

**Weston Mill Cemetery,
Plymouth, Devon
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2882 LEADING SEAMAN

C. V. RUSSELL

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

H.M.A.S. "PARRAMATTA"

8TH MARCH, 1919 Age 25

*Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me
In Memory Of Our Beloved Son
(Bon)*

Charles Victor RUSSELL

Charles Victor Russell was born at Malvern, Worcestershire, England on 9th May, 1893 to parents Thomas George and Mary Russell (nee Smith).

The 1901 England Census listed Charles V. Russell as a 7 year old, living with his family in a 4 roomed dwelling at The Hermitage, Link Common, Great Malvern, Worcestershire, England. His parents were recorded as Thomas G. Russell (Manservant, aged 34, born Malvern, Worcestershire) & Mary Russell (aged 27, born Manchester, Lancs). Charles was one of five children listed on this Census – all born at Malvern, Worcestershire, England – Thomas W. H. Russell (aged 9), then Charles, James H. Russell (aged 5), Nannie Russell (aged 3) & John H. Russell (aged 1).

The 1911 England Census listed Charles Victor Russell as a 17 year old, living with his family in a 5 roomed dwelling at 34 Cromwell Road, Malvern Link, Worcestershire, England. His parents were recorded as Thomas George Russell (Gardener, aged 44) & Mary Russell (aged 38). Thomas & Mary Russell had been married for 19 years & had 11 children. Charles was the eldest of nine children listed on this Census, all born at Malvern, Worcestershire, England – Charles, James Henry Russell (aged 15), Nannie Russell (aged 13), John Hallows Russell (aged 11), Monica Ellen Selina Russell (aged 7), Minnie Russell (aged 6), Mabel Grace Russell (aged 3), Allen Russell (aged 1) & Mary Dorcas Russell (aged 2 months).

The Russell family were passengers on *Irishman* which departed from the port of Liverpool, England on 15th March, 1912 & arrived at the port of Melbourne, Australia in May, 1912. The family consisted of Thomas Russell (Farm Labourer, age 45) & his wife Mary Russell (aged 39), Thomas Russell (Farm Labourer, aged 19), Charles Russell (Farm Labourer, aged 18), James Russell (Farm Labourer, aged 16), Nannie Russell (aged 14), John Russell (aged 12), Jennie Russell, aged 10), Monica Russell (aged 8), Minnie Russell (aged 6), Mabel Russell (aged 4), Allan Russell (aged 2) & Mary Russell (aged 1).

Charles Victor Russell joined the Royal Australian Navy on 16th April, 1913 for a period of 7 years with a service number of 2882. He was 5ft 9 ½ inches tall, with dark brown hair, brown eyes, a dark complexion with a scar on his forehead & a mole on the point of his nose. His religion was Church of England.

Charles Victor Russell was rated Ordinary Seaman while serving in H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* from 16th April, 1913. He was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Encounter* from 9th August, 1913. He was rated Able Seaman while still with *Encounter* on 28th July, 1914 & took part in the operations in German New Guinea in September, 1914. He qualified in First Aid on 12th November, 1914. Able Seaman Charles Victor Russell was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Penguin* on 18th July, 1915 then transferred to H.M.A.S. *Fantome* on 27th July, 1915. He was rated leading Seaman while on *Fantome* on 14th July, 1916. Leading Seaman Charles Victor Russell was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* on 17th October, 1917 then transferred to H.M.A.S. *Encounter* on 9th January, 1918. He went back to H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* on 15th August, 1918 & was then transferred to H.M.A.S. *Parramatta* on 13th September, 1918.

Leading Seaman Charles Victor Russell died on 8th March, 1919 at Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, England from Influenza & Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for Charles V. Russell, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of East Stonehouse, Devon, England.

Leading Seaman Charles Victor Russell was buried in Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England – Plot number Church C. 12846 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

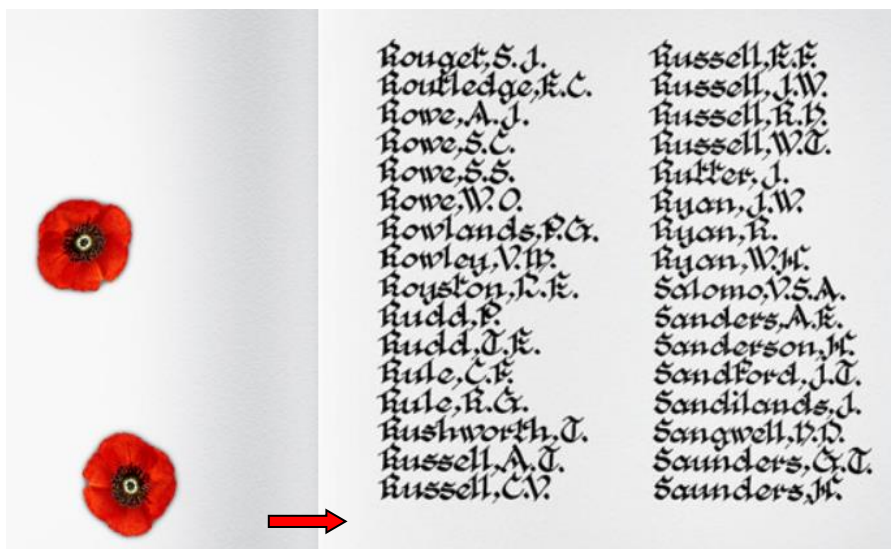
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Leading Seaman Charles Victor Russell – service number 2882, aged 25, of H.M.A.S. "Parramatta, Royal Australian Navy. He was the son of Thomas George Russell and Mary Russell, of 131 Manning Rd., East Malvern, Victoria, Australia. Native of Malvern, England.

Leading Seaman C. V. Russell 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

C. V. Russell is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.

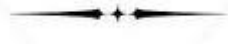


Leading Seaman C. V. Russell is remembered on Royal Australian Navy WW1 Memorial, located at HMAS Cerberus Protestant Chapel of St Mark, Nelson Road, Crib Point, Victoria.



HMAS Cerberus Protestant Chapel of St Mark, Crib Point, Victoria (Photos courtesy of Karen Standen)





Newspaper Notices

DIED ON SERVICE

RUSSELL – At the Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, England, died leading seaman, Charles Victoria Russell, of pneumonic influenza (late of H.M.A.S. Parramatta), aged 25; “Ben,” the beloved son of Mr and Mrs T. G. Russell, Hermitage, The Avenue, E. Malvern.

For ever with the Lord.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 15 May, 1919)

PERSONAL

Leading Seaman C. V. Russell, 25 years of age, who died of influenza recently in the Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, was in the Royal Australian Navy for six years, and served on the Parramatta. He was the second son of Mr and Mrs T. G. Russell, East Malvern, who formerly lived at Malvern, England. The remains were buried with Naval honors at Devonport Cemetery. The coffin was borne to the cemetery on a gun carriage, and the Last Post was sounded over the grave.

(*The Herald*, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 May, 1919)

ABOUT PEOPLE

Leading Seaman C. V. Russell, who served for some time on the Parramatta as a member of the Australian naval forces, died from influenza on 8th March last at the Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth, England. Deceased, who was 25 years of age, was buried with naval honors. His parents reside at “The Hermitage,” The Avenue, East Malvern,

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

Restoring Pennies Brings Peace for Many

by Kim Fawkes



Dead Man's Penny

Somewhere among the graves and rusting wrought ironwork in Box Hill Cemetery is a memorial grave to Lieutenant Joseph Austin Sorby. He died in April 1918, leaving his parents, Charles Edward and Helen Sorby, to mourn his loss.

When I came across Joseph's memorial in 2016, I saw an indentation at the foot of the grave. Did a vase once stand there or some other monument I thought? I did not know it then, but Joseph's father had placed there something he valued highly – a commemorative war medallion known as a "Dead Man's Penny" as a memorial to his son. Why it was missing I had no idea; whatever the reason, it was no longer where it should be.

Moving along, I came across another grave missing a Penny. With no first or second names, only a birth and death date, I decided to see if I could identify this soldier. Thomas, his father, was born on 14 October 1843 and died on 6 November 1929. Rachael Ann, Thomas's wife, was born on 10 February 1860 and died on 21 January 1956. Using their surname and Box Hill as my keywords, an internet search revealed Thomas had a son whose birth date of 5 February 1891 and death date of 19 April 1917 matched the details on the grave. Albert William Cook joined the Imperial Camel Corps only to be killed in action on 19 July 1917 at Gaza, Palestine.

Near Albert's memorial grave is that of a soldier, killed in action at Fromelles on 19 July 1916. There had once been a Penny on the grave, now gone. With few personal details to go by, I used the same research tools I'd used previously to identify William as this missing soldier. More than 5500 Australians were killed, wounded or captured in this, the first action for many, on the Western Front. They may simply been written off as a casualty of war, "Known Unto God", had it not been for the efforts of Lambis Englezos, an Australian school teacher whose efforts to find "the missing" resulted in the discovery of 250 Australian and British soldiers in a mass grave at Pheasant Wood, Fromelles, in 2009. Of these men, 203 were identified as Australians with 75 identified by name through DNA testing. Sadly, no trace was found of William.

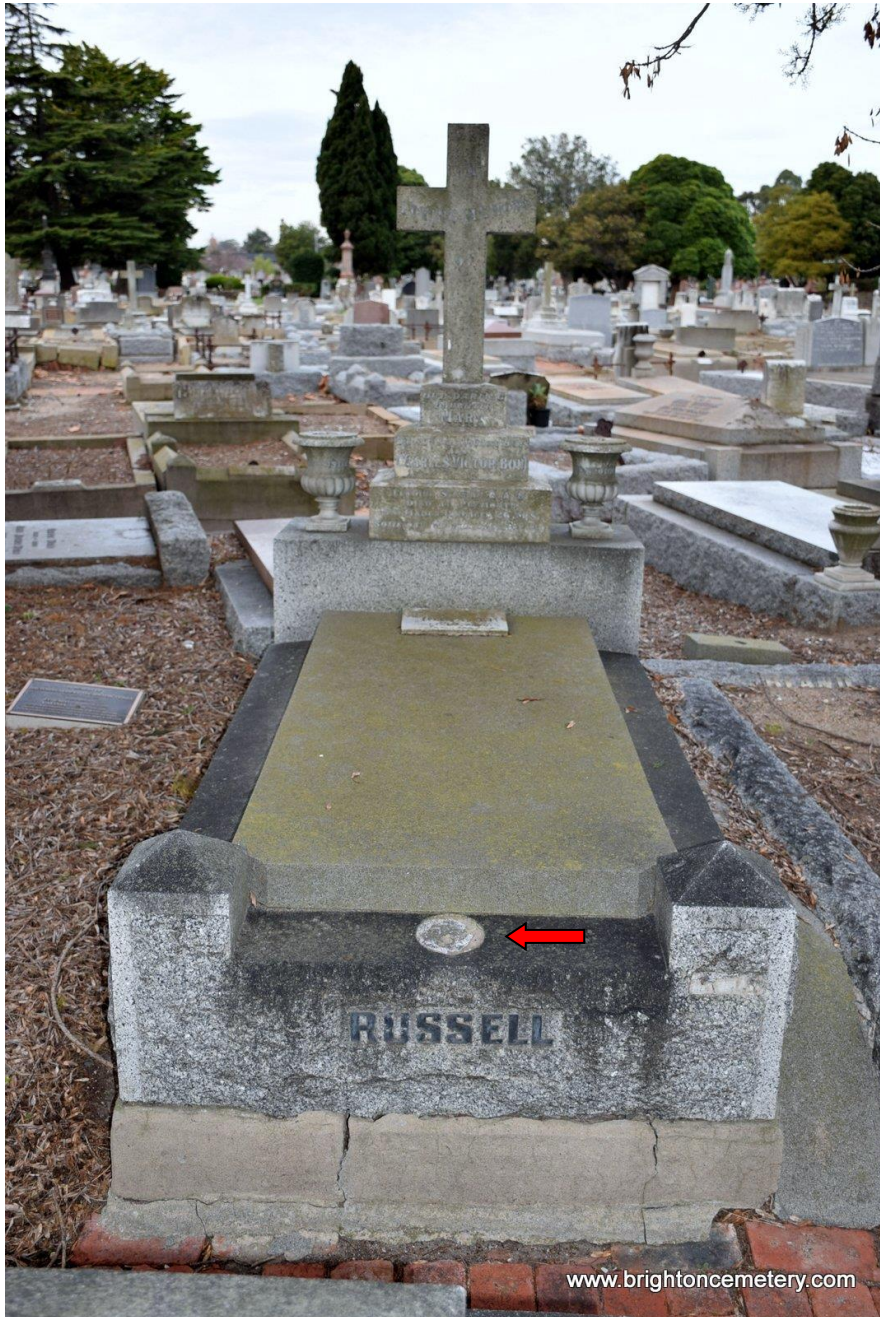
Of the more than 40 000 graves and memorials in Box Hill Cemetery, I have identified fourteen Dead Man Pennies on or missing from graves. The then RSL State President, Major-General Sir David McLachlan, said:

"... it's absolutely despicable for people to desecrate the final resting place of others. Cemeteries are a place for people to express grief and remember. Anything that violates that is out of order".

Lost or stolen, I had no idea where the Pennies had gone to, but I vowed there and then to do something about this injustice.

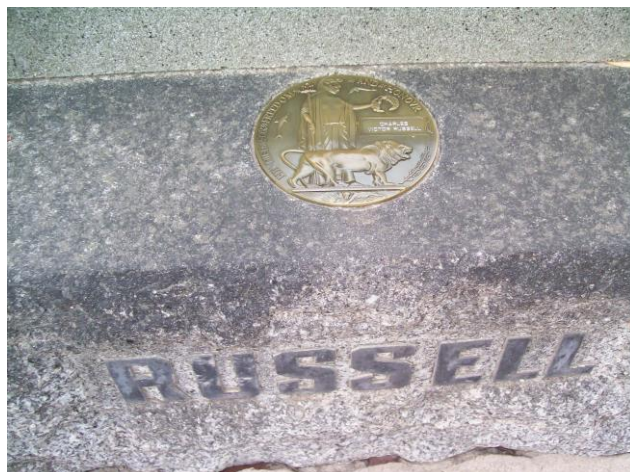
With the support of The White Horse Leader newspaper, I launched a project in May of 2016 to fund the replacement cost of the missing Pennies. Through donations large and small, replica Pennies were obtained, which, when engraved with the soldier's name, will be returned to the graves, completing a story that began more than 100 years ago. Donations are accepted for this worthy project.

(Burwood Bulletin – 20 May, 2017)



Russell Family Headstone in Brighton Cemetery, Victoria (arrow showing missing Death Penny)

(Photo courtesy of [History of Brighton Cemetery](#))



Replica Death Penny replaced on Leading Seaman Charles Victor Russell's headstone in Brighton Cemetery

(Photo & replacement of Death Penny due to Kim Fawkes)

Charles Victor Russell is remembered on the Russell Family Headstone in Brighton Cemetery, Victoria.



(Photo courtesy of [History of Brighton Cemetery](#))

In
Loving Memory
Of
Our Darling
Daughter
MARY
Died 27TH June 1930 Aged 19 Yrs
Also
CHARLES VICTOR (BON)
Leading Seaman R.A.N.
Died at Plymouth
9TH March 1919 Aged 26 Yrs
Some Day We Will Understand

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)

Leading Seaman C. V. Russell does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me
In Memory Of Our Beloved Son (Bon)*

Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England

During the First World War, Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse contained between them the Royal Dockyard, Royal Naval Barracks (known as H.M.S. Vivid), the Royal Marine Barracks of the Plymouth Division, and naval and military hospitals. For the duration of the war, Devonport was made headquarters of the Auxiliary Patrol Area.

Plymouth was a naval station second only to Portsmouth during the Second World War. Devonport was also an important military station and there was a R.A.F station at Mount Batten, opposite Plymouth.

Plymouth (Weston Mill) Cemetery contains 401 burials of the First World War, 1 being unidentified. Approximately half are in the naval and military war graves plots north-east of the chapel, the rest are scattered.

Second World War burials in the cemetery number 556, 11 of which are unidentified. Of these, 111 of the earlier graves filled the existing naval and military plots. A further plot was then set aside for service graves and 317 of the burials were made there. The rest of the war graves are scattered. The cemetery also contains 14 non-war service burials and 36 war graves of other nationalities, 25 of them Polish.

There are six Australians buried in this cemetery – five from World War 1 & one from World War 2.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon



Photo of Leading Seaman C. V. Russell's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England. *(see updated headstone next page)*

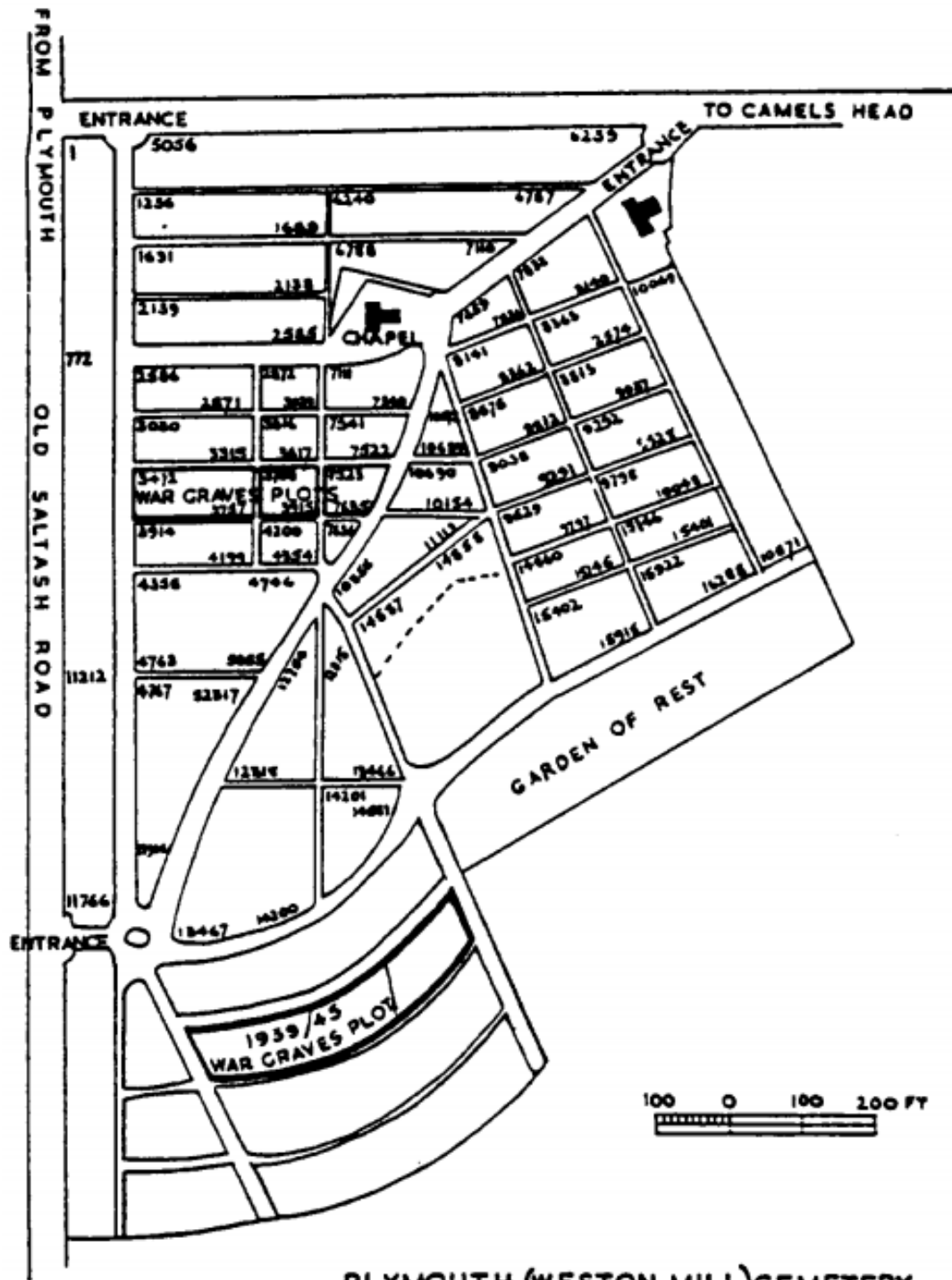


(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)

Photo of Leading Seaman C. V. Russell's new Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Weston Mill Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Cliff Barry 2018)



PLYMOUTH (WESTON MILL) CEMETERY