

# Epsom Cemetery, Surrey

## War Graves



*Lest We Forget*

## World War 1



**3325A PRIVATE**

**T. HARRISON**

**60TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**28TH JULY, 1916 Age 22**

## Thomas HARRISON

Thomas Harrison was born at Granville, Sydney, NSW to parents Thomas & Sophia Jessie Harrison (nee Poulter). His birth was registered in 1894 in Granville, Sydney, NSW.

Thomas Harrison attended Liverpool Superior Public School. Thomas Harrison had belonged to School Cadets for 2 years.

Thomas Harrison was a 22 year old, single, Boiler's Assistant from Erskineville, Sydney, NSW when he enlisted at Warwick Farm Depot, Sydney on 6th September, 1915 with the 4th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3325 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Thomas Harrison of 2 Ada Villa, Erskineville Road, Erskineville, Sydney, NSW.

Private Thomas Harrison was assigned to "D" Company, 3rd Battalion from 7th to 13th September, 1915. He was transferred to 11th Reinforcements, 4th Battalion on 14th September, 1915.

Private Thomas Harrison embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Port Lincoln (A17)* on 13th October, 1915.

Private Thomas Harrison was allotted & proceeded to join the 53rd Battalion at Zeitoun on 16th February, 1916. He was taken on strength with 53rd Battalion on 16th February, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir.

Private Thomas Harrison's regimental/service number was altered from 3325 to 3325A on 9th April, 1916 at Ismailia.

Private Thomas Harrison was taken on strength with 60th Battalion at Ferry Post on 18th May, 1916.

Private Thomas Harrison embarked from Alexandria per *Kinfauns Castle* on 19th June, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 29th June, 1916.

Private Thomas Harrison was wounded in action in France on 19th July, 1916. He was transferred to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne on 22nd July, 1916.

### **60th Battalion**

The 60th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 24th February, 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 8th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. The majority of both groups were Victorians. The new battalion formed part of the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

Having only arrived in France on 28th June, the 60th became embroiled in its first major battle on the Western Front on 19th July, 1916 without the benefit of an introduction to the trenches in a "quiet" sector. The battle of Fromelles was a disaster for the battalion. In a single day, it was virtually wiped out, suffering 757 casualties. These losses meant the battalion saw little further offensive action in 1916.

*(Information from Australian War Memorial)*

Private Thomas Harrison embarked for England per Hospital Ship *St. Denis* on 22nd July, 1916.

Private Thomas Harrison was admitted to the County of London War Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England on 23rd July, 1916 with gunshot wound to left thigh, compound fracture of femur, gunshot wound to right forearm, gunshot wound to chest wall (Gas infection). His condition was reported as dangerously ill. The Hospital Admissions form reads in part: "*Patient was admitted from France with multiple wounds & a severe gas infection & gangrene of the thigh in the upper third extending on to the buttock (left)...The wound in right arm & chest were both badly infected with gas. It was only his pluck that kept him alive as long in the face of such an extensive virulent infection. He died 28th-7-16 from toxemia.*"

Private Thomas Harrison died at 5.45 pm on 28th July, 1916 at County of London War Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England from wounds received in action in France – 1. gunshot wound to left thigh & 2. Malignant Oedema. He was last attached to "C" Company, 60th Battalion. (Note: A memo in the Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Pte

Thomas Harrison states his date of death incorrectly as 29th July, 1916. This date is also quoted in some of the forms in the Service Record file, however the Hospital Admissions form & several others state the date as 28th July, 1916.)

A death for Thomas Harrison, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Epsom, Surrey.

Private Thomas Harrison was buried on 2nd August, 1916 in Epsom Cemetery, Surrey – Screen Wall. K. 82. There are no headstones for this section of the Cemetery, however those buried have their names on a bronze plaque located on the Screen Wall which is directly in front of the lawned area of burials. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

According to information provided by Pte Thomas Harrison's father – Mr T. Harrison, for the Roll of Honour - *"Left Sydney with 4th Battalion 11th Reinforcement and was transferred from 4th to 53rd Battalion in Egypt. Was classed at an Expert 'Boom' (should be Bomb) thrower and was transferred to 60th Battalion and went to France. Was wounded at Armentieres and sent to Epsom Hospital in England. He died on 28th July, 1916."*

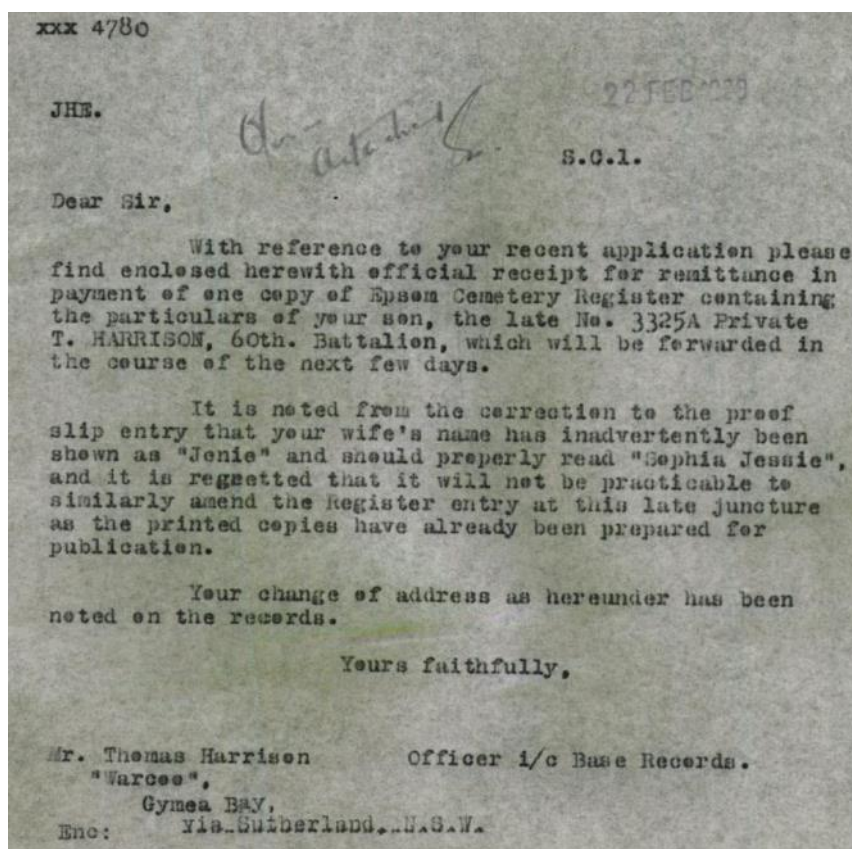
Pte Thomas Harrison was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Harrison's father – Mr T. Harrison, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1921).



**Memorial Plaque (also known as Death Penny) for Pte T. Harrison**

Mr T. Harrison, father of late Pte Thomas Harrison, received a letter from Base Records, dated 6th May, 1925, advising him that the Chairman of the Epsom Urban District Council had advised that on the 17th May *"there will be unveiled and dedicated the Great War Cross erected by the Imperial War Graves Commission to the soldiers, sailors and airmen, who died in the service of their King and Country and who are buried in the Epsom Cemetery..... A similar notification is being forwarded to next-of-kin of all members of the Australian Imperial Force whose remains are interred in the abovenamed cemetery, as it is felt that the proposed ceremony will be of special interest to the relatives concerned, and an assurance that the work of perpetuating the memory of our fallen is being carried out with the reverent care and attention."*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Harrison – service number 3325A, aged 22, of 60th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas and Jenie Harrison, of 2 Ada Villas, Erskineville Rd, Erskineville, Sydney, New South Wales. Born at Granville, New South Wales. (Note: CWGC has incorrectly named the mother of Pte Thomas Harrison as “Jenie”. It should be “Sophia Jessie”. See image below.)



Page 21 of Pte Thomas Harrison's Service Record file.

Private T. Harrison is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 170.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



T. Harrison is remembered on the Erskineville Town Hall Honour Roll, located in the Erskineville Town Hall, 104 Erskineville Road, Erskineville, Sydney, NSW.



### Erskineville Town Hall Honour Roll

(Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW – Laila Ellmoos & Paul Patterson)

(35 pages of Pte Thomas Harrison'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



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P08624.393

**Private Thomas Harrison**



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

HARRISON – Private Thomas Harrison, aged 22 years, died Epsom, July 29, 1916, previously reported dangerously ill and gunshot wounds. Dearly loved eldest son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Harrison, Erskineville, and brother Mrs James Kelly, Liverpool, Mrs Henry Scott, Marrickville, William and Edward and Iris Ulonga Harrison. He gave his life gloriously, and died a hero.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney, NSW – 12 August, 1916)*

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### **PRICE OF FREEDOM**

#### **140 DEAD**

#### **BIG CASUALTY LIST**

#### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

#### **DIED – CAUSE NOT STATED**

Pte T. HARRISON, Erskineville (previously reported wounded and dangerously ill)

*(The Sun, Sydney, NSW – 13 August, 1916)*

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### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

HARRISON – Private Thomas Harrison, aged 22 years, died from gunshot wounds received in France, July 29, 1916, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Harrison, Erskineville, and nephew of Mrs J. Dunn and Mrs Campling, Dulwich Hill. He gave his life for us to live.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney, NSW – 16 August, 1916)*

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### **AUSTRALIANS KILLED IN FRANCE**



PTE THOMAS HARRISON (Erskineville),  
Died of wounds

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney, NSW – 25 August, 1916)*

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## **Epsom Cemetery, Surrey, England**

Epsom Cemetery, Surrey contains 231 War Burials. There are 182 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and 49 of the 1939-1945 war here. 149 of the 1914-18 war burials are located in Plot K. These are commemorated at the North end of the plot on a Screen Wall, upon which are bronze panels bearing the names of those buried in the plot. The bronze panels were provided from a fund held by the Horton (County of London) War Hospital, the Horton Hospital, the Manor (County of London) War Hospital and the Woodcote Park Military Convalescent Hospital.

*(Information from CWGC)*

There are six soldiers buried in Epsom Cemetery, Surrey who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1. These six soldiers are named on bronze panels on the Screen Wall, within Plot K of the Cemetery. The bronze panels on the Screen Wall have the name, service number, rank, date of death, age & plot number. The plot numbers on the bronze plaques correspond to plaques located in the lawn immediately in front of the Screen Wall. There are 110 plaques on the lawn which do not have individual headstones, unlike most other Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries.



**Screen Wall with named bronze panels within Plot K of Epsom Cemetery, Surrey**

*(Photos courtesy of Kevin Loughnane - Great War Forum)*





Example showing Pte Cummings in Plot 239 & the Numbered Lawn Plaques in front of Screen Wall

Arrow showing Pte Thomas Harrison's Plot number 82  
 (Note there are 3 plots numbered 82)



Screen Wall



Cross of Sacrifice

665	690	737	225	90	91	236	746	701	654
664	691	736	226	89	92	237	745	702	653
663	692	735	227	88	93	238	744	703	652
662	693	734	228	87	94	239	743	704	651
661	694	733	229	86	95	240	742	705	690
660	695	732	230	85	96	241	741	706	649
659	696	731	231	84	97	242	740	707	648
658	697	730	232	83	98	243	739	708	647
657	698	729	233	82 *	99	244	738	709	646
656	699	728	234	82 *	100	245	737	710	645
655	700	727	235	82 *	101	246	736	711	644



Lawned plots

Not to scale



Aerial view of the Screen Wall burials

Photo of Pte T. Harrison's name on the bronze panels on the Screen Wall in Epsom Cemetery, Surrey, England.

