Pilot Face To Face*

*When I Have Crossed The Bar*

*“Tennyson”*

### **St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England**

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield contains 126 Commonwealth War Graves.

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Harefield (St. Mary) Churchyard contains war graves from both world wars. There are 120 First World War graves, mostly those of Australians who died in No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park. Uniquely, their graves are marked by scroll shaped headstones, chosen by the staff and patients at the hospital. In the centre of the Australian plot stands a memorial obelisk which was erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, late Governor of Tasmania and of Western Australia, and Mr. C.A.M. Billyard-Leake, of Harefield Park. The churchyard also contains six graves of the Second World War.

*(Information & photos from CWGC)*



**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield**





St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield



THE ANZAC CEMETERY, HAREFIELD, LAWRENCE, PHOTO

Photo of Private M. Grubnau's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)*



**St Mary the Virgin Church, Harefield** (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield** (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photos courtesy of Peter Bennett)

