

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2654 PRIVATE

V. H. PIKE

5TH AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

3RD AUGUST, 1918

Victor Hugo PIKE

Victor Hugo Pike was born at Tungkillo, South Australia on 4th October, 1891 to parents William & Mary Pike (nee Scott). His birth was registered in Talunga, South Australia.

Victor Hugo Pike attended school at Tungkillo, South Australia.

Victor Hugo Pike was a 24 year old, single, Teamster from Magill, South Australia when he enlisted on 6th July, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Methodist & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Mary Pike, Jackson Street, Magill, South Australia. Victor Pike stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service as he was medically unfit.

Private Victor Hugo Pike was posted to "C" Company, 2nd Depot Battalion, A.I.F. on 6th July, 1916 for recruit training at Exhibition Camp. He was transferred to Base at Micham on 3rd August, 1916 then on 16th August, 1916 he was transferred to 5/5th Pioneers.

Private Victor Hugo Pike, Service number 2654, embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Commonwealth* (A73) on 21st September, 1916 with the 5th Pioneer Battalion, 5th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport*, England on 14th November, 1916. (Note: The Casualty Form – Active Service recorded he disembarked at Devonport, however the Statement of Service form recorded he disembarked at Plymouth, England)

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 Victor Hugo Pike was marched in to Pioneer Training Battalion at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 15th November, 1916.

Private Victor Hugo Pike was admitted to Military Hospital, Tidworth, Wiltshire on 5th December, 1916 with Myalgia. He was discharged on 26th December, 1916 with 7 days light duty.

Private Victor Hugo Pike proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 28th February, 1917 per S.S. *Golden Eagle*. He was marched on to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 1st March, 1917. Private Pike was marched out to his Unit on 24th April, 1917 & was taken on strength of 5th Pioneer Battalion on 25th April, 1917 in the Field.

5th Pioneer Battalion

The 5th Pioneer Battalion was an Australian infantry and light engineer unit raised for service during the First World War as part of the all volunteer Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Formed in Egypt in March 1916, the battalion subsequently served on the Western Front in France and Belgium, after being transferred to the European battlefields shortly after its establishment. Assigned to the 5th Division, the 5th Pioneer Battalion fought in most of the major battles that the AIF participated in between mid-1916 and the end of the war in November 1918. It was subsequently disbanded in early 1919.

The 5th Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 5th Division. The battalion was formed in the aftermath of the failed Gallipoli campaign when the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was expanded as part of plans to transfer it from the Middle East to Europe for service in the trenches along the Western Front. This expansion saw several new infantry divisions raised in Egypt and Australia, as well as specialist support units such as machine gun companies, engineer companies, artillery batteries and pioneer battalions, which were needed to meet the conditions prevalent on the Western Front.

Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. The pioneer concept had existed within the British Indian Army before the war, but had not initially been adopted in other British Empire forces. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield

clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

The 5th Pioneer Battalion was formed from volunteers from the 5th Division who possessed relevant trade qualifications, or who were deemed to be suitable for manual labouring tasks. Many were skilled and experienced in mining and other artisanal trades. According to some sources a majority of the battalion's recruits were from South Australia, although others refer to a significant proportion originating from Western Australia.

(Extract of Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)

Private Victor Hugo Pike was on Leave to UK from 17th February, 1918 & returned from Leave on 6th March, 1918.

Private Victor Hugo Pike reported sick on 26th July, 1918. He was admitted to 15th Field Ambulance on 26th July, 1918 with Neoplasm of left Thigh. Private Pike was transferred to 61st Casualty Clearing Station on 26th July, 1918 with Naeous of left Thigh. He was transferred to Ambulance Train on 28th July, 1918 & admitted to 2nd Canadian General Hospital at Etretat, France on 29th July, 1918. Private Pike embarked for England on 1st August, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Warilda*.

Private Victor Hugo Pike was "*reported Missing believed Drowned ex Ambulance Transport Warilda*" at Sea on 3rd August, 1918.

A Court of Enquiry was held at Headquarters London (no date recorded) where Private Victor Hugo Pike who was previously reported as Missing believed drowned is now reported "*Died at Sea as a result of Enemy action in the torpedoing & sinking of HMAT Warilda*" on 3rd August, 1918.

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.

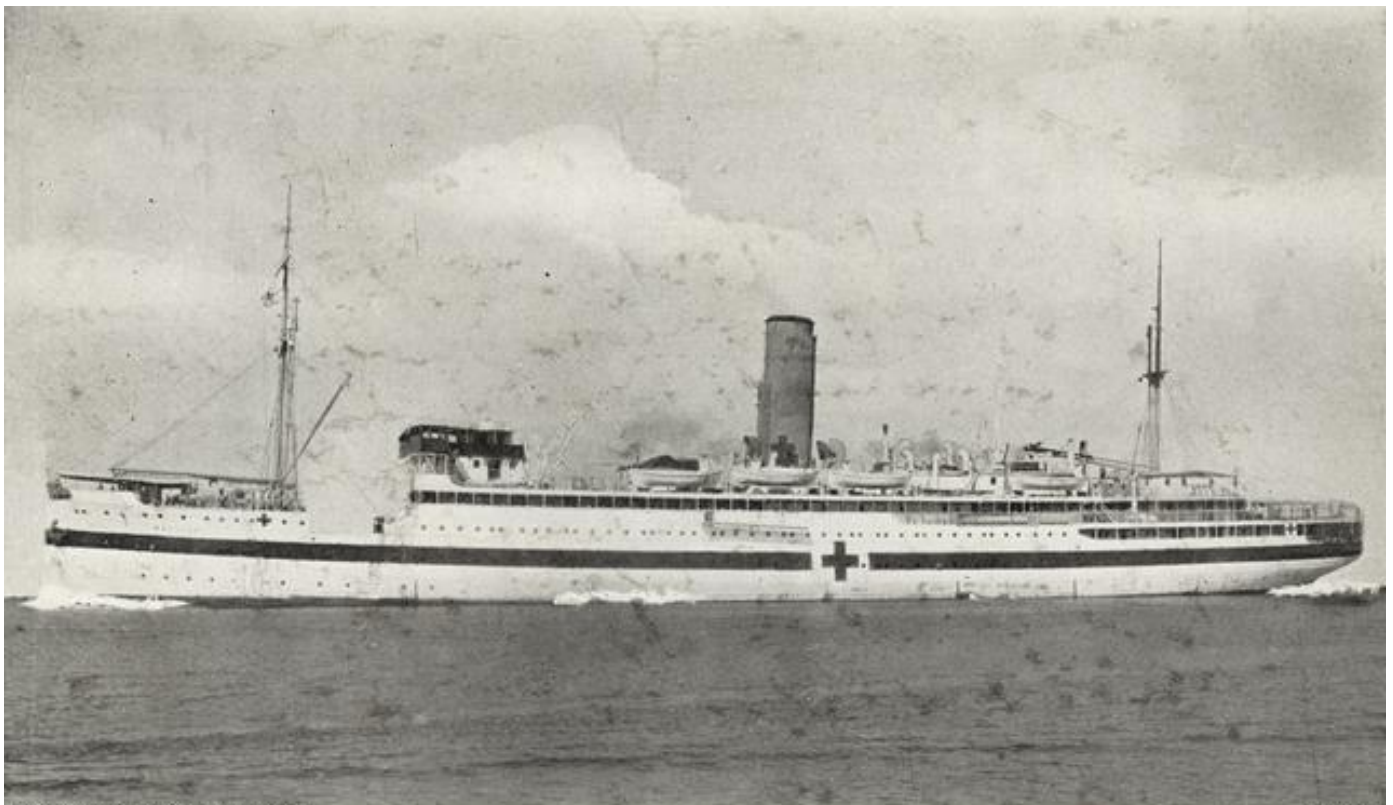
HMS P39 came alongside the stricken steamer and took off the rest of the patients and crew. It was no easy task. Most of the remaining patients were unable to walk so a bosun's chair was rigged, and the patients were winched across by hand. Two men in particular, Lance Corporal Booth, number 100015 and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

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.

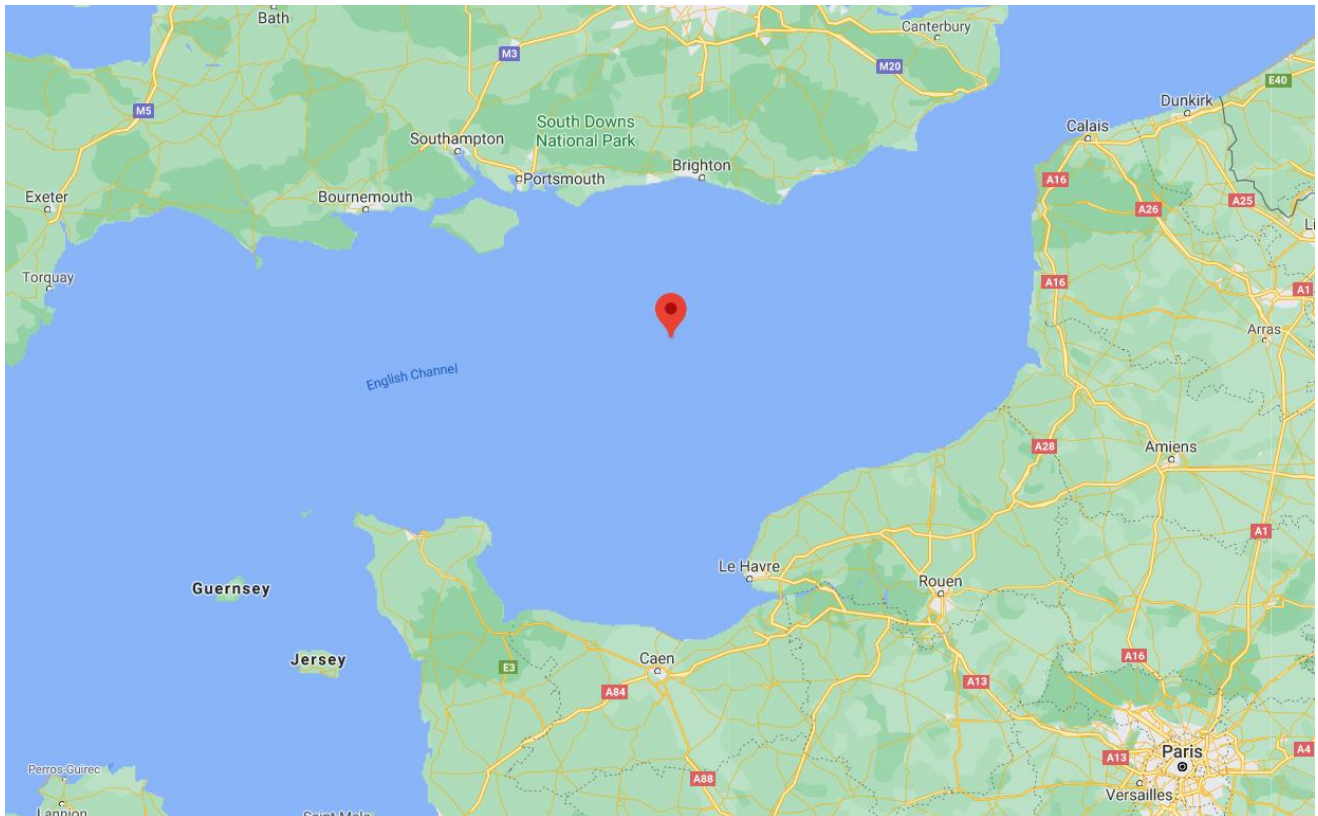
(With thanks to Empire Attendant (Twitter) for sharing this with me.)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H04201

Her Majesty's Hospital Ship *Warilda*



Location of H.M.A.T. Warilda

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

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Victor Hugo Pike contains the following reports:

- Private V. U. Woolard, 2684, 5th Pioneer Battalion, France reported: *“Re Pte V.C.H. Pike. 2654. I am sorry to say I am unable to furnish you with particulars that would be of any value to you, but should this information be of any value to you, it is with the greatest of pleasure I am doing so. He left our Battalion on the 26th July. I received a letter dated 30th in which he stated he was marked for Blighty. Since then, nothing has been seen or heard of him. His description is:- Height 5ft 8, thick set, reddish complexion, inclined to be freckled, full face, light brown hair. He also has a raised birth mark like a bruise just above the left knee. I think I have told you all I can in answer to your enquiry, and should it be proved that he was a victim of the S.S. Warilda, I shall be greatly indebted to you, for information.”*
- Private C. Rehn, 2659, B. Company, 5th Pioneer Battalion, 3rd A.A.H., Dartford reported: *“Refer to Pte V. U. Woolard, A. Coy, 5th Pioneer Battn., and now in France, for they were mated and always slept next each other. The last I heard of Pike was that he was sick.”*

Private Victor Hugo Pike requested in his Will dated 19th September, 1916 that his father William Pike, of Magill, be appointed as Executor of the Will & all his property be bequeathed to his father.

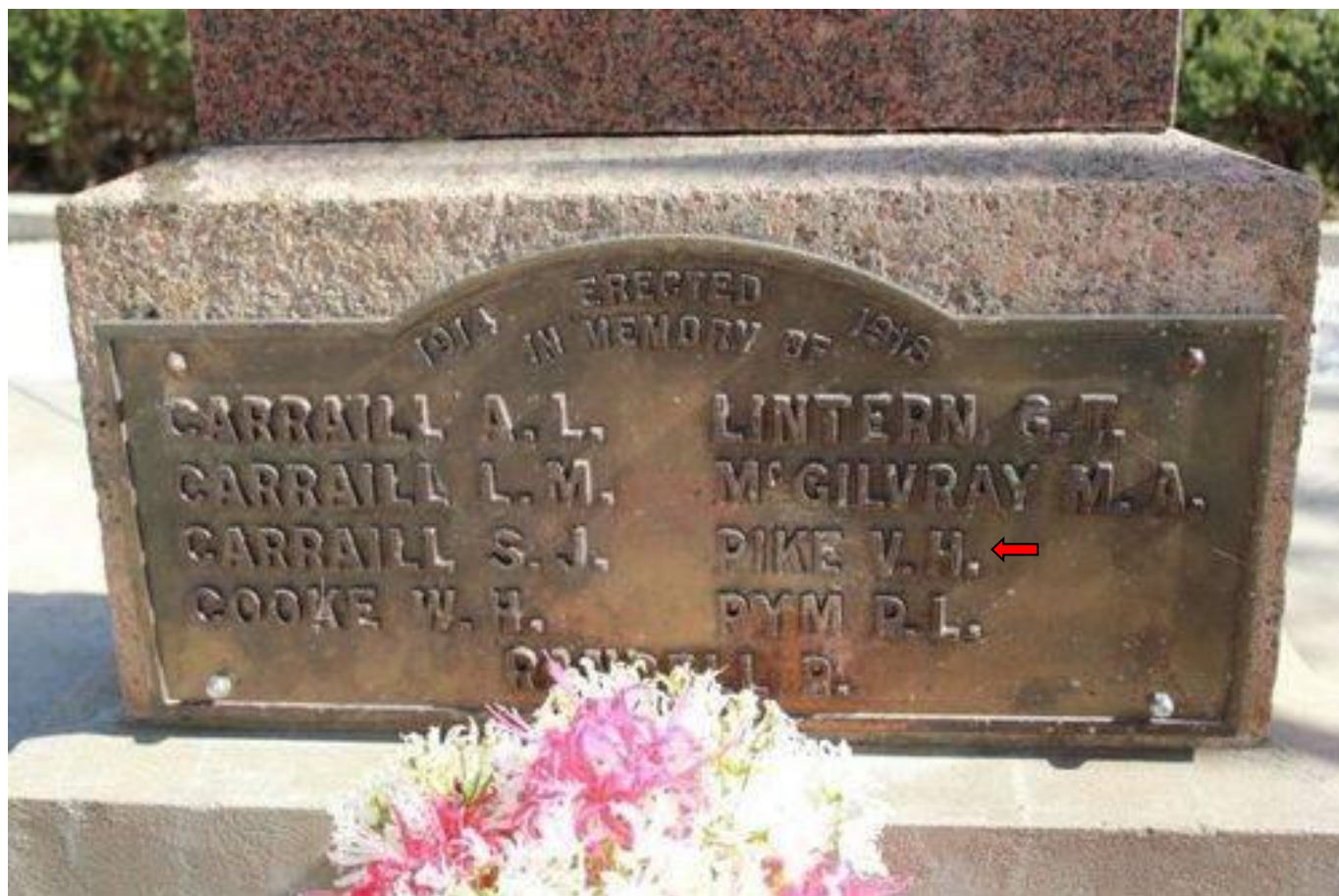
Private Victor Hugo Pike was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Pike's father – Mr W. Pike, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Victor Hugo Pike – service number 2654, of 5th Australian Pioneers. No family details are listed.

V. H. Pike is remembered on the Tungkillo War Memorial, located on Brinkworth Road & O'Briens Street, Tungkillo, South Australia.



Tungkillo War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Roger Johnson)



V. H. Pike is remembered on the Tungkillo Roll of Honour, located in Soldiers Memorial Hall, Brinkworth Road, Tungkillo, South Australia.



Tungkillo Roll of Honour (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Mari Walker)



V. H. Pike is remembered on the Tungkillo Memorial Wall, located at War Memorial, Brinkworth Road & O'Briens Street, Tungkillo, South Australia.



Tungkillo Memorial Wall (Photos courtesy of Mari Walker)



V. H. Pike is remembered on the Magill Roll of Honour, located in RSL, Lorne Avenue, Magill, South Australia.



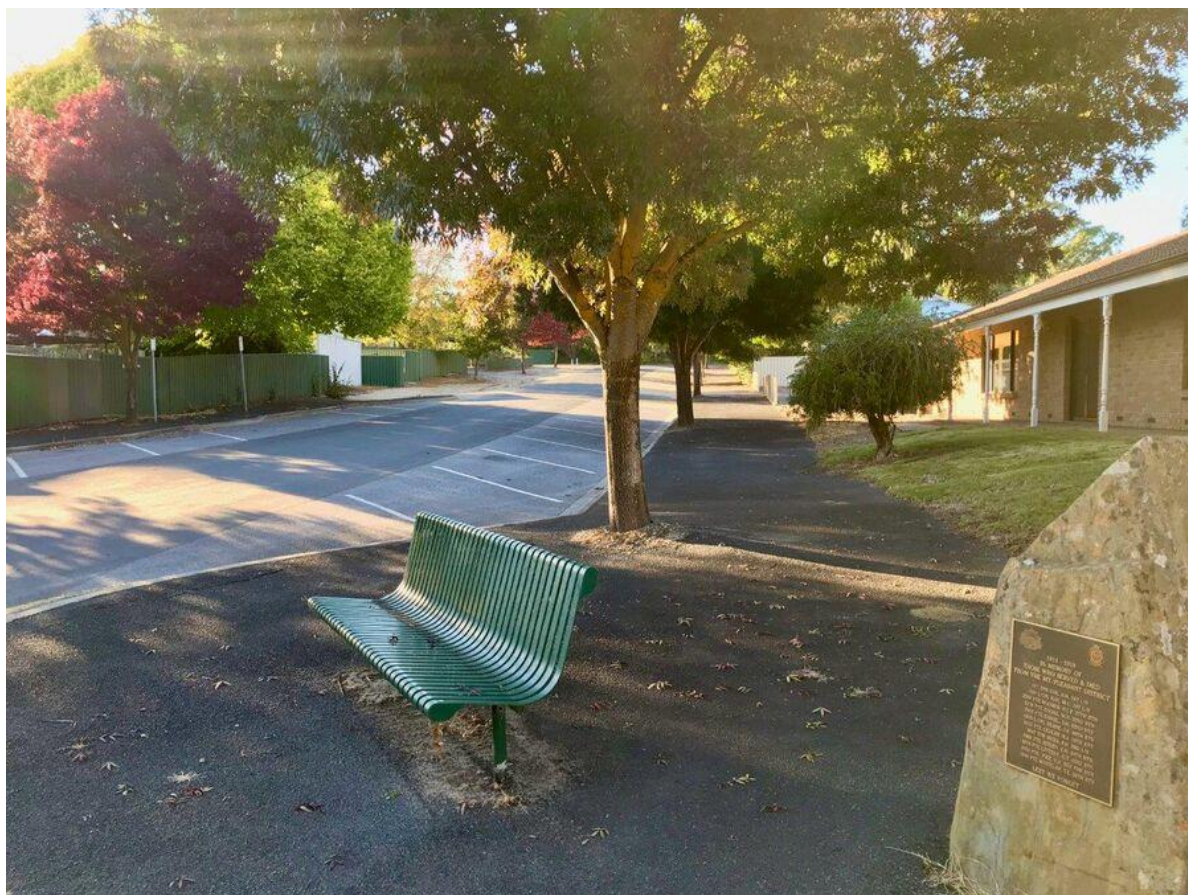
Magill Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Magill RSL)

V. Pike is remembered on the Mount Pleasant Roll of Honour, located in Mount Pleasant Soldiers' Memorial Hall, 61 Melrose Street, Mount Pleasant, South Australia.

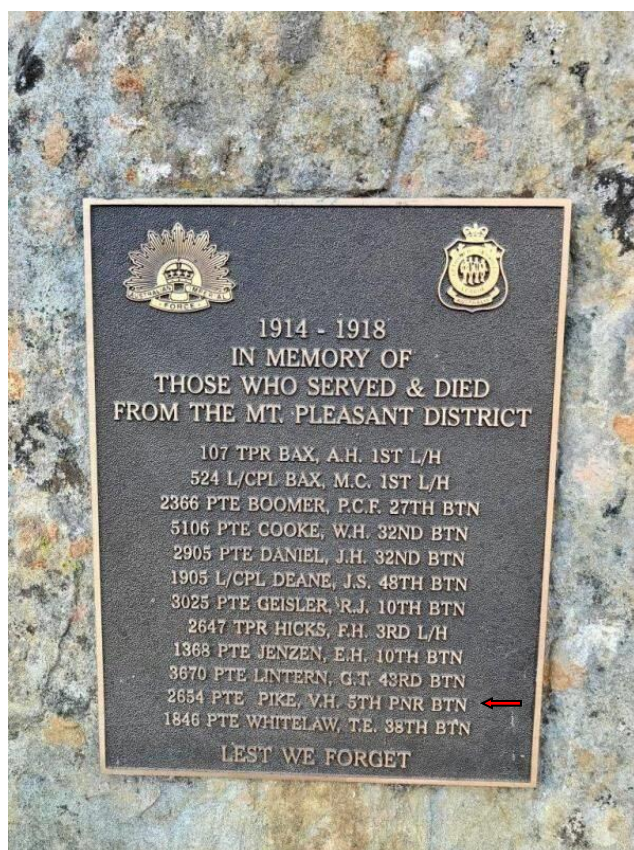


Mount Pleasant Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia - Georgina Bliss)

V. H. Pike is remembered on the Mount Pleasant District Memorial, located on Melrose Street & Memorial Avenue, Mount Pleasant, South Australia.



Mount Pleasant District Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)



V. Pike is remembered on the Mount Pleasant "In Remembrance" Pictorial Honour Roll, located in Mount Pleasant Soldiers' Memorial Hall, 61 Melrose Street, Mount Pleasant, South Australia.



Mount Pleasant "In Remembrance" Pictorial Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Georgina Bliss)



Victor Hugo Pike is remembered on Burnside & District Fallen Soldiers Memorial Trees, located on Alexandra Avenue & Prescott Terrace, Rose Park, South Australia. In 2022 an additional 22 names were added by the Burnside History Group & Victor Hugo Pike was the 15th of the additional 22. He is remembered with Tree No 102.



Burnside & District Fallen Soldiers Memorial Trees, Rose Park (Photo from VWMA)



New Memorial of Burnside & District Fallen Soldiers Memorial Trees added in 2022

(Photo from City of Burnside Council)



Example of Burnside & District Fallen Soldiers Memorial Trees with Name Plaque

(Photo from City of Burnside Council)

V. H. Pike is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide *(Photos by Bilby)*

Private V. H. Pike is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 175.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(30 pages of Private Victor Hugo Pike'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

TUNGKILLO, September 11

On Friday night last a concert was given by the Band of Hope in the hall, in aid of Y.M.C.A. Addresses, recitations and songs were given.....On Saturday night a farewell social was tendered to Privates Victor Hugo Pike and Leslie McNeil Carrail.....

(The Mount Barker and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser, South Australia – 15 September, 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)

LOST WARILDA

THREE SOUTH AUSTRALIANS

INCLUDED AMONG THE MISSING

MELBOURNE, August 11.

Information has reached the Defence Department that 15 Australians, and not 14 (as Previously stated), are missing from the steamer Warilda, which was torpedoed on August 3. One body, that of George Wall, of Kongwak, Victoria, has been recovered.

The Defence Department to-day issued the following list of the names of the missing, who it is believed have been drowned:-No. 2654, Private Victor Hugo Pike, Tungkillo, South Australia, 5th Pioneers;.....

(Daily Herald, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 August, 1918)

WARILDA VICTIMS

THREE SOUTH AUSTRALIANS MISSING

Melbourne, August 11.

After the Warilda was torpedoed on August 3, 13 Australians were reported missing..... Private Victor Hugo Pike, Tungkillo, S.A., 5th Pioneers;....

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 12 August, 1918)

TELEGRAMS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE, August 12.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VICTIMS OF THE WARILDA

There were three South Australians among the victims of the steamer Warilda that was torpedoed, viz., Lieut. Moss, of Smithfield; Pte Victor Hugo Pike, of Tungkillo; and Pte Ernest Watkins, of Glanville.

(*The Narracoorte Herald*, South Australia – 13 August, 1918)

TUNGKILLO SOLDIER ON THE WARILDA

It is believed that Private Victor Hugo Pike, of Tungkillo, was amongst the 15 Australian soldiers who lost their lives when the hospital ship Warilda was torpedoed.

(*The Mount Barker and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser*, South Australia – 16 August, 1918)

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HEROES

CASUALTY LIST No. 442

Died other Causes

Pte V. H. Pike, Tungkillo, drowned

(*Port Pirie Recorder*, South Australia – 19 November, 1918)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

PIKE – A tribute of love and honor to our dear son and brother, Private V. H. Pike, who was drowned in the hospital ship Warilda, on August 3.

It was in the midnight, dark and drear,
When the horrible German Hun
Torpedoed the hospital ship Warilda,
And sent out dear son to a watery grave.
As he lived, he died, a man.

-Inserted by his loving father and mother, sisters, and brothers, nieces, and nephew.

(*The Express and Telegraph*, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 November, 1918) & (*Chronicle*, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 23 November, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS

DIED FOR THEIR COUNTRY

Private VICTOR HUGO PIKE, who was drowned on August 3, when the hospital ship Warilda was torpedoed, was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs W. Pike, of Tungkillo. He was born and educated in that district, and was in his 26th year. He enlisted on June 29, 1916, and left for France in September with the 5th Pioneers, and had been on active service until his death, except when on furlough. The last mail brought a letter written by Private Pike, three days before his death, to his parents, saying he had been wounded in the leg and was in the Second Canadian Hospital in France, and was shortly leaving for England. He was always cheerful and was loved and respected by all.

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 21 November, 1918) & (*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 30 November, 1918)

BEREAVEMENT CARDS

Mr and Mrs W. PIKE, of Tungkillo, desire to THANKS all kind Friends and Relatives for letters, cards, and floral tributes, and personal expressions of sympathy in their recent sad bereavement.

(*Observer*, Adelaide, South Australia – 23 November, 1918)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR: THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR KING AND COUNTRY





Private V. H. PIKE.

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 30 November, 1918)

**Notices were also placed in the newspapers in 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1929, 1930

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 (Photo from CWGC)



CWGC Graves in Hollybrook Cemetery with Cross of Sacrifice & Hollybrook Memorial *(Photo from CWGC)*

Photo of Private V. H. Pike's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by Retired QA – Find a Grave)

