

**Cambridge City Cemetery,
Cambridge, Cambridgeshire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3225 PRIVATE

V. H. RUFF

59TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

28TH JULY, 1916 Age 25

Faithful Son

And Loving Brother

One Who Always

Thought Of Mother

Victor Henry RUFF

Victor Henry Ruff was born in Sale, Victoria in 1893 to parents Henry and Sarah Ruff (nee Jennett).

Victor Henry Ruff attended State School in Victoria.

Victor Henry Ruff joined the Victorian Railways on 24th August, 1911 with an Employee number of 15178. He was employed in the Transportation Branch as a Lad Porter then promoted to Railway Shunter.

The 1914 & 1915 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Gippsland, subdivision of Traralgon, Victoria listed Victor Henry Ruff, Porter, of Railway Coffee Palace, Traralgon.

Victor Henry Ruff was a 21 year old, single, Railway Shunter from Topping Street, Sale, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 22nd September, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3225 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr H. Ruff, of Sale, Victoria. Victor Ruff stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to his teeth.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was posted to 23rd Depot Battalion at Royal Park from 27th September, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 7th Reinforcements of 23rd Battalion at Seymour on 11th October, 1915.

Private Victor Henry Ruff embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Commonwealth* (A73) on 26th November, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 23rd Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was allotted to & proceeded to join 58th Battalion from Zeitoun on 23rd February, 1916 from 6th Training Battalion. He was taken on strength of 58th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 23rd February, 1916 from Reinforcements of 23rd Battalion.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was transferred to 59th Battalion on 15th March, 1916 & was taken on strength of 59th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir the same day.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was admitted to 14th Field Ambulance at Ferry Post on 14th April, 1916 with mumps (Statement of Service form & War Gratuity Schedule records "sick to Hospital Duntroon Plateau."). He was transferred to 15th Field Ambulance at Staging Camp on 14th April, 1916 with Parotitis then transferred to 14th Field Ambulance on 15th April, 1916. He was taken on strength of his Battalion from Hospital on 7th May, 1916 (Statement of Service form & War Gratuity Schedule records he was taken on strength from Hospital from Duntroon Plateau on 2nd May, 1916 from Hospital).

Private Victor Henry Ruff embarked from Alexandria on 18th June, 1916 on *Kinfauns Castle* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 29th June, 1916.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was wounded in action in France on 19th July, 1916. He was transferred & admitted to 2nd Canadian Stationary Hospital at Outreau, France on 22nd July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to left leg (amputated). Private Ruff was transferred to Boulogne on 24th July, 1916 and embarked for England the same day on the Hospital Ship *St. David*.

59th Battalion

The 59th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 21 February 1916 as part of the expansion of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits came from the veteran 7th Battalion, and the other half were fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 7th, the 59th was predominantly composed of men from rural Victoria. The battalion became part of the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

On 19 July 1916, the 59th became embroiled in its first major battle on the Western Front, less than a month after it arrived in France. The battle of Fromelles was a disaster for the 59th. Attacking in the first wave, the 59th suffered heavy casualties at the hands of German machine-gunners, and its advance faltered far short of its objective.

Despite grievous losses, the units of the 5th Division manned the front line around Fromelles for a further two months.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 59th Battalion

SAILLY – 19th July, 1916

12 Noon – Heavy bombardment of enemy lines. 60th Battn. relieved half our front from PINNEY AVENUE inclusive.

7 pm – 59th Battn. attacked enemy position in four waves. First wave going over parapet at 6.45 pm other three waves following at five minute intervals. Attack did not penetrate enemy trenches being held up by intense rifle and machine gun fire approximately 100 yds from enemy front line.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Victor Henry Ruff was admitted to 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England on 24th July, 1916 with fractured left shoulder & left leg - serious.

The Medical Case Sheet for Private Victor Henry Ruff recorded a Gunshot wound to left forearm.

“July 25 – Wounded July 19 at Armentieres by shrapnel in left leg & right leg and both arms. He was operated on on July 21 when left leg was amputated through the knee joint and a piece of shrapnel was removed from the forearm on bedorsal surface just above the wrist left forearm both bones broken ? very swollen and bone sticking out of wound for xray. Small wound on outer Rt calf rather dirty piece of shrapnel still in ___ of femur sticking out of wound in left thigh.”

Private Victor Henry Ruff, “D” Company, 59th Battalion, died at 6 am on 28th July, 1916 at 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England. A Post Mortem was held on 28th July, 1916 by Captain W. Malden, Pathologist: *“Well nourished man, wounds in all four extremities left leg amputated at knee joint both arms left forearm fractured & comminuted. Thorax – heart right side much dilated with anbermortene clot. Lungs normal. Abdominal organs normal but very pale from extreme haemorrhage.”* Cause of death - gunshot wounds to legs & arms, Haemorrhage & Shock.

A death for Victor Ruff, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

Private Victor Henry Ruff was buried on 31st July, 1916 in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England –Gravesite “D” Grave No. 2607

In April, 1920 Mr H. Ruff, Topping Street, Sale, Victoria, father of the late Private Victor Henry Ruff, was advised by Base Records that the remains of his late son had been exhumed from former site & re-interred in Grave No. 3400 Section “ C ”, Cambridge Cemetery, Cambridge, England. *“This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.”* Plot number C. 3400

Private Victor Henry Ruff has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

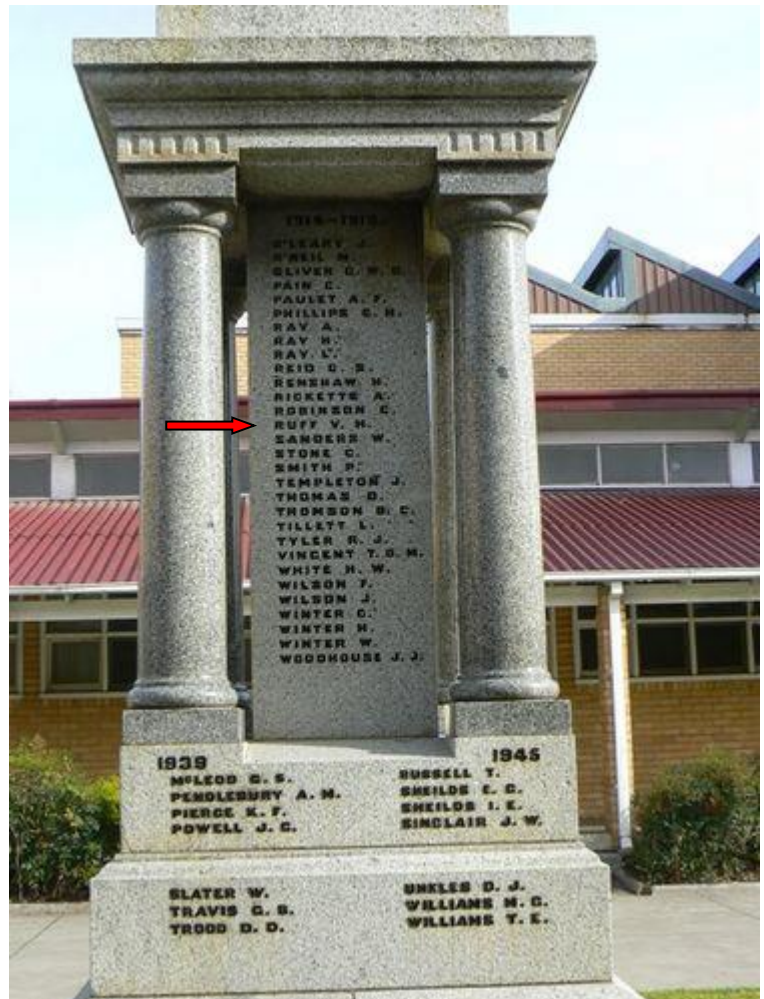
Private Victor Henry Ruff was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Ruff’s father - Mr H. Ruff, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private V. Henry Ruff – service number 3225, aged 25, of 59th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Henry and Sarah Ruff, of Topping St., Sale, Victoria.

V. H. Ruff is remembered on the Sale Cenotaph, located in front of The Memorial Hall, 82 Macalister Street, Sale, Victoria.



Sale Cenotaph in front of Memorial Hall (Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



Sale Cenotaph (Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

The Sale District Roll of Honour, located in Sale Historical Museum., 130 Foster Street, Sale Victoria, is a paper honour roll which lists the names of those who served in World War 1.



Sale District Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia –Mark Riggs)

V. Ruff is remembered on the Traralgon War Memorial, located at Kay & Franklin Streets, Traralgon, Victoria.



Traralgon War Memorial

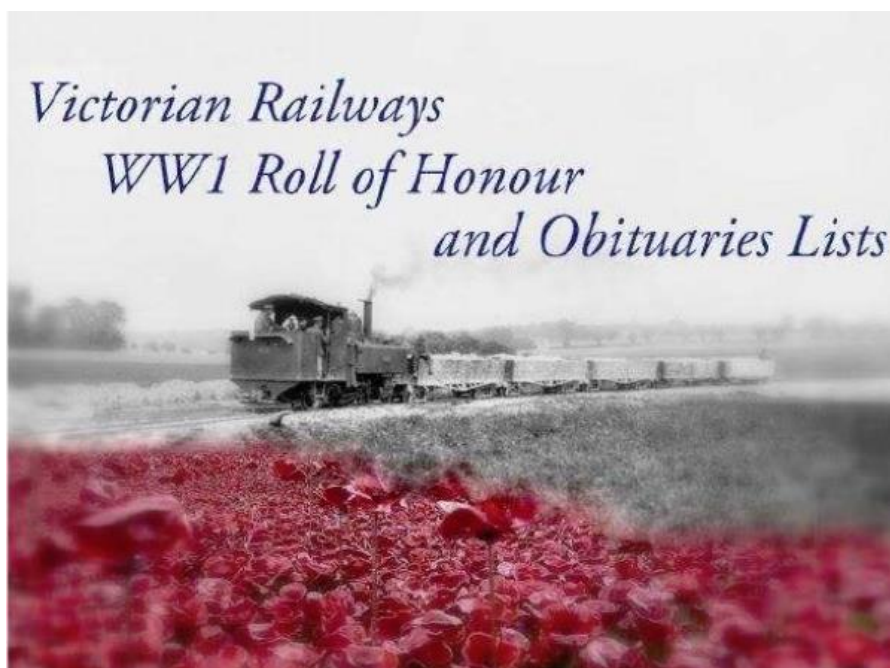
Vic Ruff is remembered on the Traralgon Honour Roll, located in the Traralgon RSL Club, 109 – 115 Grey Street, Traralgon, Victoria.



Traralgon Honour Roll (Photos from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)



Victor Henry Ruff is remembered in the Victorian Railways WW1 Roll of Honour and Obituaries Lists.



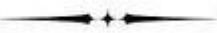
Private V. H. Ruff is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 168.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(43 pages of Private Victor Henry Ruff'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



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL

The Rev. Godfrey Smith yesterday conveyed to Mr and Mrs H. Ruff, of Sale, the sad news of the death of their son, Pte H. V. Ruff, at Cambridge Hospital, England. The authorities intimated that they were endeavouring to ascertain the cause of death. Pte Ruff was employed on the railways prior to enlisting with the A.I.F. Much sympathy is felt for his parents, who are natives of Sale.

(Gippsland Times, Victoria – 3 August, 1916)

SOLDIER'S DEATH

The "Times" writes:-

The Rev. Godfrey Smith yesterday conveyed to Mr and Mrs H. Ruff, of Sale, the sad news of the death of their son, Pte H. V. Ruff, at Cambridge Hospital, England. The authorities intimated that they were endeavouring to ascertain the cause of death. Pte Ruff was employed on the railways prior to enlisting with the A.I.F. Much sympathy is felt for his parents, who are natives of Sale.

Private Ruff was stationed at Traralgon.

(Traralgon Record, Traralgon, Victoria – 4 August, 1916)

OBITUARY

Pte H. V. Ruff, late of Sale, has died in Cambridge Hospital, London.

(Bairnsdale Advertiser and Tambo and Omeo Chronicle, Victoria – 5 August, 1916)

THE 191st CASUALTY LIST

Died of Cause Not Stated

Private V. H. Ruff, Sale

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 12 August, 1916)

ROLL OF HONOUR

Further information has been received by his parents in regards to the death on active service in France, of Private Victor H. Ruff, of Sale. It now transpires that the young soldier died in the General Hospital, Cambridge, England, from the effects of gunshot wounds in the legs and arms.

(The Maffra Spectator, Victoria – 21 August, 1916)

THANKS

MR and MRS H. RUFF and Family desire to express their SINCERE THANKS to the many kind friends who sent letters, cards and messages of sympathy during their recent sad bereavement. They specially wish to thank Rev. Godfrey Smith for the kindly tact displayed in breaking the sad news of the death of their son, Private Victor H. Ruff.

Sale, 24/8/16

(Gippsland Mercury, Victoria – 25 August, 1916)

OUR VOLUNTEERS

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In October last year four volunteers from the local railway station were given a send off by their fellow employees in the upper room of the mechanics' institute. The names of the four recruits are: George Statham, Victor Ruff, Les Sundermann and W. Wilkinson. The first two have died of wounds, and the last has been wounded. Sundermann has escaped so far. Little did those assembled at that survival gathering realise that in a few short months Statham and Ruff would have died from wounds from German shells.

(The Gippsland Farmers' Journal, Traralgon, Victoria – 29 August, 1916)

IN MEMORIAM

RUFF – In Loving Memory of our Dear Son and Brother, Victor, who died of wounds received in France on July 28th, 1916, at General Hospital, Cambridge, England.

Our darling hero.

Duty nobly done.

No mother was there to soothe his brow,

No father to say good-bye,

No sister to take him by the hand

When death was drawing nigh.

Far, far away from all his friends,

And those who loved him best;

No kindred hand can deck the place

Where he is laid to rest.

-Inserted by his sorrowing Mother, Father, Sisters and Brothers.

RUFF – In Loving Memory of our Dear Brother, Victor, who died of wounds received in France on July 28th, 1916, at General Hospital, Cambridge, England.

Our brave hero.

Dear to memory, dear to heart,

Love of my brother never will part.

We miss him and mourn him in silence, unseen,

And dwell on the memory of days that have been.

-Inserted by his loving Sisters, Ethel and Vera.

(Gippsland Mercury, Victoria – 27 July, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

A TRIBUTE to the memory of our late brothers, PRIVATES VICTOR RUFF and GEORGE STATHAM, who died in Cambridge Hospital from wounds received in France.

-Inserted by the members of the U.A.O.D. Traralgon Lodge, 426

(Traralgon Record, Traralgon, Victoria – 14 August, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

RUFF – STATHAM – A tribute from the brethren of the Traralgon Lodge, U.A.O.D., No. 426, to the memory of our late well-beloved brothers, Privates V. H. Ruff and G. W. Statham, who died in Cambridge Hospital, London, on respectively 28th July, 1916, and 14th August, 1916, of wounds received whilst fighting for King and country somewhere in France.

Duty nobly done.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 14 August, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

RUFF – STATHAM – A tribute to the memory of comrades Private P. H. Ruff and G. W. Statham, who died in Cambridge Hospital, London, on respectively 28th July, 1916 and 14th August, 1916, of wounds received at Pozieres.

Not forgotten.

-(Inserted by the Traralgon railway employees).

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 August, 1917)

Our Gallant Dead

MEMORIAL SERVICE AT TRARALGON

On Sunday afternoon, an impressive memorial service was held in the Mechanics' under the auspices of the State Recruiting Committee. Mr W. West occupied the chair, and the hall was densely packed in every part. Prior to the service, the Sportsmen's Thousand Band, reinforced by members of the local Band, played up and down Franklin street, and marched thence to the hall.

The service was in memory of the following fallen soldiers, who enlisted from the Traralgon Shire : -Messrs Thomas Walker, Gordon Cleaver, Donald Francis, Edward King, Walter M. King, John Mc Watt, Bernard Polden, James Teasdale, David Crawford, L. Boardman, Charles Chester, Edward Cobbledick, Ernest Ham, Henry De Melker, Arch Nicolson, **Victor Ruff**, Forbes Paulet, William Carter, Bert Miller, Lewis Berryman, Walter Fletcher, Harry Jonston, Arthur Miller, Robert Peiper, Geo. Statham, Frank Heaney, Thomas Coates, and John White.

Proceedings opened with the National Anthem, after which the hymn, " O God Our Help in Ages Past," was sung by the congregation. Prayer was offered by the Rev. H. Chapman in fitting terms, and the congregation chanted the hymn "Eternal Father Strong to Save." The Rev. W. H. Chapman read a portion of scripture from 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which was followed by the congregation singing " Lead Kindly Light." The Rev. Jas. Smith next delivered an appropriate address, in the course of which he eulogised the self-sacrificing spirit exhibited by those who had fallen in the world's great conflict, and extended the hand of sympathy to the bereaved. 3000 years ago an old man had said - "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord," In the midst of our madness, we were apt to blame the Almighty for things which were the direct outcome of our own actions. For instance, we may ask why this war, and why the slaughter of so many innocent lives ? There were many mysteries connected with the working of God, but in times of darkness we caught glimpses of things which were hidden before, but were becoming very, very real today. Suffering was portion of the Great Plan, and God's method of dealing with nations, as with individuals, was to make them perfect, even as Christ was made perfect, by suffering. The world would be perfected and purged in the fiery furnace through which it was passing, and made more worthy of Him who gave His life to redeem it. The first conviction brought home to us in connection with the fallen soldiers, was that they had died for the world's righteousness, and that the sacrifice that they had made would help it on. Another conviction was that the good lives given in the great conflict were not lost, for those who lived good lives can

never die eternally. It was only the bad, rotten life that died eternally. Those who led a good life had a kinship with God, trusting in the strength which is Divine. Those who loved God, and who had shed their heart's blood in Gallipoli and in France were not dead, for love was undying and would not end. The Apostle declared that whole families in heaven were one. This being so, the family tie would never be broken. Then let not the hearts of the bereaved be troubled, but be comforted in the belief that their loved ones are now with Him who is the resurrection and the life.

Hymn, "Lest We Forget."

A collection was then taken up in aid of the erection of a permanent memorial in Traralgon to the memory of our fallen soldiers and liberally responded to, £10 16s 1d being contributed.

During the offertory, the Band played "Nearer my God to Thee."

Serjeant Fozard said he desired to pay a tribute to those fallen comrades who had unfortunately died on the fields of battle, and who were now in higher hands than ours. The men who fought and died in Gallipoli, in Egypt, and in France, were the flower of Australian manhood. They had sacrificed their lives for love of their country, and for the freedom of the people who were in it. When they made the famous charges at Lonesome Pine, Poizeres, Bupaume, and Bullecourt the same spirit of comradeship was always present. When the doctor came to attend the wounded, he was invariably told to "attend to my mate first, he wants it more than I do." Notwithstanding that there were all classes and conditions of men in the ranks of the Australians, they loved and feared God. On a smaller scale, the sacrifice they had made for their country was akin to the sacrifice Christ had made on the Cross of Calvary. "Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his friend." Those who had gone to the front had taken up the Cross, which all were commanded by Christ to bear. He had seen this fine body of men, when they knew they had to go over the parapet, looking over their little testaments, quoting little prayers, or scanning little photographs, which a feeble mother or a feeble father had given them before they went away. Sometimes it would be the photograph of the wife and little ones. They knew that if it should be the wish of their Creator they would return, and if it were not His wish they would not return. But they made the sacrifice willingly, with never a tear or word of complaint. As they left the parapet, their one thought was liberty and victory. They knew that it meant the sacrifice of Australia's best blood, but they were eager to "play the game," and win out for king and country. Time after time an Australian had laid down; his life for a comrade. They had fought the good fight, and accomplished their work. When they fell on the field of battle, their last thought were always of the loved ones they had left behind in Australia. It would be but a brief span before the people who were here would, in the natural course of events, follow those who had laid down their lives for them. In the meantime were they making the sacrifices they were entitled to make? Were they living the life worthy of their fallen soldiers? Most of them had stood by the deathbed or the open grave of someone near and dear to them. That was the time the sacrifice was brought home to them all. When God required of them their souls, would they hear the glad pronouncement, "Well done thou good and faithful servant." On the fields of Gallipoli and of France a little wooden cross marked the graves of many of our own and England's soldiers who would hear it. "

The Dead March in Saul" was then played by the Band and "The Last Post" sounded, after which an impressive ceremony was brought to a close by the National Anthem and the Rev. J. Smith pronouncing the Benediction. The Band, under the baton of Corporal Carmichael, played the accompaniments to the various items admirably.

(Traralgon Record, Traralgon, Victoria – 11 September, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

RUFF – STATHAM – In sad but proud remembrance of brothers Victor H. Ruff and George W. Statham, who died on active service on 28th July, 1916 and 14th August, 1916, respectively. (Inserted by the brethren of the U.A.O.D., Traralgon, No. 426)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 August, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

RUFF – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Victor, who died of wounds received In France on the 28th July, 1916, at General Hospital, Cambridge, England.

In a soldier's grave he is sleeping,
One of earth's dearest and best.
In our hearts we will miss him for ever,
One of Australia's best.

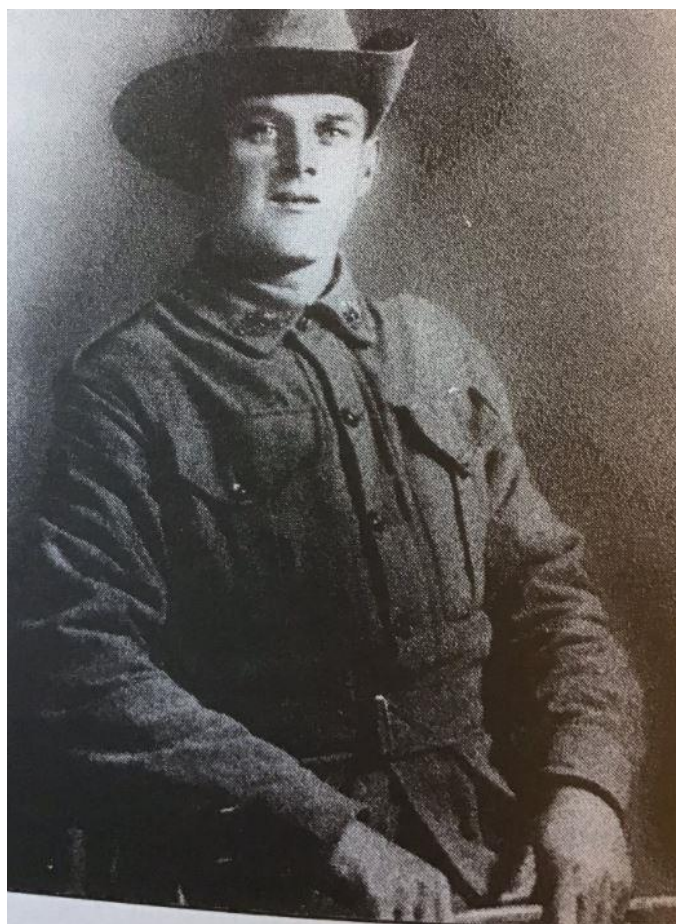
- Inserted by his loving parents, sisters and brothers, Topping-street, Sale.

RUFF - In loving memory of our dear brother, Victor, who died of wounds received In France on the 28th July, 1916, at General Hospital, Cambridge, England.

Days of sadness still come o'er us,
Hidden, secret tears still flow;
Memory keeps our brother near us,
Though he died four years ago.

-Inserted by his loving sisters, Ethel, Vera, Violet, Doris, Topping-street, Sale.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 July, 1920)



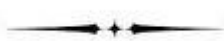
Private Victor Henry Ruff

(Photo courtesy of Gary McCulloch from his book "Sale War Fallen")



Private Victor Henry Ruff

(Photo courtesy of Gary McCulloch)



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)

Private V. H. Ruff does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Faithful Son And Loving Brother

One Who Always Thought Of Mother

Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England

Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge (known locally as Newmarket Road Cemetery) contains 1,019 Commonwealth War Graves – 186 from World War 1 & 833 from World War 2.

The 1st Eastern General Hospital, with 1,173 beds, was posted to Cambridge during the First World War, initially at the Leys School and Trinity College, later in huts. The First World War burials in Cambridge City Cemetery are mostly in two plots, one in the southern part of the burial ground, known as the Dominion Plot, and the other on the northern boundary. The Cross of Sacrifice stands on the western border of the Dominion Plot, while in the centre of the other is a memorial cross of Portland stone which was erected by private subscription. The Second World War graves are also mainly in two War Graves Plots with a few others scattered throughout the cemetery. The general Service plot was established in 1940, and the Air Force plot in 1942 for the burial of casualties from the Air Force stations set up in the eastern counties during the war. These included Bomber Command bases in Lincolnshire and fighter stations in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Stone of Remembrance, which was unveiled by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder in July 1951, stands near the centre of the Air Force plot. Cambridge City Cemetery contains 181 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 829, (inclusive 3 unidentified), from the Second World War. The cemetery also contains four non-war service burials and ten war graves of other nationalities.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Photo of Private V. H. Ruff's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.



(Photo by Julia&keld – Find a Grave)



Cross of Sacrifice (Photo from CWGC)



Entrance to Cambridge City Cemetery & Map (below) (Photos by Julia&keld – Find a Grave)

