

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



522 SERJEANT

H. E. HOLTUM MM.

12TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

22ND SEPTEMBER, 1918

May The Lord Love Him

And Grant Him

Eternal Peace And Rest

Henry Edward HOLTUM

Henry Edward Holtum was born at Zeehan, Tasmania on 1st December, 1894 to parents Richard & Elizabeth Holtum (nee Duffey).

Henry Edward Holtum attended St. Fursacus Convent School.

Henry Edward Holtum was a 19 year old, single, Grocer's Assistant from Main Street, Zeehan, Tasmania when he enlisted at Pontville, Tasmania on 21st August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 522 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Richard Holtum, of 6 Solly Street, Zeehan, Tasmania. Henry Edward Holtum stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served 1 year with Senior Cadets & 1 year with Militia – still serving.

Private Henry Edward Holtum was posted to "D" Company, 12th Battalion for recruit training.

Private Henry Edward Holtum embarked from Hobart, Tasmania on HMAT *Geelong* (A2) on 20th October, 1914 with the 12th Infantry Battalion "D" Company.

Private Henry Edward Holtum embarked from Alexandria on 2nd March, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).

Private Henry Edward Holtum was wounded at Gallipoli between 25th & 28th April, 1915. He was admitted to Hospital Ship *Clan McGilway* on 4th May, 1915 with injuries to left hip & taken to Malta the same day.

Newspaper item – Zeehan and Dundas Herald, Tasmania – 15 June, 1915:

SIGNALLER "TED" HOLTUM'S BREEZY NOTE

Writing to his mother, Mrs H. Holtum, of 6 Solly street, Zeehan, Signaller "Ted" Holtum, under date May 7, at Military Hospital, Strada, Mercanti Valletta, Malta, says:—

"We had a little argument with the Turks on Sunday, April 25. They gave us a warm welcome, to which we responded but they did not seem to like it, so they turned and bolted. I managed to get in the road of a bullet, but it did not do much damage. It hit me in the hip, but it will be right again soon, and I will be able to get a bit of my own back. They took us on to hospital ship, and then to Alexandria, where the worst cases were taken off. Then we were brought to Malta. I am in the above-named hospital. The ward I am in is 500 feet long, and about 40 feet wide. It is a "bonzer". We are looked after like kings. They seem as if they can't do enough for us. Space compels me to close. Please don't worry, my wound is not severe."

Newspaper item – Zeehan and Dundas Herald, Tasmania – 29 June, 1915:

SIGNALLER E. HOLTUM

Mrs. R. Holtum, of Solly street, received the following letter from her son, Signaller E. ("Teddy") Holtum so well known to Zeehanites. Ted writes from Valletta, Malta. He states he is getting on fine now, and that the boys are being treated like kings, everywhere bringing oranges, cigarettes, flowers, etc. (but Teddy is a non-smoker). He goes on to say that the ordinary diet, which is very good, with extras, such as cocoa for supper, two eggs a day, pudding nearly every day, oranges one day and other fruits the next. The doctor gives a list of diet every morning. He, by the way, remarks, Not bad, is it.' He goes on to say that the ward he is in is 503ft. long, and is the longest unsupported roof in the world. There are 290 beds, and Boy Scouts, who are fine little chaps do their messages to post bring them papers, etc, and do all sorts for them. He was hit in the hip about half an hour after landing, and did not even see a Turk; but he considers himself lucky, as some did not even get out of the boats. Those that got along a bit had to be carried back; those getting through without a scratch were very lucky. They landed at 4.30 am, and bullets were ping-pong all round them, and the pom-pom of the shrapnel seemed all around also. The landing and getting over the beach to cover was similar to a sham-fight, only the bullets were real. The coolness of some, pulling out a cigarette and lighting it, was wonderful; stand and look for the enemy. It was like a kick from a horse when the fire caught me. Sergeant-Major Jerrett, from Zeehan, another signaller, and myself were just making ready to advance, but a sniper caught sight of my flags (and said to himself, no you don't, my boy, and sure enough I didn't. I was picked up by the Red Cross lads and carried to cover, where I was with a sergeant on one side and a lieutenant on

the other. We had to stay under the scorching sun till 4.30 that afternoon. Every time a Red Cross chap would put up his head was signal for the Turks to shoot. It is deadly staying here when we know that we are wanted, but hope we will have better luck next time. Now that we have got a good footing things should go better but I think they look shaky for the Germans. He asks 'What do you think of the Lusitania?' and goes on to say it should make America come in now. Eddy wishes to be remembered to his Zeehan friends.

Private Henry Edward Holtum embarked for Egypt on 12th July, 1915 on *Seang Bee* & was taken on strength of Overseas Base at Alexandria on 16th July, 1915.

Private Henry Edward Holtum embarked for Gallipoli on 19th July, 1915 on *Knight Templar*.

Private Henry Edward Holtum disembarked at Alexandria on 6th January, 1916.

Private Henry Edward Holtum was appointed Lance Corporal at Serapeum on 18th March, 1916.

Lance Corporal Henry Edward Holtum was awarded 1st Class pass at School of Instruction for Signalling.

Lance Corporal Henry Edward Holtum proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 29th March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 5th April, 1916.

Lance Corporal Henry Edward Holtum was promoted to Corporal on 5th August, 1916.

Corporal Henry Edward Holtum was sent to 3rd Field Ambulance on 13th August, 1916 then transferred & admitted to 5th Field Ambulance the same day. He rejoined his Unit on 25th August, 1916.

Corporal Henry Edward Holtum was to be Temporary Sergeant from 20th August, 1916.

Temporary Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was to be Sergeant from 20th November, 1916, vice 970 Sergeant Stevens wounded.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was sent sick to Hospital. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 13th July, 1917 – P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin). He was discharged to duty on 20th July, 1917 & rejoined 12th Battalion in France on 21st July, 1917.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was recommended for the Military Medal:

"In the attack on POLYGON WOOD, east of HOOGE on 20/21st September, 1917, Sgt. HOLTUM commanded the H.Q Signal Section, the Signalling Officer having been killed. He displayed great initiative and conspicuous bravery under fire, continually moving about the line arranging for the establishment of communications, which were most satisfactory during the whole engagement. Sgt. HOLTUM has been in almost every engagement in which the Battalion has taken part and has commanded his section in 3 of the last 4."

12th Battalion

The 12th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Half of the battalion was recruited in Tasmania, a quarter was recruited in South Australia, and a quarter from Western Australia. With the 9th, 10th and 11th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within three weeks 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 in early December. The 3rd Brigade was the covering force for the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 and so was the first ashore at around 4:30 am. Lieutenant Colonel L. F. Clarke, commander of the 12th Battalion, was killed by a sniper within hours of the landing. The battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC position, and in August contributed two companies to the attack on Lone Pine. It was the only battalion in the brigade to do so. The 12th served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 12th Battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in bitter trench warfare. The battalion's first major action

in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres, the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders and then returned to the Somme for winter.

In 1917 the battalion took part in the brief advance that followed the German Army's retreat to the Hindenburg Line. For their valorous actions near Boursies during this advance, Captain J. E. 'Jim' Newland, commanding A Company, and Sergeant J. W. Whittle were each awarded the Victoria Cross. The battalion subsequently returned to Belgium to participate in the offensive that became known as the Third Battle of Ypres.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was marched in to 3rd Training Battalion in England on 3rd October, 1917. He was detached for duty on 6th October, 1917 with 3rd Training Battalion & to be borne supernumerary to establishment of 12th Battalion.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was marched out from 3rd Training Battalion on 7th November, 1917 & marched in to 1st Training Battalion at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 8th November, 1917.

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.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum attended a Course of Army Signal School at Dunstable from 27th December, 1917 to 28th February, 1918 & qualified as 2nd Class He was on command at Signal School, Dunstable from 28th December, 1917.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was transferred to 1st Training Brigade Headquarters from 12th Battalion from 1st March, 1918. He was taken on strength of 1st Training Brigade Headquarters as permanent cadre (under Para 1072) on 1st March, 1918 from 12th Battalion & from Signal School, Dunstable.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum attended the Fullephone Course at Boyton from 29th April, 1918 to 4th May, 1918 from Sutton Veny & qualified 80%.

Mr R. Holtum, 6 Solly Street, Zeehan, Tasmania, was advised on 8th June, 1915 that his son, Private H. E. Holtum, had been wounded – not reported seriously. He was advised on 17th November, 1915 that his son, Private H. E. Holtum, had returned to duty in Egypt.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was awarded the Military Medal on 17th December, 1917.

Military Medal

The Military Medal (MM) was a military decoration awarded to personnel of the British Army and other services, and formerly also to personnel of other Commonwealth countries, below commissioned rank, for bravery in battle on land. The award was established in 1916, with retrospective application to 1914, and was awarded to other ranks for "acts of gallantry and devotion to duty under fire". *(Wikipedia)*



Obverse and reverse of medal and ribbon

Mr R. Holtum, 6 Solly Street, Zeehan, Tasmania, was advised on 23rd May, 1918 that his son, Sergeant H. E. Holtum, No. 522, had been awarded the Military Medal. (Supplement No. 30431 to London Gazette - 14th December, 1917 & Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 66 - 2nd May, 1918.)

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was admitted to 332nd Field Ambulance at Wrexham on 10th September, 1918 while on leave.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was admitted to Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, Norfolk, England on 12th September, 1918 suffering from Pleurisy & headaches.



Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum died at 4 am on 22nd September, 1918 at Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, Norfolk, England from Tubercular Meningitis.

The War Hospital at Norwich sent a telegram to Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London advising that "522 Sergt Edward HOLTUM 12th Batt A.I.F. attached 1st Australian Training Brigade Signal School Sutton Veny who was admitted here while on leave died here this morning..."

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was re-transferred to 12th Battalion from Permanent Cadre of 1st Training Brigade Headquarters in 22nd September, 1918.

A death for Henry E. Holtum, aged 24, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Blofield, Norfolk, England.

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum was buried on 25th September, 1918 in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England – Plot number 54.702 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum - *Coffin was Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack and surmounted by several beautiful wreaths About twenty Australian patients from the Hospital were present at the funeral, and the burial service was conducted at the graveside by Father Edward Scott. The grave will be turfed, and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Names of relatives or friends present at the Funeral – Mrs Butt, Manor Farm, Gt Ormsley, Yarmouth, Mrs Gill, Pte Atkinson, N.Z.M.G.C., Sgt. Allchin, F. E. "M.M."

Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum requested in his Will, dated 19th September, 1917, that in the vent of his death, all his property & effects be left to his mother – Mrs Elizabeth Holtum, 6 Solly Street, Zeehan, Tasmania.

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

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum – service number 522, of 12th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of H. Raphall and Elizabeth Holtum, of Solly St., Zeehan, Tasmania. Awarded MM.

Private H. E. Holtum is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 66.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

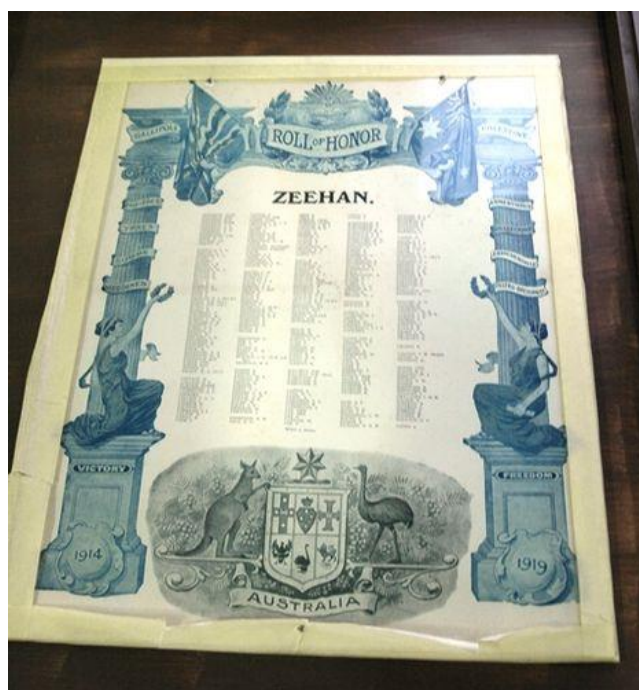
H. E. Holtum & his 2 brothers - H. D. Holtum & C. R. Holtum, are all remembered on the Zeehan Municipality Roll of Honour, located in Zeehan R.S.L. Club, Main Street, Zeehan, Tasmania.



Zeehan Municipality Roll of Honour (Photos from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)



H. E. Holtum & his 2 brothers - H. D. Holtum & C. R. Holtum, are all remembered on the Zeehan Roll of Honour, located in West Coast Pioneers Museum, 70 Main Street, Zeehan, Tasmania. The Zeehan Roll of Honour is a paper honour roll contained in a glass frame which commemorates 326 servicemen who served in World War One.



Zeehan Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

H. E. Holtum & his 2 brothers, H. D. Holtum & C. R. Holtum, are all remembered on the Zeehan Roll of Honour, located in Zeehan R.S.L. Club, Main Street, Zeehan, Tasmania. A framed paper honour roll commemorates 326 servicemen who served in World War One.



Zeehan Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

(63 pages of Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum'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 Sergeant Henry Edward Holtum:](#)

Older Brother: Private Hubert Darcy Holtum – served as Sydney Wilson, 506, 14th Battalion. Enlisted 11th September, 1914. Died of wounds on 9th June, 1915 received in action at the Dardanelles. Buried Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.

Older Brother: Lance Corporal Cyril Robert Holtum, 2029, 12th Battalion. Enlisted 9th February, 1915. Killed in action 11th August 1918, aged 28. Commemorated on Villers Bretonneux Memorial, France. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.



Newspaper Notices

Tasmanian Soldiers on Active Service



(6) Signaller H. E. Holtum, Zeehan (wounded)

(*The Tasmanian Mail*, Tasmania – 17 June, 1915)

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

SIGNALLER G. BLONG

Signaller Gilbert Blong, son of Mr and Mrs E. A. Blong, of Zeehan, writing to his parents under date of May 30, 1915, from Gaba Tepe, Gallipoli, says: —

Just a line to let you know that I am still alive and have got to the firing line at last. We left Alexandria on March 2, and went to Lemnos Island; stayed there eight weeks. Lived on board and went ashore daily, except when the weather would not allow. We got a lot of rowing there. The signalling section did not go ashore every day towards the last, because we had a good bit of work to do on the bridge— night and day — so to make up we got the rowing for exercise; we used to go to the other ships and over to Fort Mudro. There was base hospital there, also a beautiful Greek church, which is the main building there. All round the harbor there are small villages, and all the hills have wind-mills on them for grinding wheat. They have canvas sails, and look very pretty with the sun shining on them. The people are a poor class and very quiet; they have a nice, fair skin. The little boys are really pretty. We used to buy different articles from them — bread, figs, Turkish delight, nuts, oranges, and lemons, etc. A couple of times a destroyer came alongside for us to practice getting on board, so as to know our places when the time came for us to get there without any fuss or noise when the time came for action. We had a really good time on board the ship. We left Lemnos on April 24, and went to Kavalla, a point S.E. of Embros, and went aboard a destroyer, and made for Gaba Tepe at midnight; we steamed very slowly across so as not to give the game away, or attract attention. We reached there at 4 am on the 25th and then the fun begun. The boats which had been towed behind came alongside, and we got in them; the navy picket boats towed us ashore. The Turks were all the time firing upon us both with rifles and machine guns. They gave us a pretty rough time, the boats would not run up on the shore very far, so we had to

jump into the water, up to our chests in most cases, my first attempt to get over I fell into the bottom of the boat. I heard some one say, "Hello, Blong's got one." I got up and had another try, and the water was over my head. I held on to the gunwale of the boat, until I touched the bottom, and then made for the shore as fast as I could. I fell over once or twice, tripped on the stones, but I don't remember whether the water felt cold or hot; when ashore, I could hardly walk with the weight of water in my clothes and equipment; then I got under cover for a few seconds threw off my pack, our chaps charged as soon as they got ashore straight up a great steep hill, the Turks went for their lives, but left a number of snipers behind in good, concealed positions, who were a great nuisance, and did a lot of damage; we had a very had days fight; when we got the Turks back a bit, we formed a signal station, and we had a long message to send to Brigade H.Q. I was sending, the Turks must have seen us, because they started sniping, but we were lucky to escape; they then gave us some shrapnel, which forced us to move, for it has a very playful way of hitting one. Sergeant Major Jerrett was wounded very badly on the Wednesday, and died in hospital. Bob Stephens our corp. (that fine fellow I told you about) was killed, poor chap; he was a real wonder; he did some marvellous work, and is to be mentioned in despatches, I think. **Teddy Holtum was wounded on the first day; he was with the sergeant-major. There were about eight of our signal corps wounded.** We are having a really good time now; got them bluffed. It is great to see the airships flying over the enemy's line, the Turks firing shrapnel at them; but they still fly on untouched; they waste a lot of ammunition in this way; their losses have been very great by our rifle fire and artillery; the navy have been a great help to us. I don't know what we should have done without their big guns. On the first Tuesday the enemy tried to turn our left flank they came over in great masses, thinking they would push us back, but they made a very great mistake, the navy opened fire on them, and every shot that lobbed we would see bodies, legs and arms flying in all directions and the machine guns cut them to pieces. I think their losses are estimated at about 50 000. The navy think there is nothing like the 3rd Brigade, for the way they landed, and the way they did on that day, a day I shall never forget. We are getting really good food, and plenty of it, bacon, cheese, biscuits, Jam, onions, potatoes, tea sugar, bully beef, mutton, Machonichies ration (meat and vegetables), some times fresh meat, tobacco, and cigarettes twice a week, better food than we had on board ship and in camp. We are not doing any signalling now, we carry all messages. Poor G. Gibson is dead he put up a great fight, half-a dozen Turks surrounded him he killed five, but the sixth got him. I saw Charlie Gordon the other day, Poor old Spottie is wounded, also Ern. Lucas (both Derby lads).

On 13/6/15 he again writes I am still quite O.K. A good many of the wounded men have returned now, just as fit as ever, and quite recovered. We live in dug-outs, holes in the ground, and in the side of banks; we manage to make ourselves quite comfy. I had a message to take to Colonel Cameron to-day, and had a chat with him, he wishes to be kindly remembered to Dad. P.S.— I forgot to say that Dave Downie is killed. Charlie Williams is here, he came up to see me. In a second letter home Gilbert says— We are having glorious weather, the days are a bit hot, but the nights are simply perfect; the flies are a great nuisance, they are here in millions. We are all as brown as berries some of us are almost black, but all are in pretty good health. I, myself, am quite O.K. We are having a fairly quiet time just at present; some days not anyone wounded; another of our section was wounded and died last week. **I didn't see much of Teddy Holtum. He was wounded the first day, and has not yet returned. Sorry to hear his mother is fretting, but he will soon be all right; the sergeant-major was wounded on the fourth day.** I saw Jim Anderson yesterday, he is in the A.M.C., and is working on one of the trawlers that take wounded and sick to Lemnos. These cases are not very serious only those that will take a couple of weeks or so; others are taken on board the hospital ships, and taken to Egypt and Malta. Archdeacon Richard wishes to be kindly remembered to you, The Archdeacon his two sons in the forces; one was wounded on the first day, but is getting along all right now. I saw in a South Australian paper where it said that the 3rd Brigade was made up mostly of South Australians, and details from Tasmanians and West Australia, and that the South Australians had taken a leading part on the day of our landing, but that was not so; the 3rd Brigade was made up of one battalion of Queenslanders, one battalion of West Australians, one battalion of South Australians, half a battalion of Tasmanians, and the other half of the company from S.A. and W.A.

(Zeehan and Dundas Herald, Tasmania – 24 August, 1915)

ROLL OF HONOUR

117th CASUALTY LIST

RETURNED TO EGYPT FOR DUTY

TASMANIA

Twelfth Battalion

Holtum, H. E. Zeehan, previously reported wounded.

(The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania – 30 November, 1915)

Mrs R. Holtum, of Solly street, Zeehan, has received a letter for her son, Sergeant T. Holtum, who is at present in England attending school of instruction, enclosing a piece of the ribbon attached to the Military Medal won by him. In describing the prize which he says he much treasures, Sergeant Holtum says it is a nice little medal, silver, and has the King's head on one side, and in the reverse "For bravery in the field". His name and number of Battalion on the edge.

(Zeehan and Dundas Herald, Tasmania – 15 February, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

Sgt. H. E. HOLTUM, M.M., Zeehan 22/9/18 (illness)

(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania – 15 November, 1918)

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 H. E. Holtum does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

May The Lord Love Him And Grant Him Eternal Peace And Rest

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.

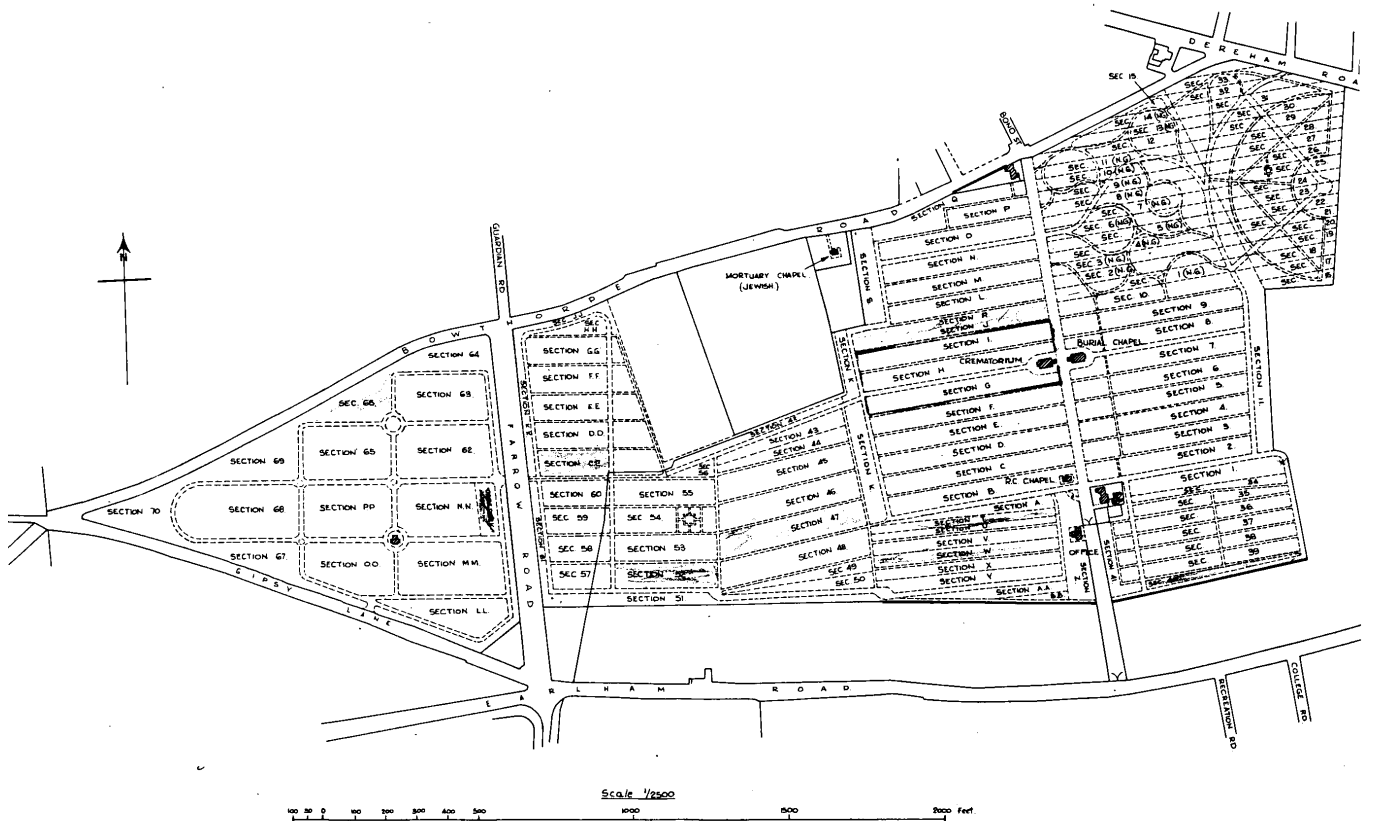
(Information & photo from CWGC)



Photo of Sergeant H. E. Holtum'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

