

**Peterborough Old Cemetery  
(Broadway Cemetery),  
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire  
War Grave**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**505 SERGEANT**

**T. HUNTER**

**10TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**31ST JULY, 1916 Age 36**

## Thomas HUNTER

George Thomas Hunter was born on 5th May, 1880 at Medomsley, near Newcastle, Co. Durham, England to parents George Burton Hunter & Mary Hunter (nee Walton).

The 1881 England Census recorded Thomas Hunter as an 11 month old living with his parents at Medomsley, Durham, England. His parents were listed as George Hunter (Coal Miner, aged 32, born Medomsley, Durham) & Mary Hunter (aged 35, born Newby, Cumberland).

Mary Hunter, mother of Thomas Hunter, died in 1882 at Sunderland, Durham, England.

Thomas Hunter attended Church of England School, Medomsley

The 1891 England Census recorded Thomas Hunter as an 11 year old Scholar living with his Uncle in Medomsley, Durham. His uncle was listed as William Hunter (Farmer, aged 59). Also living in the household was William's brother - John Hunter (Farmer, aged 46), & John's wife – Jane Hunter (aged 42) & William's sister – Deborah Hunter (aged 52). Two servants – a Domestic & a Farm servant were also listed.

Thomas Hunter emigrated to Australia in 1910, at the age of 30. He originally lived with his aunt & uncle – John & Hannah Dawson at Kurri Kurri, NSW. Later he moved to Broken Hill to work in the heavy metal mines.

Thomas Hunter was a 34 year old, single, Miner from Cobalt Street, Broken Hill, NSW when he enlisted in Adelaide, South Australia on 24th August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 505 & his religion was Church of England. Thomas Hunter stated that he had no living next of kin & listed J. Dawson of Deakin Street, Kurri Kurri, NSW as a contact. Thomas Hunter stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served 10 years with Field Artillery, Durham.

Private Thomas Hunter was posted to "H" Company, 10th Infantry Battalion on 24th August, 1914 for recruit training.

Private Thomas Hunter embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Ascanius* (A11) on 20th October, 1914 with the 10th Infantry Battalion, "H" Company.

Private Thomas Hunter embarked for Gallipoli on *Ionian* on 2nd March, 1915 to join M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force).

Private Thomas Hunter was wounded in action at Dardanelles (no date recorded). He received a gunshot wound to right foot (Severe) & was transferred to *Ionian*. Pte Hunter was admitted to 17th General Hospital at Alexandria on 1st May, 1915. He was transferred to Convalescent Camp at Mustapha on 23rd May, 1915. Pte Hunter was discharged to duty from Convalescent Camp on 31st May, 1915. Pte Hunter joined Overseas Base from Convalescent Camp on 1st June, 1915 & embarked on H.M.T. *Ionian* from Alexandria on 2nd June, 1915.

Private Thomas Hunter rejoined his Battalion at Gallipoli from being wounded on 12th June, 1915.

Private Thomas Hunter was promoted to Lance Corporal at Gallipoli on 25th August, 1915

Lance Corporal Thomas Hunter was to be Temporary Corporal at Gallipoli on 11th October, 1915.

Temporary Corporal Thomas Hunter reverted to Lance Corporal on 7th December, 1915 then appointed Lance Sergeant on 7th December, 1915.

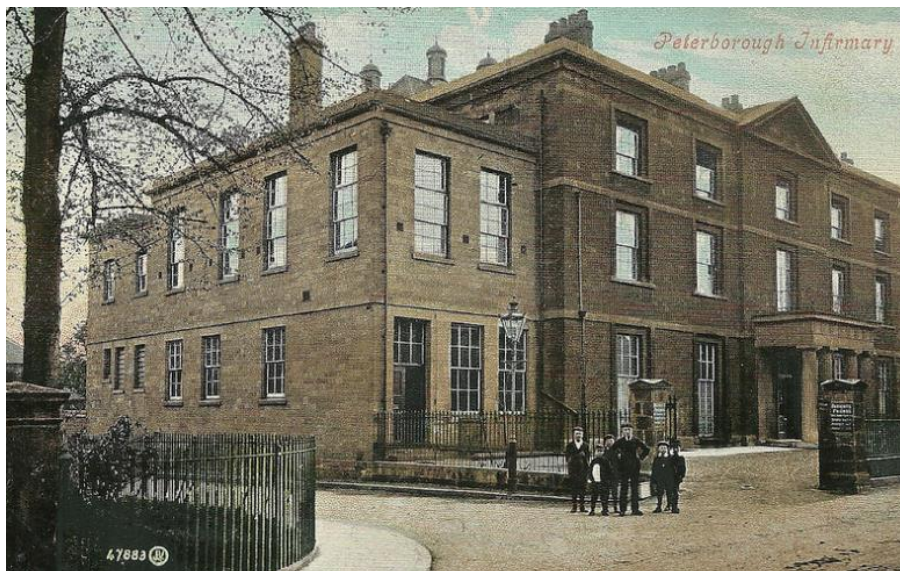
Lance Sergeant Thomas Hunter disembarked at Alexandria from *Seang Bee* on 29th December, 1915.

Lance Sergeant Thomas was promoted to Sergeant on 1st March, 1916.

Sergeant Thomas Hunter proceeded from Alexandria on 27th March, 1916 on Troopship *Saxonia* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 3rd April, 1916.

Sergeant Thomas Hunter was wounded in action in France on 25th July, 1916. He was admitted to 13th General Hospital, Boulogne, France on 27th July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to back. Sergeant Hunter was invalided to England on 29th July, 1916 on Hospital Ship *St. Denis*.

Sergeant Thomas Hunter died on 31st July, 1916 at Peterborough Infirmary, England from wounds received in action in France – spinal injury and paralysis. (Several forms in the Service Record file of Sergeant Thomas Hunter record that he died at Peterborough Infirmary, Peterborough, Scotland – including notification to Mr T. Dawson of Kurri Kurri, NSW)



**Peterborough Infirmary**

*[Peterborough Infirmary later became Peterborough Museum & is thought to be Peterborough's most haunted building. The most frequently witnessed ghost is of Australian World War 1 soldier Thomas Hunter, who sadly died in the infirmary in 1916. He's known as the grey ghost, so called because of his grey clothes and suitcase. His ghostly form has been felt and seen numerous times walking up & down the first floor stairs along with an overwhelming sense of unease.]*

A death for G. T. Hunter, aged 30, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Peterborough, (spanning counties of Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire), England.

Sergeant Thomas Hunter was buried on 2nd August, 1916 in Peterborough Old Cemetery (Broadway Cemetery), Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, England – Plot number 7. 3. 2249 and has a private headstone which was raised by public subscription. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Newspaper Details – *The Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate*, NSW – 21 November, 1916:

*Mrs Bingley, of Darling-street, Dubbo, has received a unique memoriam card on the death of Sergeant G. T. Hunter of the 10th Corps, Australian Expeditionary Force, who died at Peterborough, England, from the effects of wounds received whilst fighting with the British forces in the great war. The memorial, which is a neat folio card, is edged with black, and on the outside bears a picture of the grave of Sergeant Hunter "The Lonely Anzac," in Peterborough Cemetery. On the inside are shown representations of the coats of arms of the Australian Commonwealth and the State of New South Wales, also the inscription: "In the God's Acre of the city of Peterborough, England, in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress (Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Nicholls) and a large concourse of sorrowing citizens, on August 2nd, 1916, was affectionately laid to rest the war-scarred body of Sergeant G. T. Hunter of Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, who was wounded whilst fighting in the great war, was taken from the ambulance train in transit at*

*Peterborough, and died in that city on July 29th, 1916, aged 30 years. He paid with a cheerful heart the soldier's price." On another page of the card the following memoriam lines appear:-*

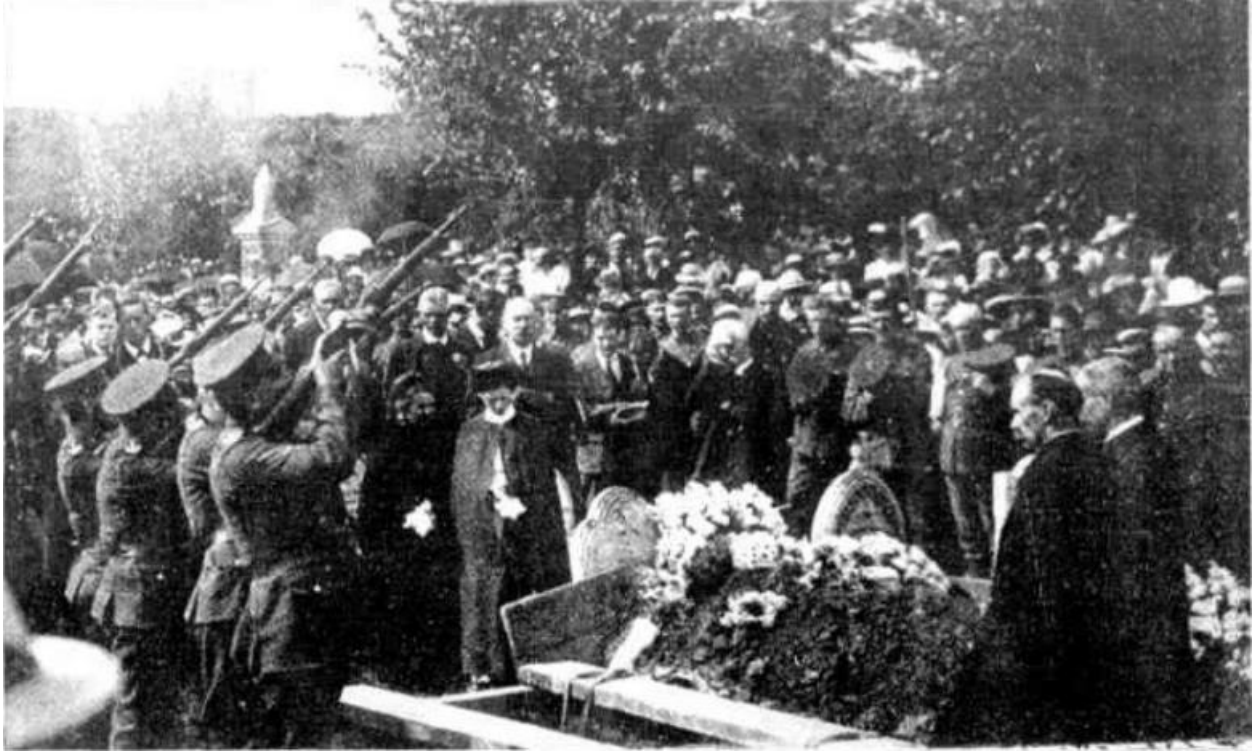
*"Blood of our blood, son of our race,  
Imperial and strong;  
He came in all his youth's fair grace,  
One of a glorious throng  
Of heroes from the Southern land,  
Linked in our Empires' chain,  
One of the famous Anzac band  
From the far-distant main.*

*With British pride in British soil,  
Amid'st our own dear dead;  
We laid him freed from warrior's toil  
In a true warrior's bed,  
His tomb as long as it shall stand.  
Shall keep alive his worth,  
And link this spot of Motherland  
With those who sent him forth."*

*The card was received from Mrs. Bingley's brother, who is a constable in Peterborough, and who was on duty at the time of the funeral.*



**Funeral of Sergeant G. T. Hunter at Peterborough, England**



**Burial of Sergeant G. T. Hunter at Peterborough, England** (*Sunday Times, Sydney, NSW – 1 October, 1916*)

### **10th Battalion**

The 10th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. The battalion was recruited in South Australia, and together with the 9th, 11th and 12th Battalions, formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within weeks of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked for overseas 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. Two soldiers of the 10th Battalion, Lance Corporal Philip Robin and Private Arthur Blackburn, are believed to have penetrated further inland than any other Australians at ANZAC. Robin was killed later on 25 April and Blackburn soldiered on to be commissioned as an officer and awarded the Victoria Cross at Pozieres, the battalion's first major battle in France. The 10th Battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC position, and served there until the evacuation in December.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 10th 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.

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

Thomas Hunter requested in his Will, dated 13th September, 1914, that John Dawson, of Kurri Kurri, NSW be appointed Executor & all his personal property & any money owing to be given to John Dawson.

Sergeant Thomas Hunter was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sergeant Thomas Hunter's father – Mr G. B. Hunter, in England, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque both sent to England January, 1922). The personal effects of the late Sergeant Thomas Hunter were sent to his father – Mr George Burton Hunter at Grange Farm, Medomsley, Co. Durham, England.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Thomas Hunter – service number 505, aged 36, of 10th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of George Burton Hunter.

Sergeant T. Hunter is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 59.



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

T. Hunter is remembered on the Barrier District Roll of Honour, located at the Broken Hill RSL Sub-Branch, 403 Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW.

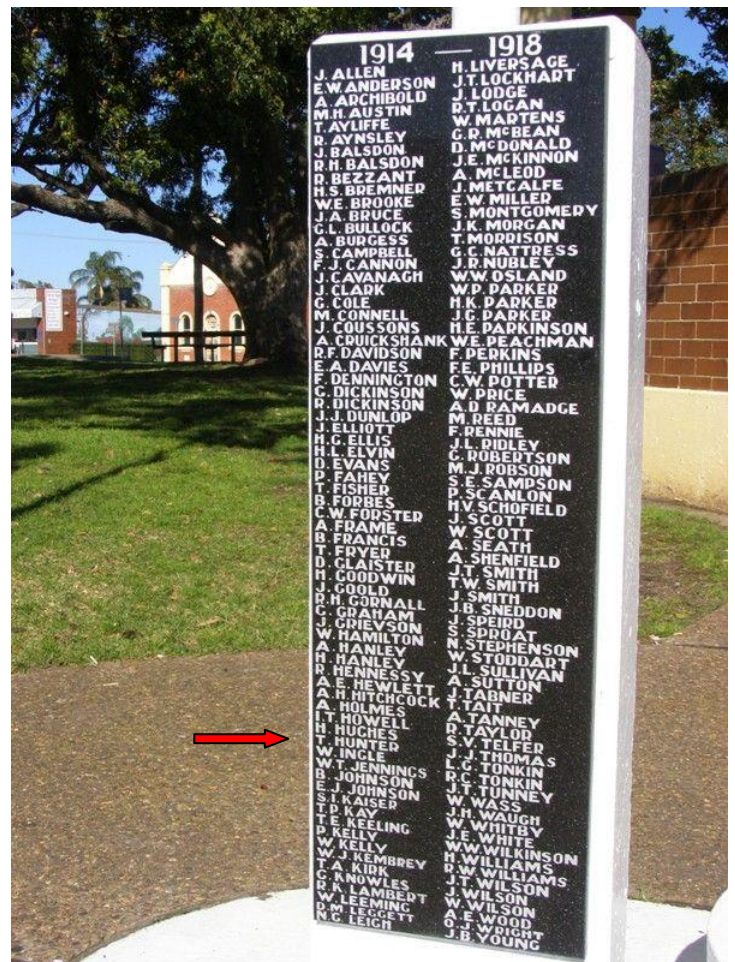


**Barrier District Roll of Honour** (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW)

T. Hunter is remembered on the Kurri Kurri War Memorial, located at Rotary Park, Lang & Hampden Streets, Kurri Kurri, NSW



Kurri Kurri War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



(52 pages of Sergeant Thomas Hunter'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



**Sergeant Thomas Hunter**

### **Newspaper Notices**

#### **AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION**

#### **193rd CASUALTY LIST**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DIED (Cause not stated)

Sergeant T. Hunter, Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, July 30, 1916

(*Barrier Miner*, Broken Hill, NSW – 16 August, 1916)

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#### **TOUCHING INCIDENT**

#### **LONELY ANZAC'S END**

#### **“SOMEONE'S DARLING BOY”**

The death of a lonely Anzac at Peterborough, England, last month evoked a remarkable and very touching demonstration of public sympathy. The story is thus feelingly narrated in the Peterborough "Standard," of August 5:-

A True Son of the Empire - A lad from the great Commonwealth of Australia - who had given his life for the mother country and the honour of his native land, but who was unknown amongst us, was laid to rest in Peterborough



Cemetery with full military ceremony. Over the sea relations may yet be unaware that he has passed away, but when they become acquainted with all that was done to honour the memory of this brave soldier, one we loved for the sake of the sacrifice he made, it will at least be a source of consolation and comfort to them. The hero was Sergeant T. Hunter, No. 505, 10th Corps, Australian Expeditionary Force.

When a Red Cross train arrived at Peterborough on Saturday night on its way to Halifax, Sergt. Hunter, who was in the convoy, and was suffering from wounds in the spine, was in a precarious condition. It was therefore thought best to remove him from the train and convey him to the Infirmary. There every effort was made to make him as comfortable as possible and minister to his requirements. It was seen that he had not long to live. Perfectly conscious, he recognised the serious nature of his injuries and prepared to meet his end like a true soldier. Tended and soothed by the gentle hands of nurses, he passed away peacefully early on Monday morning. Sergt. Hunter had been previously wounded, probably in Gallipoli. The wounds from which he died were, it is believed, received about July 25, and were from the first recognised as extremely dangerous. He was the adopted son and nephew of Mr. J. Dawson, Deakin-street, Kurri Kurri (N.S.W.), and it is presumed that his age was from 30 to 35. Among his little treasures was a pipe inscribed with his name and the word "Anzac," together with the date, 25/4/15. It had not been smoked, and it was doubtless a valued gift. He also possessed a watch, evidently of French manufacture, a compass enclosed in a case, and other knick-knacks such as are beloved by soldiers.

After death the body was tenderly conveyed to the Infirmary mortuary, where lovely flowers were placed around the body through the kindness of a well-known citizen. Mr. A. C. Taylor, secretary of the institution, got into touch with the Mayor at the earliest possible moment, with the suggestion that Sergt. Hunter should be accorded a military funeral. His Worship lent a sympathetic ear, and without loss of time materially assisted Mr. Taylor in carrying out arrangements, the staff of the recruiting office also rendering valued aid. Meanwhile, when it became known in the city that Sergt. Hunter - so far from friends - had passed away the hearts of the citizens were at once touched. Floral tributes were brought to the Infirmary one after another - choice blooms, modest flowers plucked from cottage gardens, wreaths made by the hands of little children. Others bore heartfelt sentiments, breathing the ties of kinship, brotherhood and sisterhood - ties that bind the whole British Empire so strongly. Some, fragrant roses, sweet peas, or the bloom of ramblers, were sent in bunches from persons unknown. But all betokened a singularly touching appreciation of the life laid down.

"From the Infirmary-through whose portals the coffin passed after it had been draped with the Union Jack, and was laden with wreaths - large crowds watched with a sympathetic interest the progress of the cortege to the cemetery. Some of the tradesmen shuttered their shops, and the blinds of private houses were drawn. As the procession traversed the Market Place the solemn tolling of the funeral bell was heard, amid the measured tread of the military. The first part of the service was read in the cemetery chapel by the Rev. Heathcote Barker, Wesleyan minister, and the final scene at the graveside, was full of deep feeling and solemnity. A square was formed, the firing party taking their stand on one side, the representatives of the council and the wounded soldiers, etc., being on the other. As the coffin was lowered and the last message of comfort delivered by the minister, the Mayor stood forward to address a few words to the assembled throng.

"I know," the Mayor said, "that I am voicing your wishes and desires when I express, on your behalf, our sympathy and condolence with his friends and relations, and to Australia, the great debt we owe to the men who responded so quickly to the call of Empire. It was a great honour to Australia to have given such a son, and a great privilege to us to-day, in this small way, to show our appreciation of his heroism. Wreaths have come from factory girls and our own wounded lads, as well as from our leading citizens, and I am grateful to all who have gathered here to this graveside to honour the memory of one we love for the sake of the sacrifice he made for us and the old country. It is for this we bring him this tribute to-day.

Silence followed the Mayor's earnest words, only to be broken by stifled sobs of women - mothers, sisters, and wives with boys fighting their country's cause. Then came the crackle of the rifle as the firing party gave their token of respect to the dead, and the service concluded with the Last Post. Subsequently hundreds of persons passed by the grave, many carrying little bunches of flowers and dropping them upon the coffin,

And so was laid to his last rest the stranger whom nobody knew, but whom everybody honoured, and much sympathy was felt for his friends in Australia.

A few of the inscriptions which accompanied the wreaths may be quoted:

"With deepest sympathy, from a few girls at Brown's Broadway. 'For a high cause he fought, and ,fighting died, paying with cheerful heart the soldier's price.' "

"With deepest sympathy, from Mr. and Mrs. Kington, 2 Midgate-buildings, Peterborough.

"Just three short words in this is told:

A hero's deathless story;

In action killed, the brief words hold

An epitaph of glory.

In health and strength he left his home,

Not thinking death so near;

It pleased the Lord to bid him come,

And in His sight appear,

"A token of deepest respect to a brave boy who did hhris duty, from Mr. and Mrs. Murray."

"In memory of a brave Australian soldier, who answered his country's call, from a soldier's mother, Mrs. B. J. Eldridge, 12 Albert-place, Peterborough

"He served his King and his country with a willing heart.' "

"Canada to Australia. To the memory of an unknown hero from overseas, Dominion Government Offices, Peterborough."

"In loving memory of somebody's boy, and with deepest sympathy, from Mr. A. Baxter, 1 Paston-lane, Walton."

"Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Sole and family, with deep sympathy to someone's darling boy."

"With deepest sympathy and respect for a bravehero of the Empire, from the Secretary and Porter of the Peterborough Infirmary."

"In honoured memory of a 'Son of the Empire,' from the Matron and Nurses, Peterborough Infirmary."

"In memory of a brave Australian, who died bravely defending; us."

"A token of honour and respect for one who died for his country, from a few citizens of Russell-street."

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 27 September, 1916)*

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## **ENGLAND HONORS ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S BRAVES**

### **A LONELY ANZAC**

### **DEATH STIRS NORTHERN ENGLISH TOWN**

### **TRIBUTE TO KURRI KURRI SOLDIER**

Sergeant Thomas Hunter, of Kurri Kurri, in this State, went to France with the A.I.F. He was wounded in the battle of Pozieres and sent back to England for hospital treatment. When he arrived at Peterborough, in a Red Cross train his condition was such that he had to be removed to the local infirmary, and there he died. He was only one inconspicuous Australian soldier, dying inconspicuously in a strange land, and the incident might conceivably have passed unnoticed by the townsfolk general. But the people of this Northamptonshire city were moved by the passing of the lonely Anzac, as they called Hunter. Over his grave in Peterborough Cemetery, they erected a handsome monument, and in the Minster they set up a bronze tablet commemorative of the event.

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*(Sunday Times, Sydney, NSW – 3 March, 1918)*

## Peterborough Old Cemetery (Broadway Cemetery), Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, England

Peterborough Old Cemetery (Broadway Cemetery), Peterborough contains 53 Commonwealth War Graves – 51 relating to World War 1 & 2 from World War 2.



*(Photos by Geoffrey Gillon)*



Photo of Sergeant Thomas Hunter's Private Headstone in Old Broadway Cemetery, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, England.



*(Photos courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)*



*IN GRATITUDE  
TO A LONELY ANZAC  
**SERGT. G. T. HUNTER**  
10<sup>TH</sup> AUSTRALIAN CORPS  
OF KURRI KURRI, N.S.W.  
MORTALLY WOUNDED IN FRANCE  
FIGHTING FOR THE ALLIES  
DIED IN THIS CITY  
JULY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 1916 AGED 36  
BORN AT NEWCASTLE ENGLAND*

*THIS STONE  
AND BRONZE TABLET  
IN PETERBOROUGH MINSTER  
ERECTED BY SUBSCRIPTION*



**St. Sprite's Chapel – Sergeant Hunter's Bronze Tablet shown by red arrow**



**Bronze Tablet in Memory of Sergeant Thomas Hunter inside Peterborough Cathedral (St. Sprite's Chapel). A wooden copy exists in Peterborough Museum (the former Infirmary) on Priestgate.**

*(Photo by julia&keld)*

THIS TABLET IS DEDICATED  
IN THE FAITH AND FEAR OF GOD  
BY FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE EMPIRE  
FOR WHICH HE GAVE HIS LIFE  
TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS HUNTER  
OF KURRII KURRII NEW SOUTH WALES  
SERGEANT IN THE TENTH CORPS  
AUSTRALIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE  
WHO DIED MONDAY JULY 31 1916  
IN PETERBOROUGH INFIRMARY  
OF WOUNDS RECEIVED IN FRANCE



## **Newspaper Articles**

### **LATE SERGEANT HUNTER**

#### **MONUMENT AT PETERBOROUGH**

LONDON, Aug. 13

*A public subscription is being raised at Peterborough to erect a monument to the late Sergeant Hunter, of New South Wales, who was accorded a public funeral on the 2nd inst., the Mayor and other members of the corporation attending.*

*(Examiner, Launceston, Tasmania - 19 August, 1916)*

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#### **MEMORIAL TO AN ANZAC**

*The town of Peterborough has raised 100 guineas for a memorial to Sergeant G. T. Hunter, an Anzac, buried in the town.*

*(The Week, Brisbane, Queensland – 15 September, 1916)*

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#### **A Lonely Anzac**

*To the memory of Sergeant Thomas Hunter, of Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, a handsome monolith and Celtic cross of granite has been erected over his grave in Peterborough cemetery, in England, and a massive bronze tablet has been erected at the west end of Peterborough Minster, the whole of the cost being defrayed by public subscriptions. "The lonely Anzac," as he became known to the people of Peterborough, died about sixteen months ago from battle wounds at Peterborough Infirmary, whence he had been removed while proceeding to Halifax War Hospital. The granite memorial over his grave was erected about nine months ago, but the moulding of the bronze tablet was necessarily delayed by munition work. "What could have been more pathetic than the circumstances which called*

© Cathy Sedgwick 2017



*forth the sympathy and generous response of the people of Peterborough in this matter ?” said the Vice Dean at the unveiling of the bronze tablet recently. “His name was unknown, and it is very possible that he himself had never heard of Peterborough until some sixteen months ago, when mortally wounded at the battlefield, and on his way to a military hospital farther north, he was removed in the extremity of illness from the ambulance train to Peterborough Infirmary. Here he died separated by half the compass of the earth from his home and friends. It was just in that that the lesson of his great sacrifice was found.”*

*(The Richmond River Express and Casino Kyogle Advertiser – 22 March, 1918)*

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Thomas Hunter is still remembered in Peterborough with an annual commemoration at his graveside on 25 April, 'ANZAC day'. This service is attended by the Mayor of Peterborough, members of the British Legion and local dignitaries. Most fittingly it is increasingly attended as well by local schoolchildren and Australian service personnel on attachment in the UK, paying tribute to one of their forebears who made the ultimate sacrifice.

### **Heroes honoured in emotional ANZAC tribute**

*A CITY cemetery fell silent as war heroes from the other side of the world who lost their lives during the two World Wars were remembered. A CITY cemetery fell silent as war heroes from the other side of the world who lost their lives during the two World Wars were remembered. Dignitaries, veterans, current servicemen and school children from Peterborough, alongside representatives from Australian services bowed their heads as Peterborough held the annual remembrance service to mark Australia New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) Day.*

*The service was held at the Broadway Cemetery grave of Sergeant Thomas Hunter, known as The Lonely Anzac. Sgt Hunter, an Australian soldier, was one of the hundreds of brave Australians and New Zealanders who took part in the Gallipoli landings in April 1915. He was later wounded in the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 and was sent to England. However, he was taken off a train on its way to a military hospital in Yorkshire at Peterborough station and died days later at the city's hospital.*

*Prayers for Sgt Hunter, The Commonwealth and those from Australia and New Zealand who gave their lives during the two World Wars were read by Reverend George Rogers, before a number of wreaths were laid at the grave. Pupils from Dogsthorpe Junior School and King's School also placed flowers by the headstone.*

*Representing the Australian services at the ceremony was Squadron Leader Greg Lamb, of the Royal Australian Air Force. Sqn Ldr Lamb, from Melbourne, said: "It is important to keep the memory of the sacrifice made during the wars. "This is a very important date for Australians and New Zealanders, and back home thousands of people take part in services. "It is also a good opportunity for the local community here in Peterborough to remember sacrifices made by their own servicemen and women." Joining Sqn Ldr Lamb from Australia was Bill Dalglish (71), a former member of the Royal Australian Navy, who now lives in Helpston. Mr Dalglish, originally from Sydney, said: "The people we are remembering today were not politicians. They were people who felt a need to help their country and their mates. "Anyone who lays down their life for their country is a hero, and it is important to remember that." High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire, Deputy Lord Lieutenant Colonel Peter Horrell added: "It is a poignant reminder to remember the sacrifice by not just our services, but from throughout the Commonwealth, in conflicts in the past and at the moment in Iraq and Afghanistan. And Mayor of Peterborough Cllr Marion Todd paid her respects to the soldiers, and said: "It is important to recognise that lives were lost in our service. "They fought then and continue to fight now, and we should never forget."*

*(Peterborough Telegraph – 26 April, 2008)*

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## **Peterborough remembers ANZAC day**



*The sacrifices made by Australian and New Zealand soldiers 100 years ago were remembered at a Peterborough grave side. The annual ANZAC day service took place at Broadway Cemetery on Saturday, marking the centenary of the Gallipoli landings, where thousands of soldiers died, many from Australia and New Zealand. The service took place at the grave side of Sgt Thomas Hunter, an Australian who died during the First World War after being injured in battle. He was being transferred to a military hospital but became critically ill and died at Peterborough Hospital - now Peterborough Museum. On Saturday veterans, dignitaries, serving members of the armed forces and school children laid wreaths at the grave side, and fell silent to remember fallen soldiers from the other side of the world. Tributes were also paid to former Mayor of Peterborough George Keeble, whose grave is near Sgt Hunter's.*

*(Peterborough Telegraph – 27 April, 2015)*

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## **Peterborough pays tribute to the Lonely ANZAC 100 years after his death**

*“Amongst the destroying music, he must have hoped for a lullaby when he landed in the Somme.” With hindsight we know these words to be tragically mistaken, but 100 years ago Sergeant Thomas Hunter could hardly have realised that by escaping the battlefields of Gallipoli, fate would deliver him another horrid hand in northern France.*

*Sgt Hunter, a miner in New South Wales, Australia, enlisted with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) in 1914, but having survived the bloody Gallipoli landings he was shot in the spine at Pozieres during the Battle of the Somme. Brought back to Blighty, he was on his way to Halifax when his condition deteriorated and the train he was on stopped at Peterborough where he was taken to the hospital, only to die. His story touched the hearts of many in the city, and 100 years on from the day of his death Peterborough continued to pay tribute to one of the many millions of heroes of the First World War who gave up their today for our tomorrow. Much time may have passed since the Lonely ANZAC's passing, and the hospital in Priestgate may now be a museum, but Peterborough's affection and reverence for Sgt Hunter remains firmly in tact.*



A service held in the city centre today (Sunday, July 31) was attended by grateful representatives from Australia (both military and civilian) who were extremely touched that one of their sons continues to be honoured in such fine fashion. Major-General Neil Wilson, representing the 10th Battalion AIF Association, flew in from Australia for the service.

He said: "This is quite a remarkable story. We are very appreciative of the support of the local community. "The story is not very well known at all in Australia, but I will do my best to rectify that. It's certainly well known by the 10th Battalion Association." Hugh Burnham moved from Australia to Peterborough in December 2012 when he married Karen, and has been to the annual ANZAC ceremonies held in April. He said: "I thought I would come along and pay my respects. It's quite amazing that 100 years ago when he passed away the city took him into their hearts.

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(Peterborough Today – 31 July, 2016)

# Thomas Hunter

Thomas Hunter is one of very few people who are remembered annually in the city by a commemorative service. This is despite the fact that he was neither born nor resident in Peterborough, but due to the tragic circumstances which led to his death here in July 1916.

He is remembered on 25th April as the 'Lonely ANZAC', an Australian soldier who was wounded on the Western Front during the Great War who, through a chapter of accidents, died in the building which is now home to Peterborough Museum. Today he is commemorated in the Cathedral and buried in the Broadway Cemetery.

During the Battle of the Somme, Sergeant Thomas Hunter was seriously wounded in the legs and his spine. He was sent back to England, heading for the military hospital at Halifax in Yorkshire. On route his condition worsened and nurses got the train to stop at the next station. By chance, the next station was Peterborough North (the modern rail station). After being taken from the train, Thomas was brought by motor ambulance to the nearest hospital, the Peterborough Infirmary (today the museum building). Sadly his condition had worsened so much that he died of his wounds the following day, July 31st 1916.

The Mayor of Peterborough and the secretary of the Infirmary, Alfred Caleb Taylor, felt sorry for this 'lonely ANZAC' and arranged a civic funeral for him. Word about his story spread around the town and piles of floral tributes were brought to the Infirmary. His funeral was held on 2 August, with his burial at the Broadway Cemetery with full military honours. The entirety of Peterborough stopped as the cortege passed through the streets, as people paid their respects. Thomas' death seems to have struck a cord with the people of Peterborough, perhaps because he died so far from home; perhaps because he was emblematic of their own young men who were away fighting. A public subscription was raised to place a memorial at his graveside, and an eight foot high Celtic cross still marks the spot in the Broadway Cemetery.



Funeral of Thomas Hunter - 'The Lonely ANZAC'

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*(Photo courtesy of Edward Finch 2018)*



## Recovering away from home

The gallery beyond this doorway was once a hospital ward. For most patients, it would have been the grandest room they ever slept in. For some, it was the last room they slept in. Thomas Hunter, an Australian soldier known as 'the lonely ANZAC', died in this hospital in 1916 from wounds he received in France during the First World War.

If you were ill, how would you feel about coming to this building?



History of the Building 

*(Photos courtesy of Edward Finch 2018)*



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