

**Hollybrook Memorial,  
Southampton, Hampshire, England  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**13732 PRIVATE**

**A. LAWSON**

**AUSTRALIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS**

**3RD AUGUST, 1918**

## Arthur LAWSON

Arthur Lawson was born at Grass Hut, near Ravenswood Junction, Queensland on 14th May, 1892 to parents Andrew & Margaret Lawson (nee Hinchey).

Andrew Lawson, father of Arthur Lawson, died on 24th March, 1902 at Charters Towers, Queensland.

Arthur Lawson stated he was a 27 year old, single, Advertising Manager when he enlisted in Sydney, New South Wales on 26th June, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Margaret Lawson, Charters Towers, Queensland.

Private Arthur Lawson was posted to A.A.S.C. (Australian Army Service Corps) for recruit training on 26th June, 1916. He was transferred to Invalid Section, Victoria Barracks from 13th September, 1916 until 22nd September, 1916. Private Lawson was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements of A.S.C. (Army Service Corps) on 3rd October, 1916 as Driver.

Driver Arthur Lawson, Service number 13732, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 25th November, 1916 with the A.S.C. (Army Service Corps) November Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 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.

Driver Arthur Lawson was marched into A.A.S.C. (Australian Army Service Corps) Training Depot at Parkhouse, Wiltshire on 6th February, 1917 from Australia.

Driver Arthur Lawson reported sick on 20th February, 1917. He was admitted to Delhi Hospital, Wiltshire (the War Gratuity Schedule recorded he was admitted to Tidworth Military Hospital) & was marched into A.A.S.C. Training Depot at Parkhouse, Wiltshire on 9th April, 1917 (the War Gratuity Schedule recorded he was marched in from Delhi Hospital).

Driver Arthur Lawson was taken on strength of 5th Divisional Supply Column on 14th June, 1917 from A.S.C. Reinforcements. He proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 20th June, 1917.

Driver Arthur Lawson was to be Temporary Corporal in France from 12th July, 1917 with 5th Divisional Supply Column. He reverted to the rank of Private on 10th August, 1917.

A query was made on 30th January, 1918 regarding the rank of Driver. An entry on the Casualty Form – Active Service recorded "*D. M. T. S. reports that there is no record of this man ever being a Driver*" – dated 6th February, 1918.

Private Arthur Lawson was transferred to "K" Supply Column from 9th September, 1917. He was taken on strength on 10th September, 1917 with 1st Anzac Corps Troops K Supply Column.

Private Arthur Lawson was On Leave to UK from 4th January, 1918 & rejoined from Leave on 21st January, 1918.

Private Arthur Lawson reported sick on 23rd January, 1918. He was admitted to 7th Australian Field Ambulance with Gonorrhoea then transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 23rd January, 1918. Private Lawson was transferred to Ambulance Train 36 on 25th January, 1918 & admitted to 39th General Hospital at Havre, France on 28th January, 1918 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined). He was discharged to Base Depot on 4th March, 1918 – V.D. period – 41 days.

Private Arthur Lawson was marched in the A.S.C. Base Depot at Havre, France on 5th March, 1918. He was marched out to his Unit from A.S.C. Base Depot on 11th March, 1918 & was taken on strength of ACT MT (Australian Corps Troops Mechanical Transport) Coy on 12th March, 1918 transfer from ACT SC (Australian Corps Troops Supply Column) (A.I.F. Order 1159)

Private Arthur Lawson reported sick on 24th July, 1918 & was admitted to 8th Australian Field Ambulance with an accidental injury to Face. He was transferred & admitted to 20th Casualty Clearing Station on 25th July, 1918 with "Acc Fract. Maxilla". Private Lawson was transferred to Ambulance Train 38 on 29th July, 1918 & admitted to 16th USA General Hospital at Le Treport on 30th July, 1918. He was listed for transfer to England on 1st August, 1918 & was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Warilda* on 2nd August, 1918 form 6th M. T. Company.

Private Arthur Lawson was reported missing believed drowned at Sea from "ex Ambulance Transport" *Warilda* on 3rd August, 1918.

Private Arthur Lawson who was previously reported "Missing believed Drowned" is now reported to have died on 3rd August, 1918 at Sea as a result of enemy action in the torpedoing & sinking of H.M.A.T. *Warilda* as found by a Court of Inquiry.

Extract from *World War One Channel Wrecks – Vessels Lost in The English Channel 1914 – 1918* (by Neil Maw):

*Country: British. Date sunk: 3/8/18 Owners: Adelaide SS Co. Agents: Yuill's Ltd, 120 Fenchurch St, London. In Government service as 'ambulance transport'. Cargo: 614 wounded soldiers, 117 crew, 70 RAMC staff. Armed: 1 x 4in quick fire gun. Position NW by N of Antifer (50 18 00N; 0018 00W). Master's name James Sim (Southern Australian ticket) Crew: 120. Crew nationality: - Gunners: James Carter, LS FRF; William Barton, LS FRF; John Read, LS FRF.*

*Warilda was an Australian steamer, registered at Port Adelaide but requisitioned by the British government for use as a hospital ship. She was loaded with injured soldiers. The holds of the Warilda had been hastily converted into wards and the lowest ward was I-Ward containing 102 patients. I-Ward was purposely allocated to walking wounded with the idea that if the ship had to be evacuated they could get on deck more quickly. It was a good idea but few were to survive in I-Ward.*

*She left Havre on August 2, 1918, and was being escorted by two destroyers to Southampton, HMS P39, commanded by Lieutenant J. W. Durnford, RN, and HMS P45, commanded by Lieutenant Rudolph Thompson RN. They made good progress, at 15 knots, steering north 10 degrees east.*

*Even though it was a cloudy and dark night, the second mate on watch on the bridge spotted the shape of a submarine about 100 yds off the port bow at 1.35 am. He shouted to the helmsman to turn directly towards the submarine with the intention of ramming it. A few seconds later the master arrived on the bridge and endorsed the second officer's actions but the submarine was too fast and too manoeuvrable. The helm was put hard over again, this time to bring the enemy directly astern. The master watched intently to see what the German commander intended to do, when suddenly a white streak appeared from it followed seconds later by a deafening explosion deep on the port side between the engine room and, tragically, number four hold....I-Ward.*

*The force of the explosion caused a great deal of damage. One engine had been knocked out of action, and the engine room began to fill rapidly. But the scene in I-Ward was one of utter carnage. The explosion had occurred directly under the ward and had killed most of the patients outright. Survivors of the blast were drowned by the sudden inrush of water as the ward completely filled, setting Warilda heavily down by the stern. At least 101 patients died in I-Ward.*

*The master realised that if the engine room bulkhead held he would stand a chance of getting the rest of the people off. He ordered all the patients to be assembled on the promenade deck and the boats to be lowered down to them. Several boats were soon ready to go but the master shouted that no boat was to leave until the way had gone off the ship. One engine was still running even though the water was up to the cylinder heads, but slowly it slowed as the steam ran out and at last Warilda came to a halt. The first boat with wounded and nurses in it reached the water evenly but for some inexplicable reason the front fall jammed and swamped the boat resulting in the loss of two nurses. Most of the boats got clear although another on the port side fouled the Otter mine defence boom and overturned, with the loss of two officers, eight male patients and four crew.*

*HMS P39 came alongside the stricken steamer and took off the rest of the patients and crew. It was no easy task. Most of the remaining patients were unable to walk so a bosun's chair was rigged, and the patients were winched across by hand. Two men in particular, Lance Corporal Booth, number 100015 and Pte Hamber, number 102681, were mentioned for their actions.*

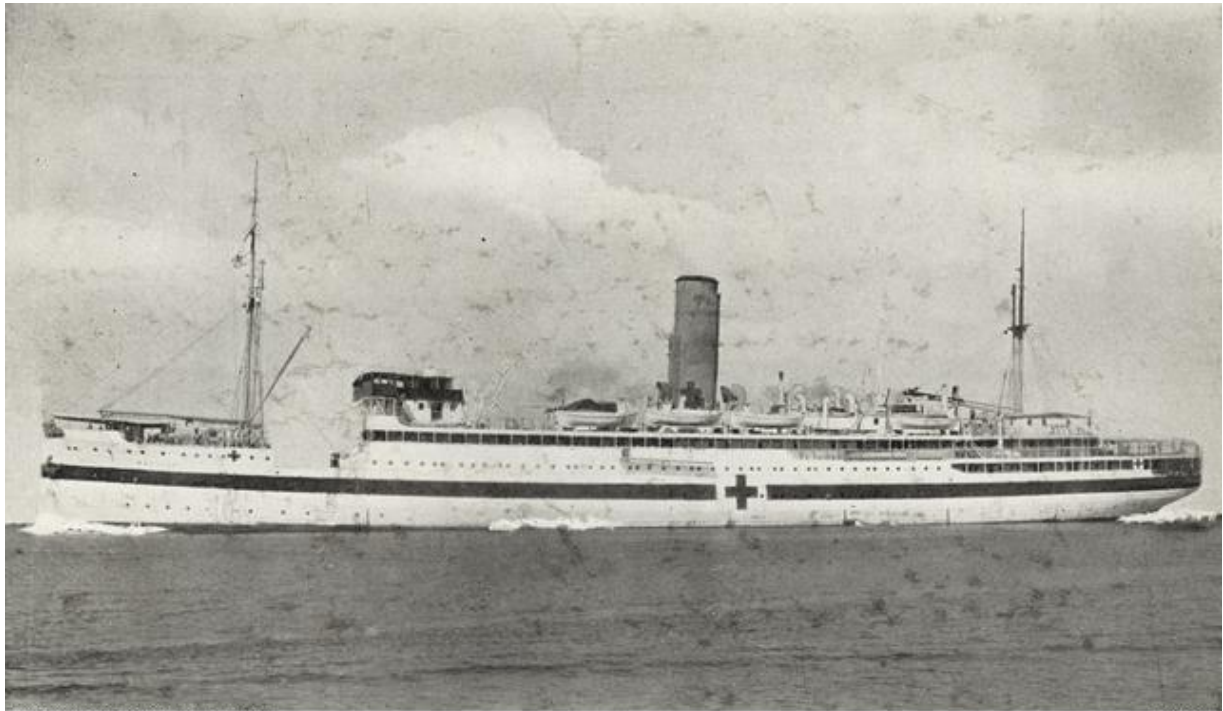
© Cathy Sedgwick 2023

*After Warilda had been cleared of survivors the commander of P39 decided it might be worth trying to take the steamer in tow and lines were attached. But after 10 minutes towing the steamer could not take the pressure put upon her weakened bulkheads and she sank at 4.10am.*

*The Court of Enquiry was held on board HMS Victory at Portsmouth was told that 113 patients, one nurse, two RAMC staff and seven crew died in the sinking, but found no negligence.*

*UC-49 was the submarine involved, commanded by Oberleutnant H. Kükenthal.*

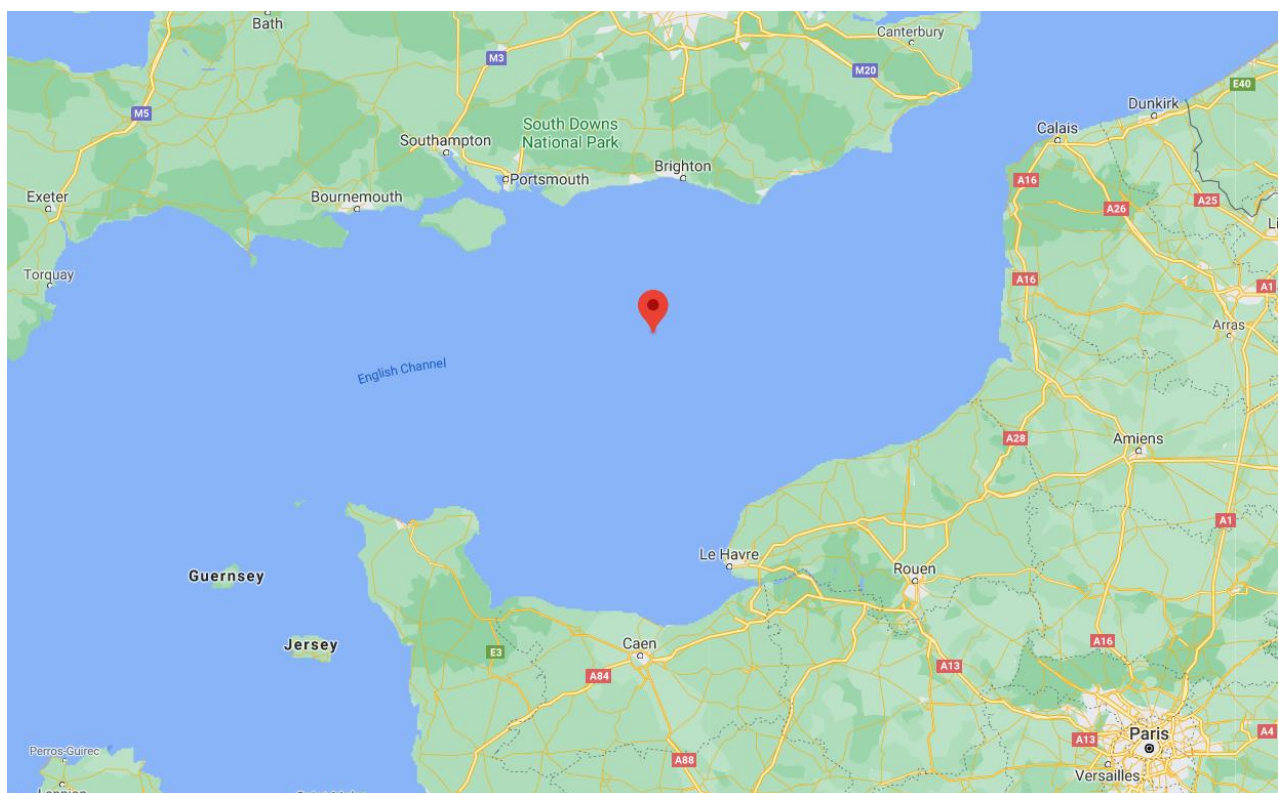
(With thanks to Empire Attendant (Twitter) for sharing this with me.)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H04201

### **Her Majesty's Hospital Ship *Warilda***



**Location of H.M.A.T. *Warilda***

Private Arthur Lawson is commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England as he has no grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

M. Matchett, Busk Street, Charters Towers, wrote to Base Records on 23rd May, 1921: *"A few lines in answer to your letter dated 12th May. I am the nearest to my late son Private A. Lawson, No. 13732, his father being dead."*

[Note: Base Records would have contacted Mrs Matchett, as the next of kin on 12th May, 1921, requesting to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & would have specifically asked if his father was still alive due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.]

Private Arthur Lawson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Lawson's widowed & remarried mother – Mrs Margaret Matchett, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Arthur Lawson - service number 13732, of 6th Motor Transport Coy., Australian Army Service Corps. No family details are listed.

Private A. Lawson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 181.



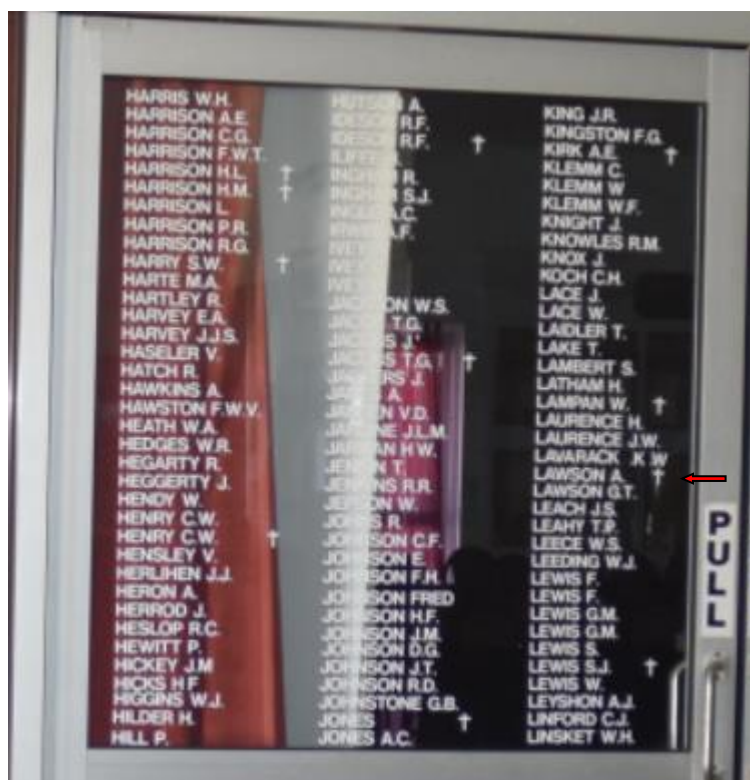
*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*



A. Lawson is remembered on the Charters Towers Wall of Remembrance, located in RSL Club, Prior & Hewett Streets, Charters Towers, Queensland.



Charters Towers Wall of Remembrance (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)



(37 pages of Private Arthur Lawson'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*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **152nd CASUALTY LIST**

#### **SEVERAL CHARTERS TOWERS NAMES**

The 152nd casualty list contains 408 names, including 12 deaths, 2 men wounded, 371 ill and 23 injured. There are 56 Queenslanders mentioned, including:-

Pte A. Lawson (Charters Towers)

*(The Evening Telegraph, Charters Towers, Queensland – 14 March, 1916)*

---

### **CASUALTIES**

#### **THE 181st LIST**

#### **RETURNED TO DUTY**

##### **Casualty Previously Reported**

Pte A. Lawson, Charters Towers

*(Daily Standard, Brisbane, Queensland – 1 July, 1916)*

---

### **TORPEDOED WARILDA**

#### **LIST OF AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

The names of the 15 Australian soldiers who are believed to have been drowned through the torpedoing of the hospital ship Warilda, and the towns in which their relations reside, are as follow:-

Private Robt. Oakley Clardige, 41st Battalion, Gympie.

Private Eric John Laidlaw, 31st Battalion, Dalby.

**Private Arthur Lawson, Mechanical Transport Company, Charters Towers.**

Private Norman Abbott, 33rd Battalion, East Sydney.

Private Norman Power, 42nd Battalion, late 15th Battalion, Wagga.

Private Robert Henry Purcell, 17th Battalion, Redfern.

Private John Roxburgh, 38th Battalion, Manly.

Private Thomas Faulks, 29th Battalion, Korong Vale (V.).

Private Donald McIntyre, 37th Battalion, Sutherland Creek (V.).

Driver H. O. Richardson, 18th A.S.C., Creswick (V.).

Lieut. Albert Herbert Moss, 2nd D.A.C., Smithfield (S.A.).

Private Victor Hugo Pike, 5th Pioneers, Tungkille (S.A.).

Private Ernest Wilkins, 32nd Battalion, Glanville

Private Paul Retell, 5th Pioneers, Albany (W.A.).

Lance-corporal G.S. L. Wall, 37th Battalion, of Longwak, Victoria, was drowned and his body recovered.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 12 August, 1918)*

---

## **LOSS OF THE WARILDA**

### **The Australian Victims**

The names of the 5 Australian soldiers who are believed to have been drowned through the torpedoing of the Warilda, and the towns in which relatives reside are:-

Queensland Military District....

New South Wales Military District : ..... Private Arthur Lawson, Mechanical Transport Co., Charters Towers.....

*(Cairns Post, Queensland – 14 August, 1918)*

---

## **LOST ON THE WARILDA**

Among the published names of the fifteen Australians believed to have been lost when the hospital ship Warilda was torpedoed appears that of Private Arthur Lawson, Mechanical Transport Company. Private Lawson, who was 28 years of age, enlisted in July, 1916. At the time of enlistment he was advertising specialist in the employ of Scott's Limited, Newcastle, a position he had occupied since March, 1913 and he was held in high esteem by the firm. His mother lives in Charters Towers, Queensland.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 14 August, 1918)*

---

## **DEATH**

LAWSON – Drowned at sea, victim of Warilda, Private Arthur Lawson, of Charters Towers, late Army Service Corps, son of Mrs Matchett, Brisk-street, Charters Towers. Deeply regretted.

*(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland – 21 August, 1918)*

---

## **ROLL OF HONOR**

LAWSON – In loving memory of Private Arthur Lawson, who was drowned in the sinking of hospital ship Warilda, who gave his life for his King and his country.

(Inserted by his loving mother, brothers and sisters)

*(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland – 2 August, 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.

### **Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England**

The Hollybrook Memorial is situated in Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery behind the plot of First World War graves near the main entrance.

The Hollybrook Memorial commemorates by name almost 1,900 servicemen and women of the Commonwealth land and air forces\* whose graves are not known, many of whom were lost in transports or other vessels torpedoed or mined in home waters (\*Officers and men of the Commonwealth's navies who have no grave but the sea are commemorated on memorials elsewhere). The memorial also bears the names of those who were lost or buried at sea, or who died at home but whose bodies could not be recovered for burial. Almost one third of the names on the memorial are those of officers and men of the South African Native Labour Corps, who died when the troop transport Mendi sank in the Channel following a collision on 21 February 1917. Other vessels sunk with significant loss of life were: HS Anglia, a hospital ship sunk by mine off Dover on 17 November 1915. SS Citta Di Palermo, an Italian transport carrying Commonwealth troops, sunk by mine off Brindisi on 8 January 1916. In rescuing survivors, two Royal Naval Otranto drifters were themselves mined and blown up. HMTs Donegal and Warilda, ambulance transports torpedoed and sunk between Le Havre and Southampton on 17 April 1917 and 3 August 1918. HS Glenart Castle, a hospital ship torpedoed and sunk off Lundy on 26 February 1918. SS Galway Castle, torpedoed and sunk in the Atlantic on 12 September 1918. RMS Leinster, the Irish mail boat, torpedoed and sunk in the Irish Sea on 10 October 1918. Among those commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial is Field Marshall Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, who died when the battle cruiser HMS Hampshire was mined and sunk off Scapa Flow on 5 June 1916.

The memorial was designed by T. Newham and unveiled by Sir William Robertson on 10 December 1930.

There are approximately 162 Australian World War 1 Service Personnel commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.

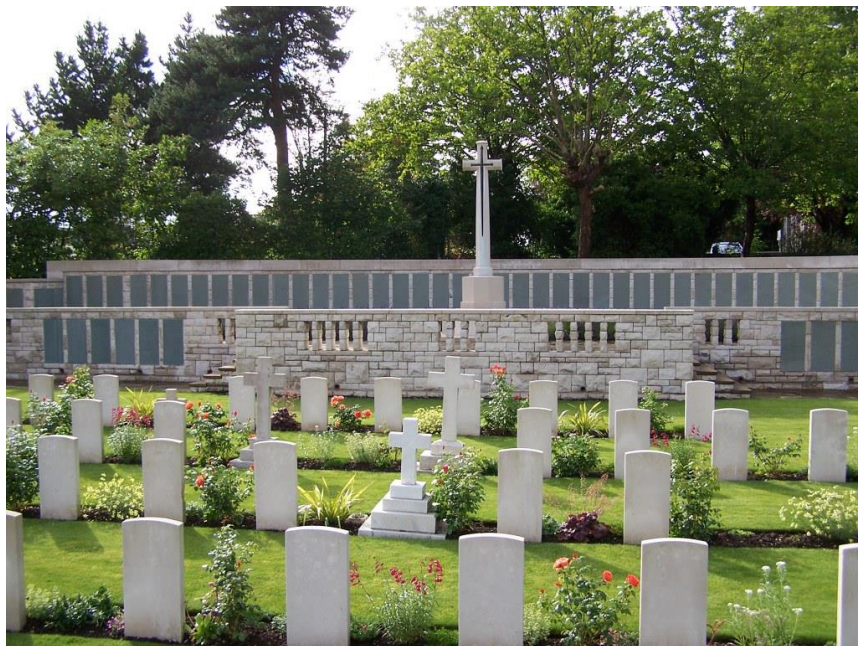
*(Information & photos from CWGC)*



**Cross of Sacrifice**



**Name Panels behind Cross of Sacrifice** (Photos from CWGC)



**CWGC Graves in Hollybrook Cemetery with Cross of Sacrifice & Hollybrook Memorial**

Photo of Private A. Lawson's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by Retired QA – Find a Grave)

