

Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon, England



Lest We Forget

World War 1



SUB-LIEUTENANT

F. L. LARKINS

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

H.M.A.S. "PLATYPUS" J2

20TH JUNE, 1919

Frank Lockwood LARKINS

Frank Lockwood Larkins & his twin brother Brian Lockwood Larkins were born on 27th March, 1899 to parents Walter Alfred and Margaret Larkins (nee Kerr). Frank & Bryan were both baptised on 21st May, 1899 at St. Peter's Church, Eastern Hill, Melbourne, Victoria along with their older sister Beryl Lockwood Larkins (born 4th August, 1896). The family were living at Locksley, Gisborne Street at the time of the Baptisms & Walter Alfred Larkins was listed as a Civil Engineer.

Frank Lockwood Larkins & his twin brother Brian Lockwood Larkins were confirmed at St. Peter's Church, Eastern Hill, Melbourne, Victoria on 8th July, 1909.

Frank Lockwood Larkins attended Melbourne Grammar Preparatory School, Victoria from 1910 to 1913.

Frank Lockwood Larkins joined the Royal Australian Navy on 31st December, 1912 for 12 years from the age of eighteen. His next of kin was listed as his father – Walter Alfred Larkins, 86th Gisborne St, East Melbourne, Victoria.

Frank Lockwood Larkins was appointed Cadet Midshipman P.N.F. (Permanent Naval Forces) on 31st December, 1912 & attended Royal Australian Naval College from 31st December, 1912 till 31st December, 1916.

Cadet Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins was appointed Midshipman on 1st January, 1917. He was posted to H.M.A.S. Cerberus from 1st January, 1917 until 17th January, 1917.

Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins was posted to London Depot from 18th January, 1917 until 4th April, 1917.

Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins was posted to H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign* from 5th April, 1917 until 26th October, 1918.

From Melbourne Grammar School – War Services Old Melburnians:

FRANK LARKINS, midshipman R.A.N., has arrived in England to join the Grand Fleet in the North Sea. On leaving the School he went to the R.A.N. College. He was appointed first cadet captain of the college, and afterwards was senior chief cadet captain. He was captain of the cricket, football and tennis teams, and also had his colours for athletics.

The Naval Forces of the Dominions (Australia) - Gradation List for August, 1917 listed Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins with Seniority from 1st January, 1917.

Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins was promoted to Acting Sub-Lieutenant from 1st September, 1918.

Acting Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins was transferred to _____ from 7th October 1918 until 20th November, 1918.

Acting Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Vampire* from 21st November, 1918 until 2nd March, 1919.

Acting Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins was confirmed in the rank of Sub-Lieutenant from 1st December, 1918.

The Naval Forces of the Dominions (Australia) - Gradation List for January 1919 listed Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins with Seniority from 15th November, 1918.

Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Dolphin* from 3rd March, 1919.

Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins gained a Commission on 21st March, 1919.

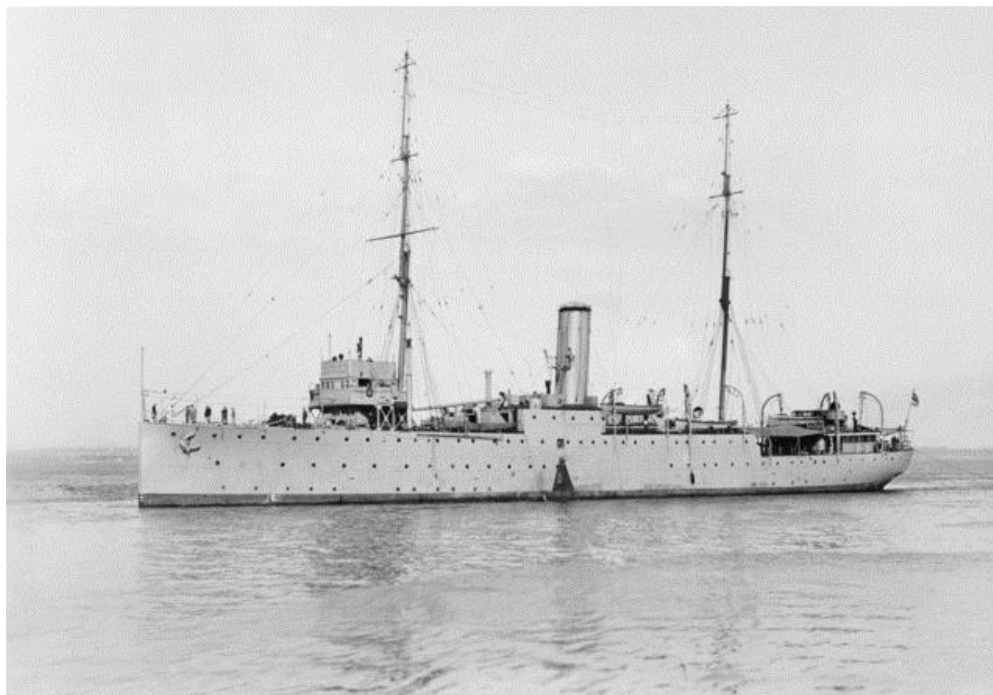
Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins was posted to H.M.A.S. *Platypus (J2)* from 25th March, 1919.

H.M.A.S. *Platypus*

HMAS *Platypus* was built to the order of the Australian Government. After completion in March 1917 she passed to the control of the Admiralty until 25 March 1919 when she was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy at Portsmouth, under the command of Commander Edward Boyle VC RN, as a Submarine Depot Ship for six J Class submarines transferred as a gift from the Admiralty to the Royal Australian Navy.

Platypus sailed from Portsmouth on 8 April 1919 and with the submarines in company proceeded to Australia via the Suez Canal, arriving in Sydney on 15 July 1919.

(Information from Australian Navy website)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H17513

HMAS *Platypus*

The Australian depot ship HMAS Platypus which was built abroad for the Australian Navy. It was launched on 28 October 1916 and completed on 2 March 1917. On completion the ship was taken over by Imperial authorities and manned by British ratings for the duration of the war. (Donor Our Australian Navy through J.W.Ward)

HMS J2

HMS J2 (later HMAS J2) was a J-class submarine operated by the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.

The J class was designed by the Royal Navy in response to reported German submarines with surface speeds over 18 knots (33 km/h; 21 mph). They had a displacement of 1,210 tons surfaced, and 1,820 tons submerged. Each submarine was 275 feet (84 m) in length overall, with a beam of 22 feet (6.7 m), and a draught of 14 feet (4.3 m). The propulsion system was built around three propeller shafts; the J-class were the only triple-screwed submarines ever built by the British. Propulsion came from three 12-cylinder diesel motors when on the surface, and electric motors when submerged. Top speed was 19 knots (35 km/h; 22 mph) on the surface (the fastest submarines in the world at the time of construction), and 9.5 knots (17.6 km/h; 10.9 mph) underwater. Range was 4,000 nautical miles (7,400 km; 4,600 mi) at 12 knots (22 km/h; 14 mph).

Armament consisted of six 18-inch (450 mm) torpedo tubes (four forward, one on each beam), plus a 4-inch deck gun. Originally, the gun was mounted on a breastwork fitted forward of the conning tower, but the breastwork was later extended to the bow and merged into the hull for streamlining, and the gun was relocated to a platform fitted to the front of the conning tower. 44 personnel were aboard.

J2 was built for the Royal Navy by HM Dockyard at Portsmouth in Hampshire and launched on 6 November 1915.

J2 torpedoed and sank the German submarine U-99 between the Orkney Islands and Norway on 7 July 1917.

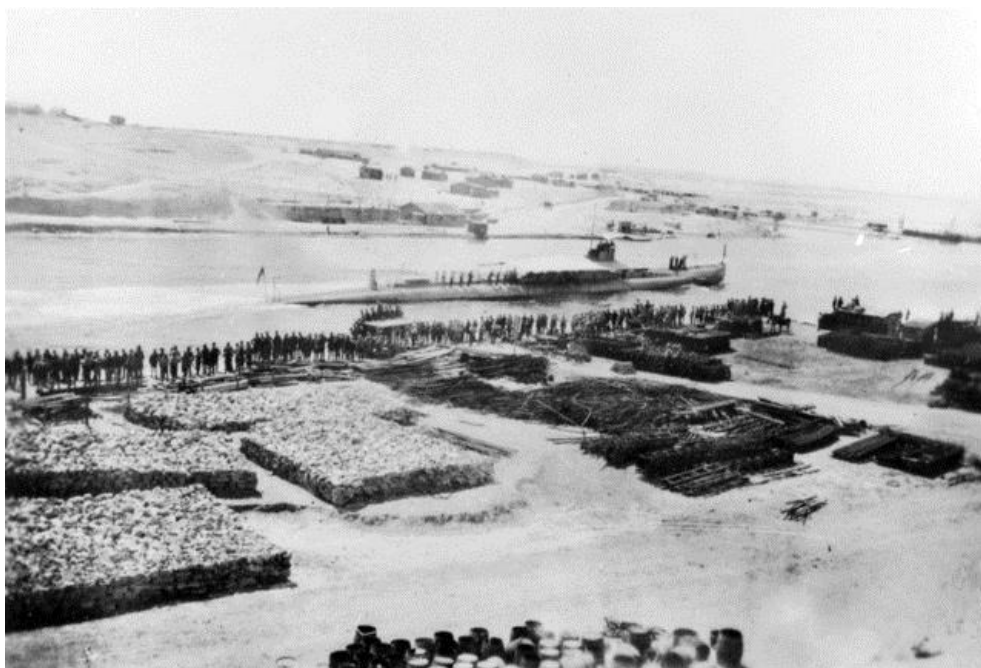
After the war, the British Admiralty decided that the best way to protect the Pacific region was with a force of submarines and cruisers. To this end, they offered the six surviving submarines of the J-class to the Royal Australian Navy as gifts. J1 and her sisters were commissioned into the RAN in April 1919, and sailed for Australia on 9 April, in the company of the cruisers Sydney and Brisbane, and the tender Platypus. The flotilla reached Thursday Island on 29 June, and Sydney on 10 July. Because of the submarines' condition after the long voyage, they were immediately taken out of service for refits.

Apart from local exercises and a 1921 visit to Tasmania, the submarines saw little use, and by June 1922, the cost of maintaining the boats and deteriorating economic conditions saw the six submarines decommissioned and marked for disposal.

(Information from Wikipedia)



HMAS Platypus with the J Class Submarines (Photo from Australian Navy website)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03093.001

J2 – Egypt – Suez Canal 1919

The J Class Submarine, HMS J2, (later HMAS) travels up the Suez Canal, passing Ferry Post, between Kantara and Port Said on her way from Portsmouth, England, to Sydney, NSW. Australian servicemen and women line the shore of the canal greeting the crew of the J2 who are standing on the deck. On the shore are stacks of iron rails and pipes, timber, storage drums and piles of rocks, neatly stacked in squares. The HMS J2 and her sisters, J1, J3, J4, J5 and J7, were gifted to the RAN by the British Admiralty after the conclusion of the First World War hostilities.



“The Mother & her deadly chicks HMAS *Platypus* & subs J1, 2, 4 & 5”

Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins died on 20th June, 1919 as a result on an accidental drowning at Karimata Strait, Netherlands East Indies when he was lost overboard from Submarine J2.

Cause of death listed by The Australian War Memorial – Accidental (Drowning).

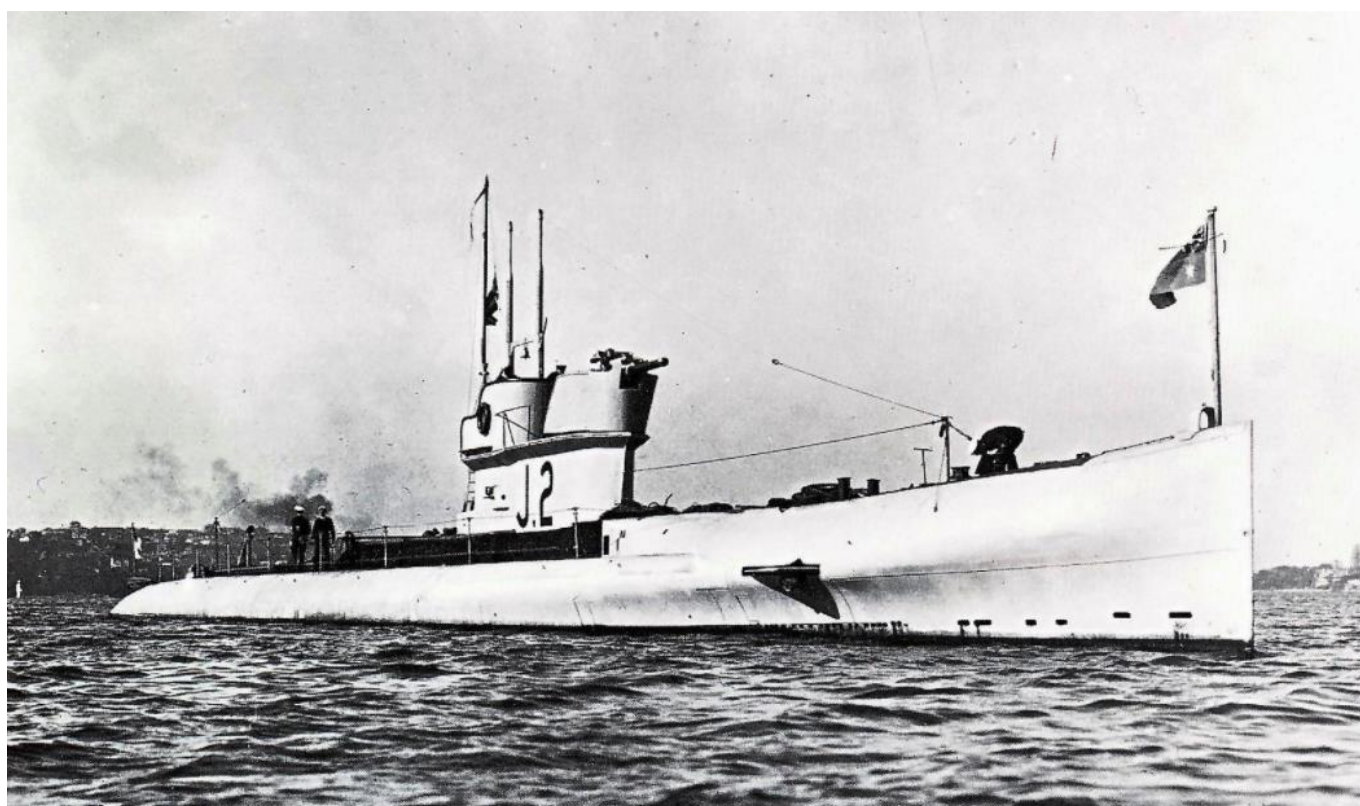
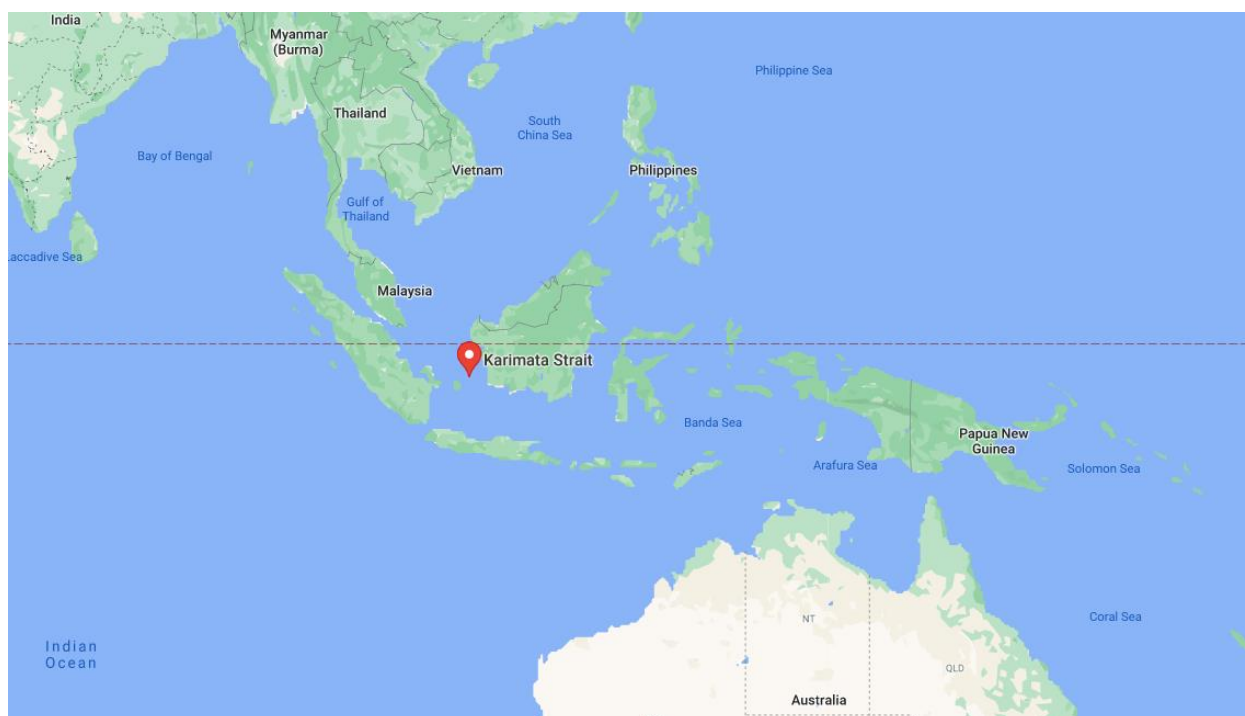
From The Naval Historical Society of Australia:

June 20, 1919

SBLT F. L. Larkins, RAN, was washed overboard and drowned from HMA Submarine J2, in the Karimata Strait, (between Borneo and Sumatra), while the vessel was returning to Australia. Larkins was one of the original entry to the RAN College in 1913.

Karimata Strait (also Carimata or Caramata)

The Karimata Strait is the wide strait that connects the South China Sea to the Java Sea, separating the Indonesian islands of Belitung and Borneo (Kalimantan).



J2

(Photo from Flickr – Horatio J. Kookaburra)

(originally by P. Britz, it appears in Ross Gillett's 'Australian and New Zealand Warships 1914-1945'

[Doubleday, Sydney 1983] p111.)

Extract from Australian Submarines at Peace: J Boats (by Graham Seal)

In January 1915 eight J-class submarines were commissioned under the United Kingdom War Emergency Program. Only six were constructed though these were able to reach surface speeds of nineteen knots, attained through a triple propeller system powered by three eight cylinder Vickers Diesel engines. This allowed the submarines to operate with the main battle fleet, trapping slow enemy craft between surface vessels and very fast submarines, a technique that led to them being known collectively as 'The Reapers'. They were around 100 foot longer than the E-class submarines, of which Australia had two during the war, and were also equipped with long-range wireless. Together with their speed, this enabled them to operate effectively as reconnaissance vessels, with a safe diving depth of 300 feet. As part of the 11th Submarine Flotilla, the J-class boats were to play an effective role in North Sea Naval operations.

Life on board a J-boat was a cramped and dangerous affair. Leading Torpedo-man Tom, or 'Taff', Jones had been among the landing boat crews at Gallipoli aboard HMS London. Inspired by the well-reported exploits of VC-winner Lieutenant Norman Douglas Holbrook in British submarine B11 in the Dardanelles, he joined the submarine service. Jones subsequently served aboard J2 and in 1935 published a rare account of the experience in his Watchdogs of the Deep. According to Jones, after some brief but intense training in HMS Thames at Sheerness, including just one practice dive, he was posted to J2 under Lt-Commander Cooper, DSO. J2 was crewed by five officers and forty men. Jones described the inside of J2 and the living and working conditions as they were in 1916: '... it is divided into eight compartments separated by means of strong bulkheads with watertight doors. The first compartment, as we come from the bows, is the torpedo room, or 'Fort End', as we call it. In it are four torpedo-tubes, each containing a torpedo; and on each side of us there are two more spare torpedoes, in all eight 'tin fish'. All round us are dozens of pipes and valves, polished to perfection. The valves are for flooding the tubes and the hundred and one controls for operating the torpedo-tubes. At the back of the tubes are four tanks containing the aircharge for firing the 'fish'. Leaving Fort End we step through a bulkhead door to the ward-room. The captain and officers feed and sleep in the ward-room. Here again, we find all valves and pipes polished. On one side are the officers' bunks; on the other the wireless cabinet. At the after end of this compartment is a tiny officers' pantry. Jones goes on to describe the operating hub of the control room, crammed with pipes, levers and gauges. 'Just abaft the control room are two beam or broadside torpedo-tubes, with two spare fish on top ready for loading. He describes the fore engine room with wing Diesels on each side, the main motor room and the after engine-room, with another Diesel making a 'terrific din' and air compression equipment equally as noisy. The final compartment was the crew space 'where we ate, slept and played patience'. Half the crew would eat their meals here at any one time, 'otherwise the other half would have had to stand on their eyebrows as we termed it.' On deck was a three-inch recessing gun and a telescopic wireless mast. The J-boats were notorious for rolling and pitching, with sea-sickness afflicting even the hardest submariners, including Jones. It was not considered good form to show that you were seasick and so Jones, like many others, suffered silently. In these confined quarters, the submariners worked, ate, slept and socialised as best they could. Some played cards, some read, some talked about their girlfriends or wives. 'The air seems thick, even in the morning', Jones wrote. 'After a very long day of diving, about eighteen hours, breathing becomes very hard, and a sort of mist can be seen over the deck-boards, indicating that the fresh air is diminishing fast. Smoking was officially banned but officers and men smoked pipes and cigarettes surreptitiously, no doubt contributing the breathing difficulties. Jones says that the only air supplies on board were used for the operation of the submarine, though he did see engineers occasionally open the airlines to 'put a little kick in the stale air. Apart from this occasional assistance, the only pleasure was the daily ration of rum in the tradition of the British navy. Despite the dangers of enemy craft, Jones wrote 'I think I voice the opinion of most submarine men when I say that the British Navy was our biggest enemy'.vi The British warships were frequently so nervous of Uboats that they attacked their own submarines, even after they had given correct recognition signals. The submarines would have to dive rapidly in sixty seconds to escape. Referring to the openly expressed warning by the British destroyers that the submarines must keep out of the way or risk being attacked, Jones writes: 'I don't think I am giving away secrets when I state that a very large number of British submarines never returned through these circumstances'. Jones and his fellow submariners appear to have accepted this situation due to the seriousness of the U-boat menace. As well as contending with such friendly fire, the J boats were not very manoeuvrable. Commander Norman Shaw recollected many years later that 'Their diving qualities were not the best, it being asserted by one experienced submarine captain that if you could drive a J-boat you could drive a bath.' The very flat upper deck and casing of the J- boats operated like one large hydroplane if the boat attained an angle of more than 5 degrees.

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Even before the J-boats began their voyage to Australia they were plagued with defects. It was not until April 9, 1919, that the six submarines were able to leave Portsmouth, escorted by Sydney and Platypus. They were followed

by three more support craft, an oiler Kurumba and the Australia and Brisbane. As with the earlier voyage of AE1 and AE2 from Britain to Australia, the J-class boats suffered problems, breakdowns and other disasters. In poor visibility J5 collided with a French sailing ship, which later sank as a result. Further problems were experienced with the intermediate shafts and the submarines were frequently under tow as they proceed from Gibraltar, to Malta. One of J2's engines failed as soon as she had left Gibraltar and the submarine had to be taken in tow by Sydney. But in the evening the tow wire parted. The next day it broke again but they managed to make another engine operable and made a slow passage to Malta, arriving on the 20th. All the other submarines also suffered engine problems on this stage of the voyage and J7, at least, was towed for some days by Australia between Aden and Colombo. Aboard Australia was a young Australian Midshipman, Norman Shaw. With the rank of sub-Lieutenant and after submarine training in England, he would later be briefly appointed to J7 in Australia in February 1920. He was one of the second group of Cadet Midshipmen at the Royal Australian Navy College at Osborne House, Geelong, a location destined to play an important role in the Australian history of the J-boats. Together with Frank Getting, who had been in the first Royal Australian Navy College intake, he was the first Australian submarine officer to complete the 'Perisher' training course in Britain. In his recollections, Shaw notes that as well as himself and Getting there were another five Australian sub-Lieutenants in the submarines, Calder, Larkins, Sadleir, Showers and Watkins. **The flotilla passed through the Suez Canal and on to Colombo by May 16. The heat and cramped conditions caused the crews great distress and there was a much needed few days rest, including leave. From there, the submarines sailed at various times for Singapore, 'Another very welcome port', as torpedo-man Jones recalled. Again they were able to rest and obtain much-needed fresh food. From Singapore the submarines had all departed by June 18 for Thursday Island.**

During this final stage of the voyage tragedy again struck the J-boats. Due to the oppressive heat of the tropics, the crews had taken to sleeping on the casing. But on the morning of June 20, the men of J2 discovered the empty blankets of Sub-Lieutenant Larkins. All the submarines immediately conducted a search until late in the afternoon, but without success. J2's captain held a burial service with all the crew mustered – 'They were a band of downcast men who stood there bareheaded', Jones wrote.....

Sub-Lieutenant F. L. Larkins is named on the Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon, England – Panel 31. He has no grave, however his death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins, aged 20, of Royal Australian Navy H.M.A. S/M "J2". He was the son of Walter Alfred and Margaret Larkins, of 86 Gisborne St., Melbourne, Australia.

Sub-Lieutenant F. L. Larkins is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 1.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

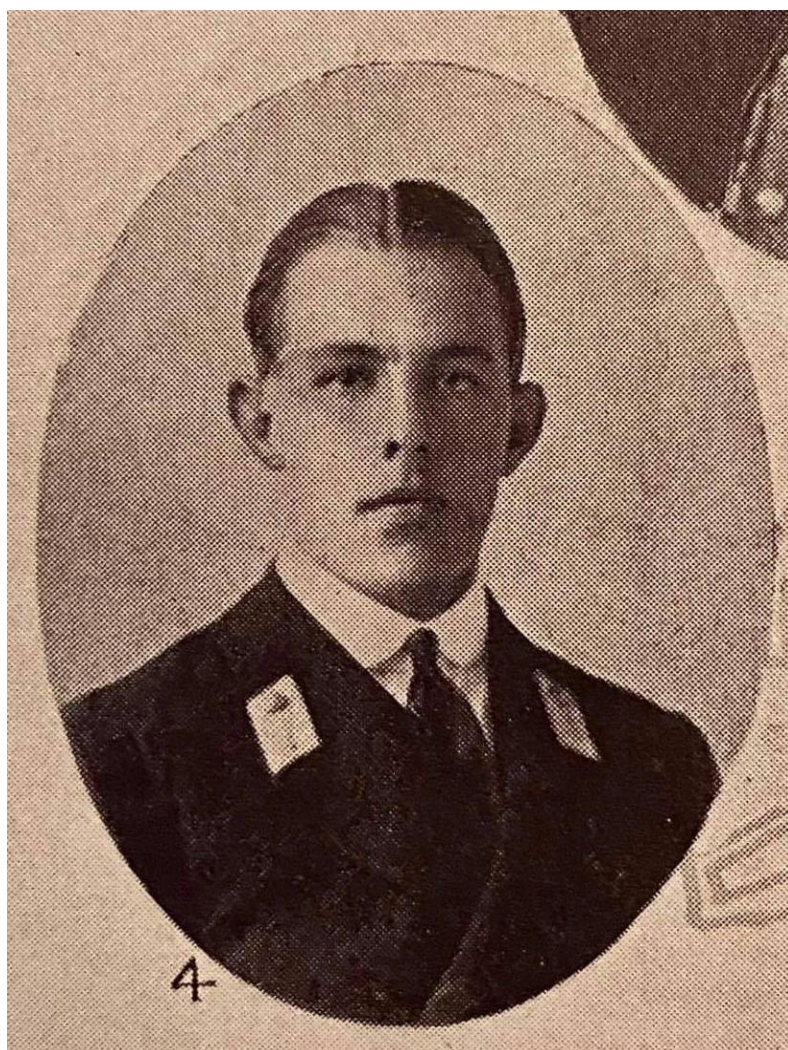
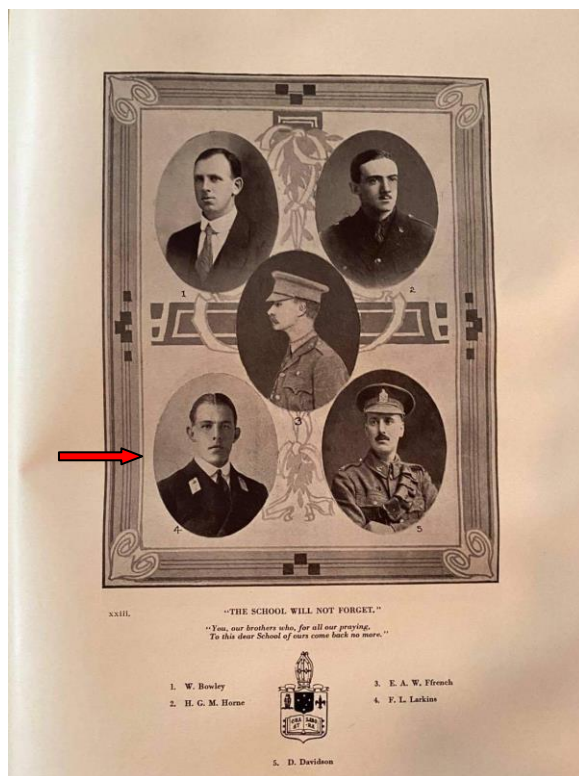
F. L. Larkins is remembered on the Melbourne Grammar School Honour Roll, located in Melbourne Grammar School, Domain Road, Melbourne, Victoria.



Melbourne Grammar School Honour Roll (Photos by Chris McLaughlin)



From the Melbourne Grammar School War Services Books:



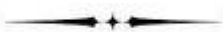
Frank Lockwood Larkins

FRANK LOCKWOOD LARKINS who was drowned at sea, being lost overboard from Submarine J2 in Carimata Strait on the coast of Borneo on 20th June 1919, was the son of Mr. W. A. Larkins. He was born in 1899 and was at the Preparatory School from 1910 to 1913. He was the first Old Melburnian to join the Royal Australian Naval College, which he entered in February 1913 at the opening of the College. He was the first Cadet Captain appointed in the College, and finished his course in December 1916. In January 1917 he proceeded to the North Sea, where he served in H.M.S. "Royal Sovereign" until November 1918, and shortly after was transferred to H.M.S. "Vampire." Sub-Lieutenant Larkins was later appointed to the Submarine J2, in which he was proceeding to Australia. The news of the loss was received with deep regret by the Naval Board and the comrades of Sub-Lieutenant Larkins in the Royal Australian Navy. The story of the loss is told in a letter from Commander Boyle, H.M.A.S. "Platypus," thus: "Your son was washed overboard and drowned from H.M.A. Submarine J2 on Friday, 20th June, in the Carimata Strait, when we were two days out from Singapore. His absence was first noticed at 6.30 a.m., and upon careful inquiry being made it was thought probable that he had been washed overboard about 3.30 a.m. The whole flotilla was immediately turned round and proceeded at full speed to the position we were in at that time, and a thorough search was carried out in the vicinity until after dark that evening. In the hot fine weather all the officers and men sleep on the upper deck. The boat's side is guarded. Only one small wave came inboard during the whole night, and this was at 3.30 a.m. Although nothing happened to indicate that anybody had fallen overboard, it must be assumed that your son was either washed overboard at this time or that he got out of bed and fell over the side just before, as he was seen in his bed on the upper deck asleep at 3.10 a.m. and no one saw him after this. He was one of the nicest officers that his Captain has ever had to do with, and he will be a very great loss to the service. His record at Jervis Bay was splendid, and he promised to become an example of everything that an officer should be. The funeral service with full military honours was read in this ship on the evening of the day he died." The following letter from the Chaplain of H.M.A.S. "Platypus" is a tribute to a young naval officer of which his parents are justly proud. Chaplain Tulloh wrote: "He was a splendid young man, courteous, cheerful and capable. Everybody liked him and thought well of him. My own feelings towards him were of deep attachment and regard." Sub-Lieutenant Getting wrote thus of him: "Your son was our leader in everything. At college, as you know, he was our games leader and our senior captain, and one we always looked for wherever we were. I knew him probably better than anyone else in our term, and I cannot say I have met a finer and fairer fellow."

FRANK LOCKWOOD LARKINS who was drowned at sea, being lost overboard from Submarine J2 in Carimata Strait on the coast of Borneo on 20th June 1919, was the son of Mr. W. A. Larkins. He was born in 1899 and was at the Preparatory School from 1910 to 1913. He was the first Old Melburnian to join the Royal Australian Naval College, which he entered in February 1913 at the opening of the College. He was the first Cadet Captain appointed in the College, and finished his course in December 1916. In January 1917 he proceeded to the North Sea, where he served in H.M.S. "Royal Sovereign" until November 1918, and shortly after was transferred to H.M.S. "Vampire." Sub-Lieutenant Larkins was later appointed to the Submarine J2, in which he was proceeding to Australia. The news of the loss was received with deep regret by the Naval Board and the comrades of Sub-Lieutenant Larkins in the Royal Australian Navy. The story of the loss is told in a letter from Commander Boyle, H.M.A.S. "Platypus," thus : "Your son was washed overboard and drowned from H.M.A. Submarine J2 on Friday, 20th June, in the Carimata Strait, when we were two days out from Singapore. His absence was first noticed at 6.30 a.m., and upon careful inquiry being made it was thought probable that he had been washed overboard about 3.30 a.m. The whole flotilla was immediately turned round and proceeded at full speed to the position we were in at that time, and a thorough search was carried out in the vicinity until after dark that evening. In the hot fine weather all the officers and men sleep on the upper deck. The boat's side is guarded. Only one small wave came inboard during the whole night, and this was at 3.30 a.m. Although nothing happened to indicate that anybody had fallen overboard, it must be assumed that your son was either washed overboard at this time or that he got out of bed and fell over the side just before, as he was seen in his bed on the upper deck asleep at 3.10 a.m. and no one saw him after this. He was one of the nicest officers that his Captain has ever had to do with, and he will be a very great loss to the service. His record at Jervis Bay was splendid, and he promised to become an example of everything that an officer should be. The funeral service with full military honours was read in this ship on the evening of the day he died." The following letter from the Chaplain of H.M.A.S. "Platypus" is a tribute to a young naval officer of which his parents are justly proud. Chaplain Tulloh wrote : " He was a splendid young man, courteous, cheerful and capable. Everybody liked him and thought well of him. My own feelings towards him were of deep attachment and regard." Sub-Lieutenant Getting wrote thus of him : " Your son was our leader in everything. At college, as you know, he was our games leader and our senior captain, and one we always looked for wherever we were. I knew him probably better than anyone else in our term, and I cannot say I have met a finer and fairer fellow."

(3 pages of Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins' 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) & National Archives



Connected to Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins:

Twin Brother Brian Lockwood Larkins – Enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 1st January, 1915. Embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on 12th February, 1915 on HMAT Runic as Private 5426 with Divisional Train, 2nd and 3rd Reinforcements. Admitted to Hospital at Dardanelles on 27th May, 1915 with Pleurisy. Admitted to Hospital at Helipolis on 30th June, 1915 with Heart disease. Returned to Australia 17th August, 1915. Medically discharged from Australian Imperial Force on 22nd November, 1915. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.

Died 13th June, 1957 at Caulfield, Melbourne, Victoria. Buried Melbourne General Cemetery



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL

Midshipman Frank Lockwood Larkins, R.A.N., son of Mr and Mrs Walter Larkins, of East Melbourne, has sailed for England to join the Grand Fleet in the North Sea. He was educated at the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School, and from there went to the R.A.N. College. He was appointed first cadet captain of the college, and afterwards was senior chief cadet captain. He was captain of the cricket, football, and tennis teams, and also had his colours for athletics. He is a cousin of the late Sir Frank Lockwood, K.C., England.

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

THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY

A BATCH OF LIEUTENANTS

Melbourne, October 28.

The Australian midshipmen who left college, Jervis Bay, in December, 1916, and who have since been employed on vessels in the North Sea have passed their seamanship examination for the rank of lieutenant and been promoted to be acting sub-lieutenants as from September 1 last. They are:-F. L. Larkins.....

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 29 October, 1918)

Australian Naval Officer Lost

FALLS OVERBOARD FROM SUBMARINE

The Navy department announces with regret that news has been received from H.M.A.S. Platypus, submarine depot ship, that Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins, R.A.N., was lost overboard from submarine J2 on 20th June, in Carimata Strait (Dutch East Indies, between Borneo and Sumatra). A 12 hours' search was carried out without success.

This young officer, who is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Larkins, of 86 Gisborne street, East Melbourne, entered the Royal Australian Naval College in February, 1913, being one of the first batch of cadet middshipmen to enter the establishment. He finished his course at Jervis Bay in December, 1916, and in January, 1917, proceeded to the North Sea, where he served in H.M.S. Royal Sovereign until November; 1918, and shortly afterwards was transferred to H.M.S. Vampire. Sub Lieutenant Larkins was later appointed to the submarine J2, in which he was proceeding to Australia. The news of the loss has been received with deep regret by the Naval Board and his comrades in the Royal Australian Navy.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 24 June, 1919)

NOTES AND NOTICES

Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins, R.A.N., was lost overboard from submarine J2 on June 20 in Carimata Strait on the west coast of Borneo. A twelve hours' search was carried out without success. The young officer was the son of Mr and Mrs Walter A. Larkins, 86 Gisborne street, East Melbourne. He entered the Royal Australian Naval College in February, 1913.

(The Australasian, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 June, 1919)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Sub-Lieutenant Frank Lockwood Larkins has no headstone but is instead named on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon, England

The Memorial is situated centrally on The Hoe which looks directly towards Plymouth Sound.

After the First World War, an appropriate way had to be found of commemorating those members of the Royal Navy who had no known grave, the majority of deaths having occurred at sea where no permanent memorial could be provided.

An Admiralty committee recommended that the three manning ports in Great Britain - Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth - should each have an identical memorial of unmistakable naval form, an obelisk, which would serve as a leading mark for shipping. The memorials were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, who had already carried out a considerable amount of work for the Commission, with sculpture by Henry Poole. The Plymouth Naval Memorial was unveiled by HRH Prince George on 29 July 1924.

After the Second World War it was decided that the naval memorials should be extended to provide space for commemorating the naval dead without graves of that war, but since the three sites were dissimilar, a different architectural treatment was required for each. The architect for the Second World War extension at Plymouth was Sir Edward Maufe (who also designed the Air Forces memorial at Runnymede) and the additional sculpture was by Charles Wheeler and William McMillan. The Extension was unveiled by HRH Princess Margaret on 20 May 1954. A further unveiling took place on 11 November 1956, when panels 101 to 103 honouring those who died on shore, but who had no known grave, were unveiled by Admiral Sir Mark Pizey.

In addition to commemorating seamen of the Royal Navy who sailed from Plymouth, the First World War panels also bears the names of sailors from Australia and South Africa. The governments of the other Commonwealth nations chose to commemorate their dead elsewhere, for the most part on memorials in their home ports. After the Second World War, Canada and New Zealand again chose commemoration at home, but the memorial at Plymouth commemorates sailors from all other parts of the Commonwealth.

Plymouth Naval Memorial commemorates 7,251 sailors of the First World War and 15,933 of the Second World War.

(Information from CWGC)



Plymouth Naval Memorial (Photo from VWMA – Julianne T. Ryan 2017)



(Photo from CWGC)



1914 – 1918 1939 – 1945

***All These Were Honoured In Their Generations
And Were The Glory Of Their Times***



(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Sub-Lieutenant F. L. Larkins' name on the Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon, England.



Panel 31 – Plymouth Naval Memorial



Poppies Wave at CWGC Plymouth Naval Memorial (Photo by Robert Pittman)