

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

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**213 SERJEANT**

**ALEC MCK. HEPBURN**

**14TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**12TH NOVEMBER, 1917 Age 24**

*Our Dear Boy*

## Alec McKenzie HEPBURN

Alec McKenzie Hepburn was born at Newport, near Williamstown, Victoria in 1893 to parents James & Margaret J. Hepburn (nee Stone).

Alec McKenzie Hepburn attended North Williamstown State School, Victoria.

Alec McKenzie Hepburn was a 21 year old, single, Clerk from 18 Oakbank Street, Newport, Victoria when he enlisted on 14th September, 1914 in Melbourne, Victoria with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 213 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs M. Hepburn, 18 Oakbank Street, Newport, Victoria. Alec Hepburn stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 1 ½ years with Victoria Rifles 51st Infantry but had left the district. His enlistment was “*subject to teeth being attended to.*”

Private Alec McKenzie Hepburn was posted to 14th Battalion on 1st October, 1914 for recruit training & was promoted to Corporal the same day.

Corporal McKenzie Hepburn (name as per Embarkation Roll) embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ulysses* (A38) on 22nd December, 1914 with the 14th Infantry Battalion “B” Company.

Corporal Alec McKenzie Hepburn was promoted to Lance Sergeant on 1st February, 1915. He proceeded to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) at Gallipoli on 12th April, 1915.

Lance Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was wounded in action at Dardanelles on 3rd May, 1915 with G.S.W. (Gunshot wound/s) to wrist & shoulder. He was admitted to Hospital at Tel-el-Kebir on 7th May, 1915. Lance Sergeant Hepburn was transferred as fit to Sidi Gaber on 17th July, 1915.

### 14th Battalion

The Headquarters of the 14th Battalion opened at an office at 178 Collins Street, Melbourne in the last week of September 1914. On 1 October it relocated to Broadmeadows Camp where the battalion's recruits, principally from Melbourne and its suburbs, were taken on strength and trained. With the 13th, 15th and 16th Battalions, the 14th formed the 4th Brigade commanded by Colonel John Monash. It embarked for overseas on 22 December and, after a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, arrived in Egypt on 31 January 1915. In Egypt, the 4th Brigade became part of the New Zealand and Australian Division with which it would serve at Gallipoli.

The 4th Brigade landed at ANZAC Cove on the afternoon of 25 April 1915. On 19 May the Turks launched a massive counter-attack.....

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

### War Diary – 14th Battalion

*3rd May, 1915 - “Courtney's Post”*

*Our position remained fairly quiet all day, the main efforts of the enemy being directed against the left of No 3 Section of Defence which had advanced during the night. [One shrapnel shell exploded in our trench in the early morning seriously wounded one officer and killing one man.] The Platoon holding the ridge on left of Quinns position returned to bivouac about 8.30 pm. Having successfully held on all day with much opposition, Quiet during night.*

*About 12 midnight one Coy, was sent to support Quinn's Post as an attack was expected. Ut was sent back shortly afterwards as the attack was not made.*

*Strength:- 18 Officers 654 Others*

*Casualties:- Killed 12 other ranks*

*Wounded – 1 Officer 30 other ranks Lieut B. Combes chest.*

*(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)*

The Secretary of Defence contacted Mrs M. Hepburn, 24 Oakbank St, Newport, Victoria, mother of Corporal Alex McKenzie Hepburn, on 24th May, 1915 advising that her son Lance Sergeant A. M. Hepburn had been wounded.

Lance Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was in charge of Kits at Cairo from 14th December, 1915.

Lance Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was marched in to Serapeum & rejoined his Unit on 7th May, 1916 from Base Kit Stores.

Lance Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 1st June, 1915. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 8th June, 1916.

Lance Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was to be Sergeant while at Baillieu from 12th June, 1916– vice Sergeant Ayre evacuated sick & to date from 2nd June, 1916.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was wounded in action in France on 8th August, 1916. He was admitted to 3rd Field Ambulance on 9th August, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Shoulder. Sergeant Hepburn was transferred & admitted to 8th Stationary Hospital at Wimereux on 10th August, 1916. He embarked for England from Boulogne on 16th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen*.

#### **14th Battalion**

.... After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt. While there, the AIF expanded and was reorganised. The 14th Battalion was split and provided experienced soldiers for the 46th Battalion. The 4th Brigade was combined with the 12th and 13th Brigades to form the 4th Australian Division.

In June 1916 they sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in August 1916.....

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

#### War Diary – 14th Battalion

*8th August, 1916 – Pozieres*

*2 am Strength 30 Officers 803 others. Party of 20.*

*Enemy charged our right flank but were dispersed by our Lewis Gun fire. Enemy artillery fire quieter during the day. A. Coy relieved D Coy in firing line and D Coy relieved C Coy in support. Relief complete by 5.30 pm. Our artillery opened heavy bombardment on enemy trenches at 9.20 pm.*

*9.23 pm Barrage lifted & 15 Bn advanced along trench R34 B 12 to B 24. 14 Bn providing covering party for this and left flank swung forward from R34 B 12. B 60 to B 24. B 60 and party dug trenches from R34 B 12 to B 24 also made strong points between R34 B 24 & B 60 connected by sap.*

*(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)*

Base Records advised Mrs M. Hepburn, 18 Oakbank Street, Newport, Victoria, mother of Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn, on 8th August, 1916 that he had been wounded, second occasion.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was admitted to War Hospital at Keighley, England on 17th August, 1916 with shrapnel wound to Buttocks (as listed on Casualty Form – Active Service) with G.S.W. to Shoulder (as listed on Hospital Admissions from).

Base Records advised Mrs M. Hepburn, 18 Oakbank Street, Newport, Victoria, mother of Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn, on 22nd September, 1916 that Sergeant A. McK. Hepburn had been admitted to War Hospital at Keighley on 17th August, 1916 suffering from gunshot wound to buttock (severe). She was advised on 9th October, 1916 that Sergeant A. McK. Hepburn was still progressing favourably.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was transferred to 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford on 3rd November, 1916 with G.S.W. to Shoulder & Buttocks. He was placed on Supernumerary List from 8th November, 1916.

Base Records advised Mrs M. Hepburn on 13th November, 1916 that Sergeant A. McK. Hepburn was convalescent.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was discharged to Furlo from 3rd January, 1917 to 18th January, 1917 & was then to report to Wareham. He was taken on strength of No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham, Dorset on 15th January, 1917 from Headquarters London, after Furlough.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was transferred to 65th Battalion from 14th Battalion on 23rd March, 1917 while posted at Wareham. He was transferred back to 14th Battalion on 29th April, 1917.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 29th April, 1917 from Infantry Draft Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England to reinforce 14th Battalion. He joined 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 30th April, 1917.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn reported sick on 1st May, 1917 & was admitted to 26th General Hospital at Etaples, France with Phimosi. He was transferred to 6th Convalescent Depot on 19th May, 1917 then re-admitted to 26th General Hospital on 30th May, 1917 for circumcision. Sergeant Hepburn was transferred to England on 12th July, 1917 on Princess Elizabeth.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was admitted to 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell, London, England on 12th July, 1917 – P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin).

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn died at 10.15 pm on 12th November, 1917 at 1st London General Hospital, Camberwell, London, England from Dysentery.

A death for Alec Mck Hepburn, aged 24, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, London, England.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was buried at 1.30 pm on 20th November, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 180064.

*From the burial report of Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn - Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian flag. Band, Firing Party, Buglers and Pallbearers were supplied by the 3rd London Regiment (Reserve Bn) stationed at Blackdown, near Farnborough. The grave will be turfed immediately and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

*Names of relatives & friends present at the Funeral – (Brother) Lieutenant E. A. Hepburn, 31st Battalion, A.I.F., France. (Friends) Sister F. S. Oldfield, Territorial Nursing Home, and Sister A. L. McDermott, 84 London Force Red Cross.*

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Hepburn, 2 Airlie St., Elsternwick, Victoria on 29th March, 1923 stating that the site of his son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row B Grave 20.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – XI. B. 20. Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn requested in his Will, dated 28th February, 1917, that "*in the vent of my death while on Active Service I give the whole of my property & effects to my Mother, Mrs Margaret Jane Hepburn, or in the event of her death to my brother James McLachlan Hepburn.*"

A War Pension was granted to Margaret J. Hepburn, 24 Oakbank St, Newport, mother of the late Corporal (rank as listed on Pension slip) Alec McKenzie Hepburn, in the cum of 40/- per fortnight as from 15th January, 1918.

An enquiry was received at Base Records on 24th August, 1917 for the Death Certificate of the late No. 213 A. M. Hepburn, 14th Battalion, to be posted to Mrs M. Hepburn, 24 Oakbank St, Newport, Victoria for Lodge.

Another enquiry was received on 28th December, 1917 for the Death Certificate of the late No. 213 A. M. Hepburn, 14th Battalion, to be posted to Mrs M. Hepburn, 24 Bank St, Newport, Victoria.

Base Records replied by mail on 4th January, 1918 advising that *"the necessary official confirming documents covering the report of death of No. 213, Private A. M. Hepburn, 14th Battalion, have not yet been received from abroad. Your request, however, has been noted for compliance at the earliest possible date."*

Base Records replied to Mrs M. Hepburn on 4th February, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of death of her son, the late No. 213 Private Alec McKenzie Hepburn, 14th Battalion (rank as listed in letter).

Henderson & Ball, Solicitors, Melbourne, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 23rd January, 1918 requesting the official Certificate of Death for Sergeant Alex. McKenzie Hepburn.

Base Records replied to Messrs Henderson & Ball, Solicitors, on 4th February, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 213 Private Alex McKenzie Hepburn.

Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sergeant Hepburn's father – Mr J. Hepburn, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn – service number 213, aged 24, of 14th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of James & Margaret J. Hepburn, of 2 Airlie St., Elsternwick, Victoria, Australia.

Sergeant A. M. Hepburn is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 72.



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

A. McK. Hepburn is remembered on Williamstown Cenotaph, located at Ferguson Street & Nelson Place Roundabout, Williamstown, Victoria.



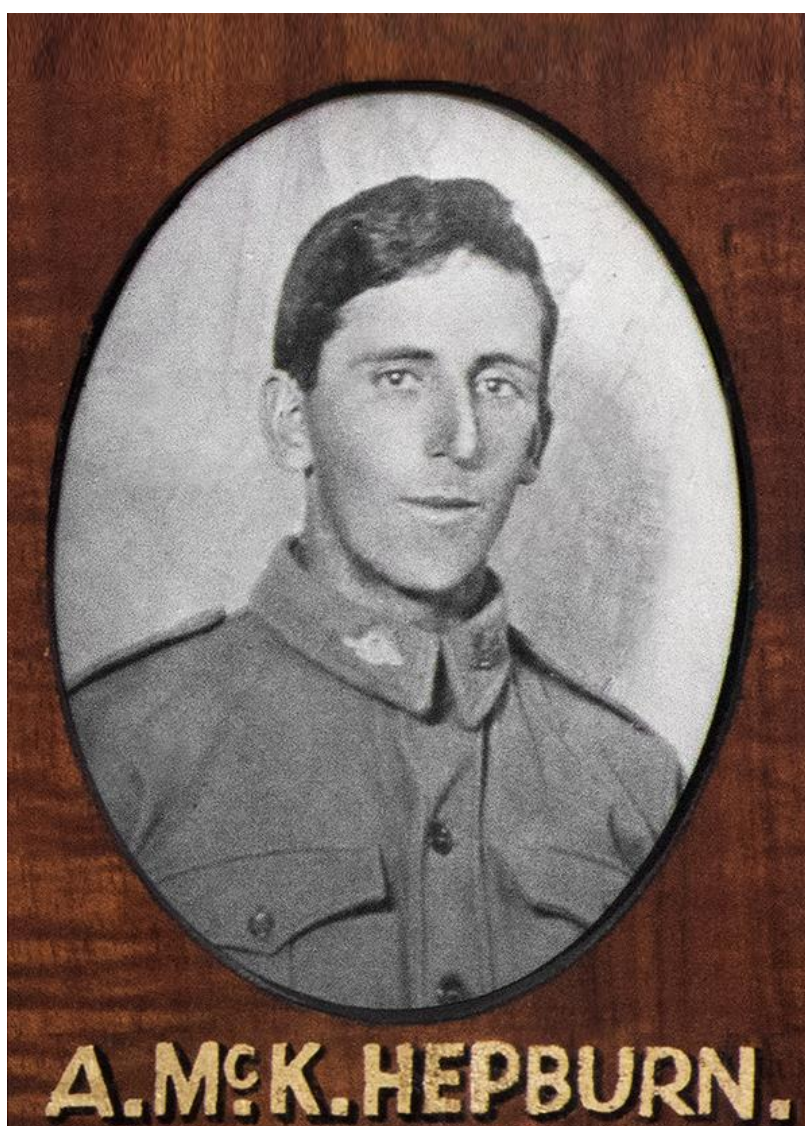
Williamstown Cenotaph (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Brian Rowe)



A. McK. Hepburn is remembered on Williamstown Pictorial Honour Board, located at Williamstown Town Hall, 104 Ferguson Street, Williamstown, Victoria.



**Williamstown Pictorial Honour Board** (Photo from Sons of Williamstown)



The Newport War Memorial, located at Mason Street, Newport, Victoria, does not list individual names.



**Newport War Memorial** (Photo from VWMA)

(75 pages of Sergeant Alec McKenzie Hepburn'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**

### **AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

WOUNDED

VICTORIA

L. Sgt HEPBURN, A.M., 14th Batt., Newport, Vic.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 29 May, 1915)

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### **A NEWPORT SERGEANT**

Lance-sergt. A. Hepburn, of Oakbank street, Newport, writes briefly to his parents as follows:—"Long before this reaches you you will have seen in the papers that I am very early among the list of the wounded. We had only been in the firing line one week when I caught it. We had taken a ridge about 50 yards in front of our position by a bayonet charge on Sunday night, but by daylight on Monday we found that we were between cross machine gun fire by the Turks on our right and left flanks, and as we could not get up ammunition or reinforcements to the small trench we



were forced to retire, and as we were going they got me twice—once through the right wrist (which accounts for the writing), just above the bone—and one in the left shoulder, but the bullet came straight out, leaving a clean cut. They are going on real well, and by the time you get this I will be ready to get back to it again. We are getting treated well here. We have an English sister, and all the rest are Egyptians, doctor included, and he is a very good surgeon. We have heaps of visitors and plenty of good things sent us, including oranges from the Governor's own garden—and they are oranges. We came to Alexandria by the Indian hospital ship Gascon, and then by the hospital train here. There are 50 of us, and I am the only one of the 14th Battalion here."

*(Williamstown Chronicle, Victoria – 26 June, 1915)*

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## **AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

### **216th AND 217th LISTS ISSUED**

WOUNDED

VICTORIA

Sgt A. McK. HEPBURN, Newport.

*(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 21 September, 1916)*

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### **DIED ON SERVICE**

HEPBURN – On the 12th November, at Camberwell Hospital, London, Sergeant Alex. McKenzie, second and dearly loved son of Mr and Mrs J. Hepburn, 24 Oakbank street, Newport, aged 24 years. Enlisted 11th September, 1914.

*(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 19 November, 1917)*

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### **DIED ON SERVICE**

HEPBURN – A tribute of deep respect and esteem to our late fellow-employee, Sgt. Alex. McKenzie Hepburn, who died of illness in London on the 12th November, after being twice wounded in action.

One of the Anzac heroes.

-(Inserted by the employees of Varley's Pty Ltd.)

*(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 November, 1917)*

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### **DIED ON SERVICE**

HEPBURN – On the 12th November, at Camberwell Hospital, London, Sergeant Alec McKenzie, dearly loved second of J. and M. Hepburn, 24 Oakbank street, Newport and brother of Lieut. E. A. (on active service abroad) and Jim. Wounded on Gallipoli and in France. Aged 24 years.

-Inserted by Jim.

*(Williamstown Chronicle, Victoria – 24 November, 1917)*

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## AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS Nos. 371 and 372

Victoria

### DIED OF ILLNESS

HEPBURN, A. M., Newport, 12/11/17

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 18 December, 1917)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### ON ACTIVE SERVICE

HEPBURN – In loving memory of Sergt. Alex McKenzie Hepburn, who died in 1st Lon. Gen. Hospital on November 12th, 1917, dearly loved second son of J. and M. Hepburn, and loved brother of Lieut. E. A. (on active service) and J. M.

Our Anzac.

(*Williamstown Chronicle*, Victoria – 9 November, 1918) & (*Footscray Chronicle*, Victoria – 9 November, 1918) &

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 12 November, 1918)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

HEPBURN – In loving memory of Sergeant Alex McKenzie Hepburn, 14th Batt., loved son of James and Margaret Hepburn, and brother of Lieutenant E. A. and J. M. Hepburn, who died in 1st London General Hospital, 12th November, 1917, after 3 years' service.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 12 November, 1920)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

HEPBURN – In loving memory of Sgt A. M. Hepburn, 14th Battn., who died in 1st London General Hospital on November 12, 1917, dearly loved son of J. and M. Hepburn, and brother of Lieut. E. A. and J. M. Hepburn.

Our Anzac.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 12 November, 1921)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

HEPBURN – In loving memory of Sergt M. Hepburn, 14th Battalion, who died in First London General Hospital on 12th November, 1917, dearly loved son of J. and M. Hepburn, and brother of Lieut. E. A. and J. M. Our Anzac.

*(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 12 November, 1921)*

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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)*

Sergeant Alec McK. Hepburn does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*Our Dear Boy*

### **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.



**Brookwood Military Cemetery** *(Photo from CWGC)*



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** (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 Serjeant Alec McK. Hepburn's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)*



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

