

**Cathays Cemetery,
Cardiff, Wales
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3588 PRIVATE

L. J. OLSEN

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

16TH JULY, 1918 Age 42

Lawrence John OLSEN

Lawrence John Olsen was born on 2nd September, 1875 in Haugeund, Norway.

Lawrence John Olsen was apprenticed to Mr S. McGill, of NSW for 5 years.

Lawrence John Olsen was a 42 year old, single, Bridge builder from Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted on 19th December, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3588 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Mrs Olsen, London Boarding House, Maryborough, Queensland. Lawrence Olsen's permanent address was listed as People's Palace, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was posted to No. 1 Depot Company on 23rd December, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to 9th Reinforcements of 41st Battalion on 2nd February, 1918.

Private Lawrence John Olsen embarked from Sydney, NSW on SS *Ormonde* on 2nd March, 1918 with the 41st Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 4th April, 1918. While at Sea Private Olsen was written up on 24th March, 1918 - when on active service A.W.L. (Absent without leave) for 6 ¼ hours – from 12.45 pm to 7 pm on 23rd March, 1918. He forfeited a total of 2 days' pay.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was taken on strength at Australian Camp at Suez on 4th April, 1918.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was written up on 15th April, 1918 – “*When on active service 1) Drunkenness 2) Out of bounds*” on 13th April, 1918 at Suez. He was awarded 14 days F.P. (Field Punishment) No. 2 and forfeited £3/10/-.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was transferred to Port Tewfik on 30th April, 1918 for embarkation overseas. He embarked from Port Tewfik on T. 15 on 30th April, 1918 & disembarked at Southampton, England on 15th May, 1918.

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.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Fovant, Wiltshire, England on 15th May, 1918.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was admitted to 3rd Western General Hospital, Cardiff, Wales on 17th June, 1918 while on leave. Cause of illness – N.Y.D. (not yet determined). The Hospital Admissions form records “*admitted whilst on leave from Fovant Camp, Wiltshire. Off Colour several weeks; acutely ill a few days; cough, dyspnoea, great weakness malaise mucopurulent spit & pyrexia 102. General condition poor & degenerate....no cardiac lesion. Arteries thickened. 16.7.18 – Condition varied from time to time. He improved & was to have rejoined unit but took a fresh acute attack. Pulse became bad & he died suddenly today of cardiac failure.*”

Private Lawrence John Olsen died at 7 am on 16th July, 1918 at 3rd Western General Hospital (Albany Rd Section), Cardiff, Wales from Chronic Bronchitis & Cardiac Failure.

A death for John Olsen, aged 48, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Cardiff, Glamorganshire, England.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was buried on 19th July, 1918 in Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff, Wales – Plot number EB. 39 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Lawrence John Olsen - *Coffin was good polished Elm. Deceased was accorded a full Military funeral the body being conveyed to the graveside on a Gun Carriage preceded by a Firing Party and Band. Convalescent Australian soldiers from the 3rd Western General Hospital attended as mourners. Wreaths from the Australian Red Cross and “A” Ward Albany Road Hospital were placed on the grave after the “Last Post” had been sounded. Headquarters, A.I.F. Depots in U.K. were represented at the funeral.*

Private Lawrence John Olsen requested in his Will, which was lodged with Officer in Charge Base Records upon embarkation for Active Service Abroad, that in the event of his death the whole of his property & effects to be left with Mrs Wright, Tivoli Boarding House, Townsville, Queensland.

Jane Wright, of Olympia Boarding House, Sturt Street, Townsville, Queensland wrote to Base Records in May, 1920 stating *“relative to the death of Private John Olsen, No. 3588 of 9/41st Batt. C. Company, A.I.F., I beg to inform you that I have received all effects and money due him less the war gratuity from the Military Authorities and being sole beneficiary under his Will I am now asking you if you will be good enough to inform me – having misplace the Will – what steps I have to take so as to render my claim valid. I am sending next week a gratuity form filled in as far as I am able to and trust that you will see to my claim being recognized as soon as possible.”*

Mrs A. G. Olsen, C/o Mr A. Nagel, Tooley Street, Maryborough, Queensland wrote to Base Records in November, 1920 stating that she had seen in *“the Brisbane Courier that the next of kin to deceased soldiers should write to you. Well in the case of Lawrence John Olsen, 3588, in his Will he made me his next of kin as he has no relations living although I am no relation of his only that he stayed with me for some considerable time, so I am writing to you and would you kindly let me know any particulars there is to know.”*

Base Records contacted Mrs A. G. Olsen, C/o Mr A. Nagel, Tooley Street, Maryborough, Queensland on 11th June, 1921 asking if there were any blood relatives alive so that the War Medals issuable on account of the service of the late Private Lawrence John Olsen could be disposed of. Mrs Katherine Olsen replied to Base Records stating that to her knowledge no relatives of Private Olsen’s were alive. She stated that he was only a friend of hers.

Private Lawrence John Olsen was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Pte Olsen’s next-of-kin. No next-of-kin was located so Medals & Memorial Scroll & Plaque were sent to “Untraceables” on November, 1922.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private L. J. Olsen – service number 3588, aged 42, of 41st Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private L. J. Olsen is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 134.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(58 pages of Pte Lawrence John Olsen'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



Private Lawrence John Olsen

(Photo from The Queenslander Pictorial, 16 February, 1918)

Newspaper Notices

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

CASUALTY LIST No. 420

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

Lawrence John Olsen, Maryborough, 16/7/18 (illness)

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 3 August, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 28th June, 1921, to Mrs A. G. Olsen, C/o Mr A. Nagel, Tooley Street, Maryborough, Queensland, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of the late Pte L. J. Olsen had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Private L. J. Olsen does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff, Wales

During the 1939-1945 War, the city of Cardiff was one of the Royal Naval bases of the Western Approaches Command. It was severely damaged by enemy air attack during the early part of the 1939-1945 War and has been largely rebuilt. The cemetery, known locally as Cathays Cemetery was opened in 1859 and has been extended to cover over 100 acres. The cemetery contains war graves of both world wars. Just over a third of the 1914-1918 burials are contained in a War Graves Plot in the portion of Section EB, this plot is on two converging roadways leading to the main entrance. The remainder of the graves are scattered in other parts of the cemetery. After the 1914-1918 War, a Cross of Sacrifice was erected in front of the plot in the angle formed by the junction of the two roadways, the whole forming a triangular island site. The 1939-1945 War burials are scattered throughout the cemetery in more than 30 different sections. A number of them are airmen who came from the Royal Air Force stations at Cardiff and St. Athan. There are now nearly 500, 1914-1918 and over 200, 1939-1945 war casualties commemorated in this site. Some 40 French and Norwegian Foreign Nationals are also commemorated here.

(Information & Photos from CWGC)





Entrance to Cathays Cemetery (Photo by Peter – Find a Grave)

Map Of Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff showing Section EB – Roll of Honour

(Courtesy of The Friends of Cathays Cemetery)



		113	114	115		
103	104	105	106	107	108	109
96	97	98	99	100	101	102
89	90	91	92	93	94	95
82	83	84	85	86	87	88
75	76	77	78	79	80	81
	69	70	71	72	73	74
	63	64	65	66	67	68
	57	58	59	60	61	62
	51	52	53	54	55	56
	45	46	47	48	49	50
		40	41	42	43	44
		35	36	37	38	39
		30	31	32	33	34
		25	26	27	28	29
		20	21	22	23	24
			16	17	18	19
			12	13	14	15
			8	9	10	11
			4	5	6	7
			1A	1	2	3



Australian CWGC Headstone



Private Headstone for Babbage

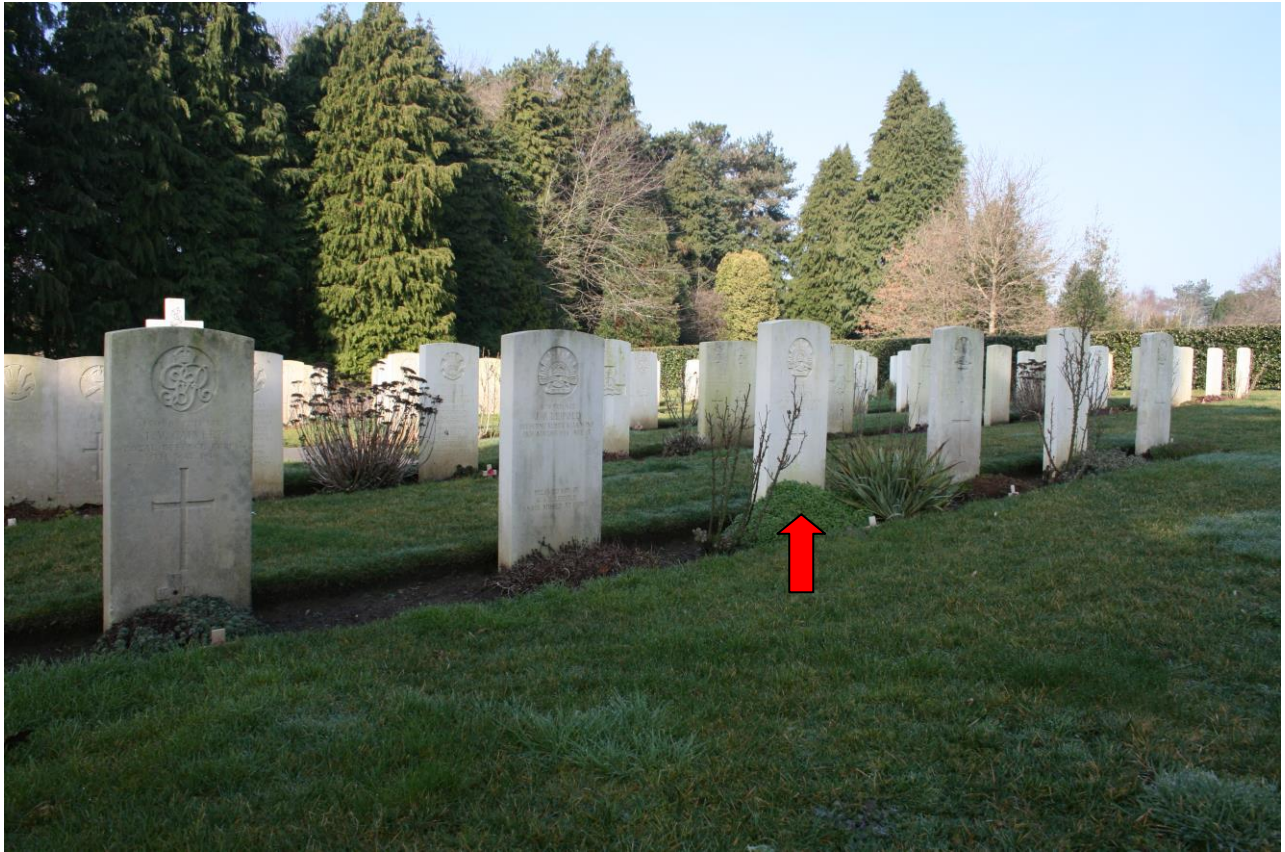


RASC CWGC Headstone for Pilkington



The five Australian CWGC Headstones in Cathay's Cemetery, Cardiff
(left to right) **Leipold, Olsen** (*red arrow*), **Waddups, McCleery & O'Connell**
(Photos courtesy of John Farnhill – The Friends of Cathay's Cemetery)





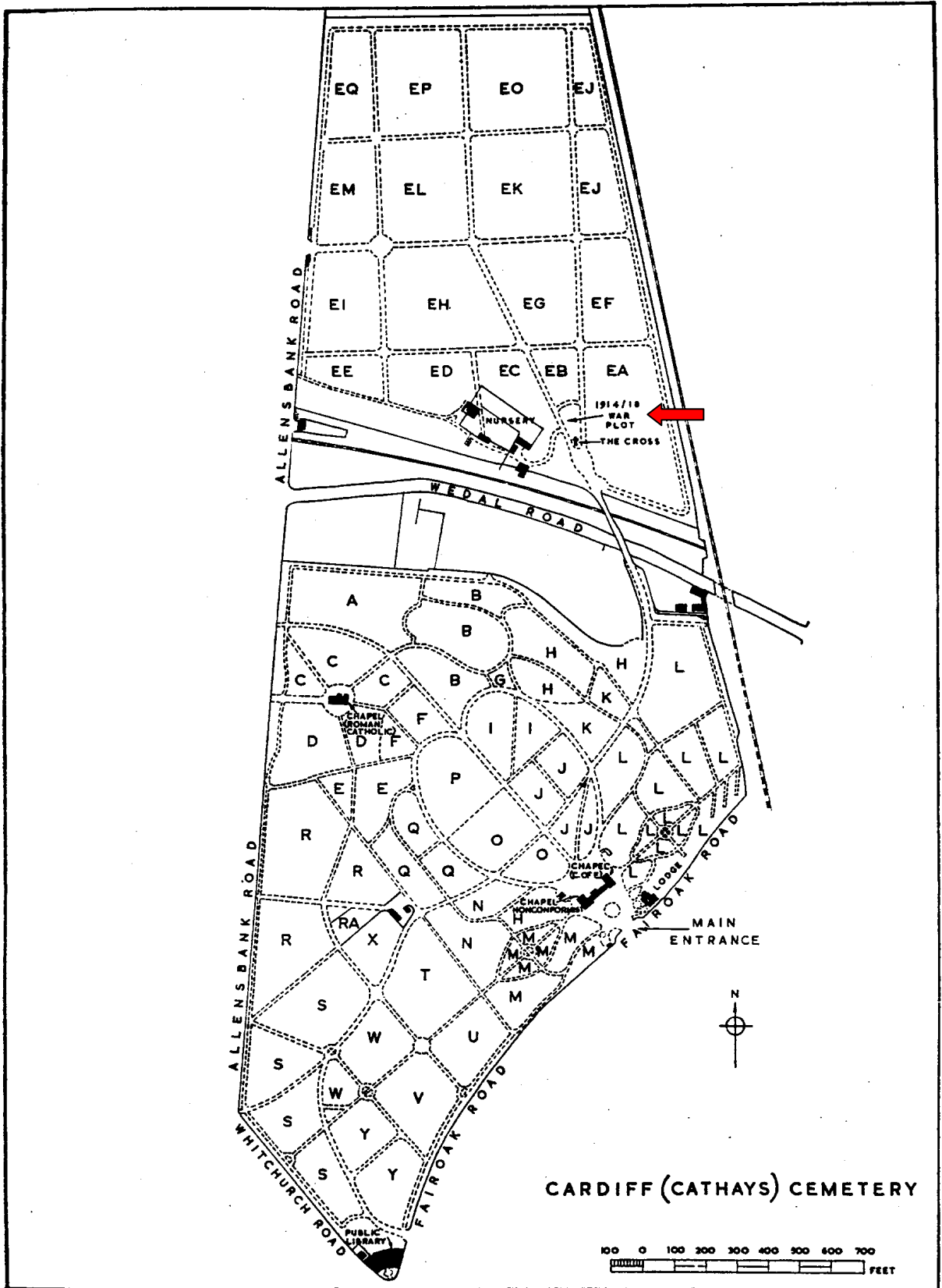
The five Australian CWGC Headstones in Cathay's Cemetery, Cardiff
(left to right) **Leipold, Olsen** (*red arrow*), **Waddups, McCleery & O'Connell**
(Photos courtesy of John Farnhill – The Friends of Cathay's Cemetery)



Photo of Private L. J. Olsen's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff, Wales.



(Photo courtesy of Friends of Cathay Cemetery)



Cemetery Plan from CWGC