

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1760 PRIVATE

A. J. HOBBS

AUST. MACHINE GUN CORPS

26TH MAY, 1918 Age 26

*Fond Memory Lingers Yet
Of One We Never Can Forget*

Arthur John HOBBS

Arthur John Hobbs was born at Devenish, Victoria in 1892 to parents John and Elizabeth Jane Hobbs (nee Short).

Arthur John Hobbs attended Benalla State School, Victoria.

From Victoria, Australia *Police Gazette* – February 6, 1908:

See Police Gazette, 1908, p. 51

E. J. HOBBS' larceny – Complainant's son, Arthur J. Hobbs, committed this robbery. – O.330. 1st February, 1908.

Newspaper item – The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 1 February, 1908:

ROBBERIES AT BENALLA

BENALLA, Friday – During the past two months a number of cases of house-breaking and larceny have occurred in this district. On December 8 the Broken Creek school, 12 miles from Benalla, was entered during the temporary absence of the teacher, Miss Ormond, and £2 was stolen. Mrs Hobbs, dressmaker, of Benalla, lost a brooch valued as £1/17/6 on January 15, and on January 18 Mr Arnott's bicycle-shop was broken into, and 10/9 taken. Mr John Hooper's residence, Goorambat, was entered on January 23, when £2 was stolen. This week the residences of Mr John Quinlan and Mr Ambler, Benalla, were entered, and 25/ and 14/ respectively were taken. A youth named Arthur John Hobbs, 16 years of age, it is alleged, admitted to-day that he had taken his mother's brooch, and sold it to a Chinese, and that he was the perpetrator of the other robberies.

John Hobbs, father of Arthur John Hobbs, died on 19th April, 1911 at Geelong Hospital, Geelong, Victoria.

The 1914, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Indi, subdivision of Benalla, Victoria recorded Arthur John Hobbs, Labourer from Wedge Street, Benalla. Also listed at Wedge Street was his mother – Elizabeth Jane Hobbs, Costumiere.

Arthur John Hobbs was a 23 year old, single, Labourer from Benalla, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 6th January, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1760 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs E. E. Hobbs, Benalla, Victoria.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was posted to 6th Battalion, 4th Reinforcements on 6th January, 1915 for recruit training.

Private Arthur John Hobbs embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Wiltshire (A18)* on 13th April, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements.

Private Arthur John Hobbs joined 6th Battalion at Gallipoli & reported for duty on 27th May, 1915. He was posted to "A" Company.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was sent sick to Hospital on 15th September, 1915. He was admitted to No. 2 Field Ambulance on 15th September, 1915 then transferred to No. 3 General Hospital at Lemnos due to his teeth. He rejoined his Unit on 16th September, 1915.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was wounded in action. He was admitted to 6th Field Ambulance on 30th November, 1915 at Gallipoli then transferred to 1st Casualty Clearing Station with bullet wound to thigh. Private Hobbs was transferred to Hospital Ship *Dongola* from Anzac on 1st December, 1915 & was admitted to Bombay Presidential General Hospital at Alexandria on 5th December, 1915.

6th Battalion

The 6th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 7th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving on 2 December. It later took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915, as part of the second wave. Ten days after the landing, the 2nd Brigade was transferred from ANZAC to Cape Helles to help in the attack on the village of Krithia. The attack captured little ground but cost the brigade almost a third of its strength.

The Victorian battalions returned to ANZAC to help defend the beachhead, and in August the 2nd Brigade fought at the battle of Lone Pine. The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 6th Battalion

29th November, 1915 – ANZAC

11.00 – Heavy general shelling of position. One shell exploded in bivouac – casualties 2 killed 3 wounded.

14.00 – Commenced relief of 5th Bn. in No. 3 & No. 4 subsections of SILT SPUR. "A" & "B" Coys in firing line; "D" Coy in support, "C" Coy on WYCKHAM TERRACE

17.00 – Relief completed. Troops on ¼ water rations from now onwards.

30th November, 1915 – ANZAC

"A" & "B" coys entirely in firing line & tunnels. "D" Coy moved completely into 2nd line of defence.

Enemy inactive.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Benalla, Victoria, mother of Private Arthur John Hobbs, on 23rd December, 1915 to advise that her son had been wounded in action on 30th November, 1915.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Benalla, Victoria, on 9th December, 1915 to advise that her son Private Arthur John Hobbs had been admitted to Bombay Presidency General Hospital, Alexandria on 5th December with gunshot wound to Thigh.

Private Arthur John Hobbs transferred & admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 18th January, 1916. He was discharged to duty on 13th March, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs reported to Overseas Base at Ghezireh on 13th March, 1916 from Hospital. He was marched in to "A" Details at Zeitoun on 27th March, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was taken on strength of 58th Battalion at Ferry Post on 1st April, 1916 from 2nd Training Battalion.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was transferred to 57th Battalion at Ferry Post on 2nd April, 1916 from 58th Battalion. He was taken on strength of 57th Battalion on 3rd April, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was transferred to 15th I.B.M.G. (Infantry Brigade Machine Gun) Company on 12th April, 1916 & was taken on strength of 15th Brigade Machine Gun Company on the same day.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was sent sick to Hospital on 29th April, 1916 then admitted to 8th Field Ambulance at Ferry Post on 27th April, 1916 P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin) (Influenza) then transferred to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 2nd May, 1916. He was admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station

on 2nd May, 1916 with Pleurisy (another entry on the Casualty Form – Active Service recorded he was admitted on 1st May with Pleuro Pneumonia). Private Hobbs was discharged to his Unit from Casualty Clearing Station on 13th May, 1916 & rejoined his Unit on 14th May, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs embarked from Alexandria on 17th June, 1916 on *Kalyan* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 24th June, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was sent sick to Hospital on 17th July, 1916 & admitted to 14th Australian Field Ambulance on 18th July, 1916 with an abscess on tooth. He was discharged to duty on 18th July, 1916 & rejoined his Unit on 19th July, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was on Leave from 6th November, 1916.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was admitted to 1st Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 24th November, 1916 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was transferred to 51st General Hospital at Rouen on 28th November, 1916 – cause N.Y.D.

Private Arthur John Hobbs joined Australian Machine Gun Base Depot at Camiers on 31st January, 1917 from Hospital.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was admitted to Hospital on 7th February, 1917 from Machine Gun Base Depot. He was marched in to Australian Machine Gun Base Depot at Camiers, France on 21st February, 1917 from Hospital.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was marched out to 15th Australian Machine Gun Company from Machine Gun Base Depot at Camiers on 10th March, 1917 & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 11th March, 1917.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was wounded in action on 10th May, 1917. He was admitted to 23rd Field Ambulance on 10th May, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to head then transferred & admitted to 49th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Hobbs was transferred & admitted to 14th General Hospital at Wimereux, France on 11th May, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Head. He was transferred to Boulogne, France on 18th May, 1917 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St. Andrew* the same day. (Casualty Form – Active Service recorded he embarked for England with “GSW Hand”)

War Diary - 15th Australian Machine Gun Company

In the Field - 10th May, 1917:

During the morning there was intense Artillery activity on both side, Tow of our guns were put out of action by shell fire.

The afternoon was comparatively quiet.

Casualties 2 O/R

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Arthur John Hobbs was admitted to Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, England on 18th May, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to Head. He was discharged to furlo from 30th May, 1917 to 14th June, 1917 & was then to report to Depot at Hurdcott.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Benalla, Victoria, mother of Private Arthur John Hobbs, on 28th May, 1917 to advise that Private A. J. Hobbs had been reported wounded, second occasion. She was advised on 5th June, 1917 that Private A. J. Hobbs had been admitted to Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich on 18th May, 1917 suffering from a gunshot wound to Head.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was posted to No. 3 Convalescent Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 14th June, 1917 & medically classified as B1 A2 (fit for overseas training camp in three to four weeks).

Private Arthur John Hobbs was reclassified as A3 (fit for overseas training camp, to which transferred for hardening prior to rejoining unit overseas) on 31st July, 1917 while posted at No. 3 Command Depot, Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was marched out from No. 3 Command Depot, Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 2nd August, 1917 & marched in to Overseas Training Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 5th August, 1917.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was marched in to Machine Gun Training Depot at Grantham on 15th August, 1917 from Overseas Training Brigade at Perham Downs.

Private Arthur John Hobbs proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone from Grantham on 18th October, 1917. He was marched in the M.G.C.B.D. (Machine Gun Company Base Depot) at Camiers, France on 18th October, 1917. He was marched out from M.G.C.B.D. on 21st October, 1917 & rejoined his Unit (15th Australian Machine Gun Company) on 22nd October, 1917.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was sent sick to Hospital on 6th March, 1918. He was admitted to 5th D.R.S. (Divisional Rest Station) on 6th March, 1918 with Pharyngitis. Private Hobbs was transferred to 11th Casualty Clearing Station on 12th March, 1918 with "T.B. (R Apex)" then transferred to No. 32 Ambulance Train on 13th March, 1918. He was admitted to 54th General Hospital on 13th March, 1918 with T.B. right lung. Private Hobbs was transferred to England on 15th March, 1918 with Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was admitted to Horton War Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England on 16th March, 1918 with Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Benalla, Victoria, mother of Private Arthur John Hobbs, on 26th March, 1918 to advise that Private A. J. Hobbs had been admitted to Horton County of London War Hospital, England on 16th March, 1918 suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis. She was advised on 14th April, 1918 that Private A. J. Hobbs was seriously ill.

Mrs Elizabeth Jane Hobbs wrote to Base Records on 17th April, 1918 to state she had received the cablegram saying that her son was seriously ill and wanted to advise that her address in future was Beechworth Post Office, Victoria.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Middlesex, England on 2nd May, 1918 from Horton War Hospital.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Post Office, Beechworth, Victoria, mother of Private Arthur John Hobbs, on 1st May, 1918 to advise that Private A. J. Hobbs' condition was stationary. She was advised again on 14th May, 1918 that Private A. J. Hobbs had been transferred to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, England on 3rd May, 1918 suffering from Tubercle Lung & was seriously ill.

Private Arthur John Hobbs died at 2.30 pm on 26th May, 1918 at 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from Tubercle of Lungs.

A death for Arthur J. Hobbs, aged 26, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private Arthur John Hobbs was buried on 29th May, 1918 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Plot number Aust. 52 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Hobbs - *Coffin was good. Polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and several beautiful wreaths were placed on the coffin from the Nursing Staff and patients of the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield. Firing party, pall bearers and Bugler, were present. A party of Australian (patients in the 1st A.A.H.) followed the remains to the cemetery. Prior to the interment, a service was held by Chaplain Terry, in the Parish Church, Harefield. Captain Renwick represented the 1st A.A.H. at the funeral. The grave will be turfed and a gravestone erected by the 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives or friends present at the Funeral – Friends – Mrs Grierson, 12 Great Chart St, East Road, London. Mrs Callaby, 30 Hamilton Bldgs, Gt Eastern Street, London.

Private Arthur John Hobbs requested in his Will, dated 11th July, 1917, that all his real & personal estate be bequeathed to his mother – Elizabeth Jane Hobbs, Nunn Street, Benalla, Victoria.

Base Records contacted Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Post Office, Beechworth, Victoria on 15th July, 1920 stating that she was registered on the records of the late No. 1760 Private A. J. Hobbs but desired to learn whether the late soldier had any nearer relations than herself & specifically asked if his father was still alive & if so his name & address.

Mrs E. J. Hobbs, Thomas Street, Benalla, Victoria replied to Base Records on 20th July, 1920 stating *“I am the nearest blood relation living his mother his father died 8 ½ years ago in Geelong Hospital on the 19th April, 1911. So therefore I am the widowed wife of John Emmanuel Hobbs and mother of Private A. J. Hobbs.”*

Private Arthur John Hobbs was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Hobbs' widowed mother - Mrs E. J. Hobbs, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent August, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Arthur John Hobbs – service number 1760, aged 26, of 5th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Jane Hobbs, of Goomalibee St., Benalla, Victoria, Australia.

A. Hobbs is remembered on the Holy Trinity Honour Roll, located in Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 73 Arundel Street, Benalla, Victoria.



Holy Trinity Honour Roll, Benalla (Photo from Monument Australia – Chris McLaughlin)

A. Hobbs is remembered on the Benalla War Memorial, located in Benalla Botanical Garden, Bridge Street (Midland Highway), Benalla, Victoria.



Benalla War Memorial

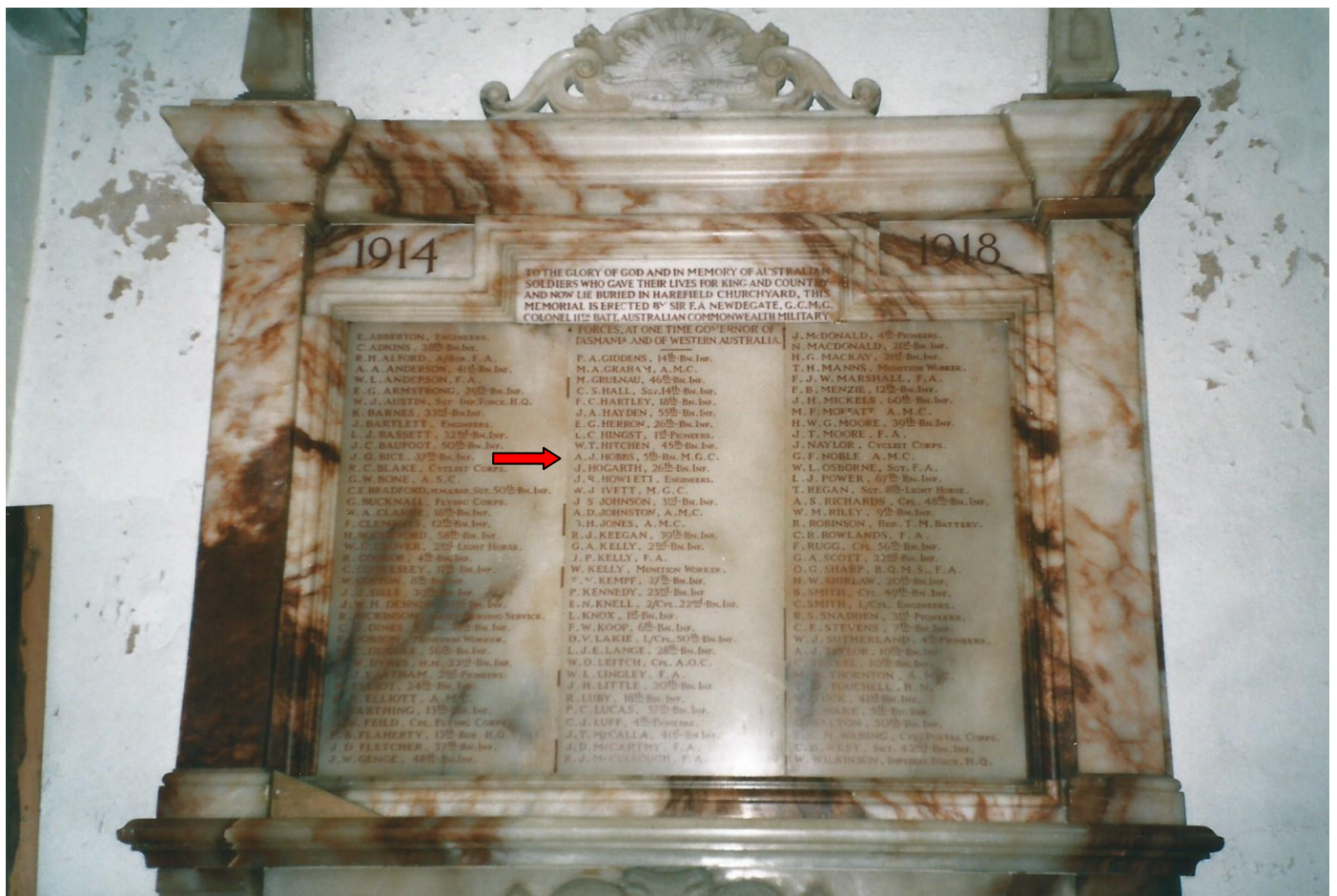


Private A. J. Hobbs is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 176.

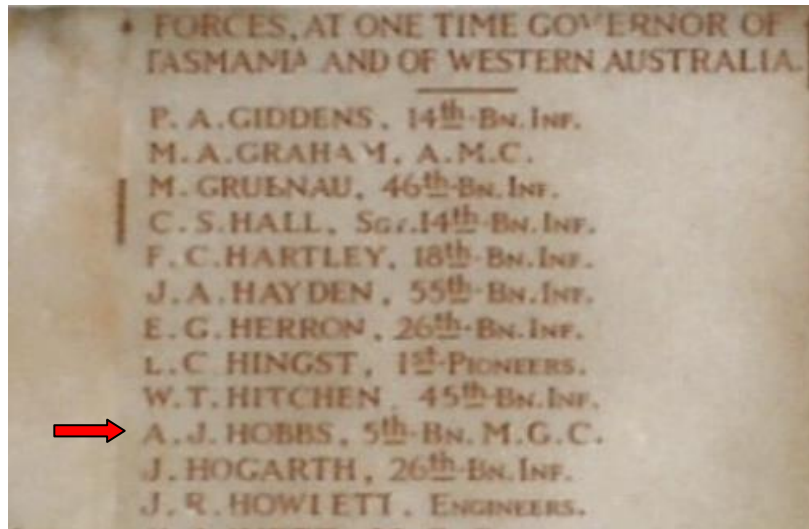


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. J. Hobbs 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)



Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield

(80 pages of Private Arthur John Hobbs' 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

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

PRIVATE J. F. ELLIS

Mrs Ellis, of Benalla East, has received the following letter from her son, Private J. F. Ellis, who was wounded at Gallipoli:-

"I am getting on alright, though I had a bad time of it with my knee. I have been in the hospital a month. I was wounded in both legs, but that is nothing. I had one of the shrapnel bullets taken out of my leg, but I am not going to the front again for two or three months yet. Arthur Hobbs is alright, and tell Mrs Connolly that her son is in the hospital with me, but he will get well. It was hard luck for Stan. Charlesworth and Willie McDonald, but we have to take our chance....."

(Benalla Standard, Victoria – 17 August, 1915)

Wounded

Mrs Hobbs, of Nunn street, has received the unwelcome news that her son, Pte Arthur John Hobbs, has been admitted to the Bombay ___ Hospital at Alexandria on ___ with a gunshot wound ___ thigh. May he have a speedy recovery.

(The Independent, Benalla, Victoria – 17 December, 1915)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

124th LIST ISSUED

Details of Victorian losses are:-

Wounded

Pte A. J. HOBBS, Benalla

(*The Bendigo Independent*, Victoria – 20 December, 1915)

ROLL OF HONOR

In the 124th casualty list published yesterday Private A. J. Hobbs, Benalla, is reported as being wounded.

(*Benalla Standard*, Victoria – 21 December, 1915) &

A similar account in (*Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, Beechworth, Victoria – 22 December, 1915)

Wounded

In the last published casualty list the following are also reported wounded:- Corporal W. B. Ford, Benalla; Private A. J. Hobbs, Benalla,

(*Benalla Standard*, Victoria – 15 June, 1917)

Our Heroes

War's Honourable Scars

The 309th casualty list published this week, comprising 344 deaths and 600 wounded, conveys the sad story to our district that men are more than ever wanted to take the places of the gallant lads who have stood between us and the brutal Hun. Among those who have bought eternal honour to themselves and the country they love are the following:- Private A. J. Hobbs, Benalla;.....

(*The Independent*, Benalla, Victoria – 15 June, 1917)

Personal Notes

The flag was again flown at half mast over the town hall, Beechworth, on Friday for Private Hobbs, whose mother, a recent arrival from Benalla, lives at Alma-road, Beechworth. The Defence Department sent a telegram to Ven. Archdeacon Potter with the sad announcement that Private Hobbs had succumbed to pneumonia in hospital. As Archdeacon Potter was out of town Rev. Luther Williams broke the very sad news to Mrs Hobbs.

(*Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, Beechworth, Victoria – 1 June, 1918) & (*Benalla Standard*, Victoria – 4 June, 1918)

Respect to Soldier's Memory

The flag was again flown at half mast over the town hall, Beechworth, on Friday for Private Hobbs, whose mother, a recent arrival from Benalla, lives at Alma-road, Beechworth. The Defence Department sent a telegram to Ven. Archdeacon Potter with the sad announcement that Private Hobbs had succumbed to pneumonia in hospital. As Archdeacon Potter was out of town Rev. Luther Williams broke the very sad news to Mrs Hobbs.

(Benalla Standard, Victoria – 4 June, 1918)

The Honor Roll

Officers

.....

N.C.O.'s and MEN

.... A. J. Hobbs.....

(The Independent, Benalla, Victoria – 14 June, 1918)

The 409th CASUALTY LIST

VICTORIAN NAMES

DIED OTHER CAUSES

Private A. J. Hobbs, Beechworth

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 19 June, 1918)

In Memoriam

HOBBS – In loving memory of our dear brother, No. 1790, Pte Arthur John Hobbs, 15th Machine Gun Battalion, who died of illness 26th May, 1918 at Australia Military Hospital, Harefield, England, after 3 ½ years active service, Egypt, Gallipoli, and France, aged 26 years.

Our Anzac Hero.

Where the shadows are falling soft and still

And the heat of the day is done,

We see through the dusk, as loved ones will,

The face of our darling brother.

Our loved one is sleeping his last long sleep,

And his grave we may never see;

But some gentle hand in that distant land

May plant a small flower for us.

-(Inserted by his brother, sister-in-law and sister, J.H., B.H., L.H., Benalla)

(Benalla Standard, Victoria – 27 May, 1919)

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 A. J. Hobbs does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*Fond Memory Lingers
Yet Of One We Never Can Forget*

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

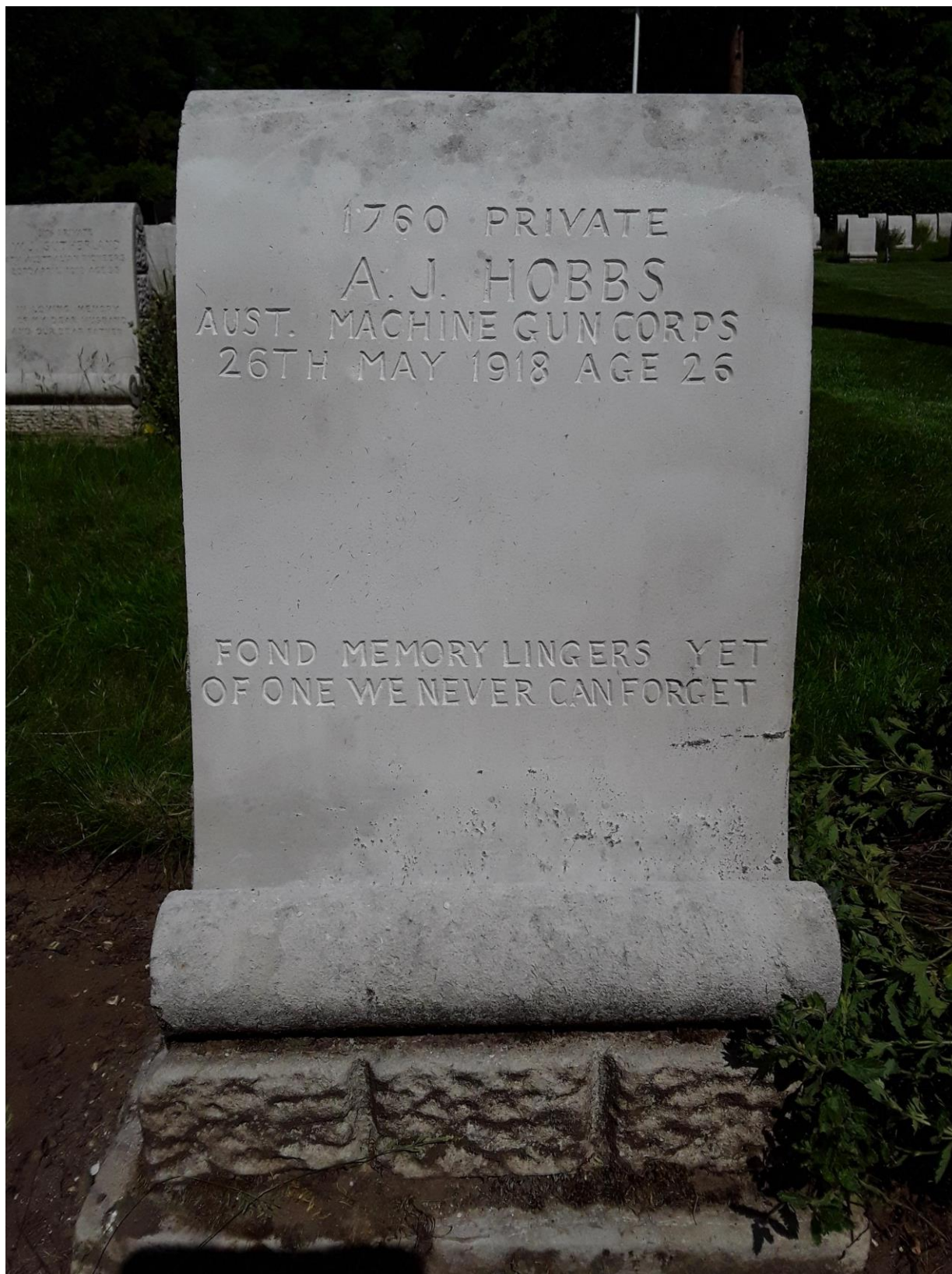
Photo of Private A. J. Hobbs' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.

(Note: The headstone for Private A. J. Hobbs has the incorrect date of death – should be 26th May, 1918. The CWGC were advised of the error at the time of researching – May 2021)



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)

UPDATE: The following photo was sent to me (June, 2021) from CWGC showing that Private A. J. Hobbs' headstone had been amended.



(Photo courtesy CWGC – June, 2021)



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)

