

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



10367 SAPPER

L. R. TOPPING

AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

31ST JULY, 1916

Lynton Robert TOPPING

Robert Lynton Topping was born at Clayton, Victoria in 1892 to parents John & Margaret Cameron Topping (nee Finnie).

Lynton Robert Topping attended schools at Mentone & Mordialloc, Victoria.

Margaret Cameron Topping, mother of Robert Lynton Topping, died on 9th November, 1911, aged 56 years, at "Sylvan", Florence Street, Mentone, Victoria.

The 1913, 1914, 1915 & 1916 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Henty, subdivision of Mentone, Victoria recorded Robert Lynton Topping, Carpenter, of Sylvan, Florence Street.

Lynton Robert Topping was a 24 year old, single, Carpenter from Florence Street, Mentone, Victoria when he enlisted on 23rd February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Presbyterian & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Stanley John Topping, Florence Street, Mentone, Victoria.

Sapper Lynton Robert Topping was posted to Engineer Reinforcements on 23rd February, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 10th Field Company Engineers on 16th March, 1916.

Sapper Robert Lynton Topping (name as per Embarkation Roll), Service number 10367, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Runic* (A54) on 20th June, 1916 with the 10th Field Company Engineers.

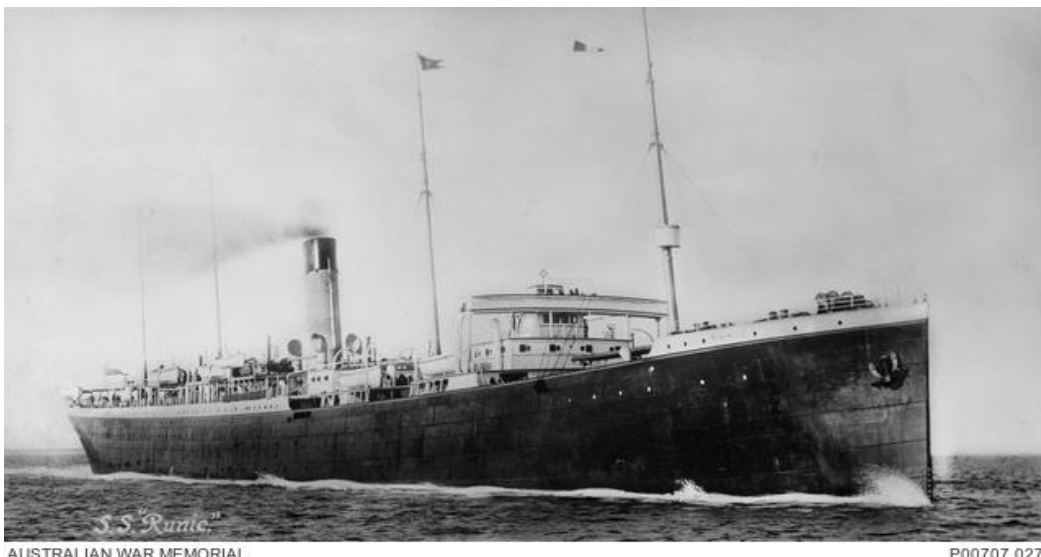
Australian Engineers in the First World War

Engineers, also known as sappers, were essential to the running of the war. Without them, other branches of the Allied Forces would have found it difficult to cross the muddy and shell-ravaged ground of the Western Front. Their responsibilities included constructing the lines of defence, temporary bridges, tunnels and trenches, observation posts, roads, railways, communication lines, buildings of all kinds, showers and bathing facilities, and other material and mechanical solutions to the problems associated with fighting in all theatres.

(Description of Engineers Information from The Australian War Memorial)

Sapper Lynton Robert Topping was admitted to Ship's Hospital on 28th July, 1916 with Cerebro Spinal Meningitis & Pneumonia.

Sapper Lynton Robert Topping died at 2.30 pm on 31st July, 1916 at Sea on board HMAT *Runic* (A54) from Pneumonia, however the Statement of Service form recorded he died from "C.S. Meningitis" at Latitude 11.48 North & Longitude 19.38 West. (Time of death as listed on Hospital Admissions form)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00707.027

HMAT *Runic* (A54)

According to Register of Deceased Passengers – Lynton Robert Topping died at 2.25 pm on 31st July, 1916 at Sea at co-ordinates Latitude 11.17N, Longitude 19.38W from Pneumonia. His last place of abode was listed on the Register as Seymour Camp, Victoria, Australia.



Place of Death of Sapper Lynton Robert Topping



According to information provided by his brother – James Henry Topping for the Roll of Honour – Lynton Robert Topping “*died of illness at Sea between Cape Verde & Canary Islands.*”

Sapper Lynton Robert Topping was buried at Sea at 6 pm on 31st July, 1916 from HMAT *Runic* (A54). He is commemorated on the Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England as he has no grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Sapper Lynton Robert Topping was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. The British War Medal was signed for by J. H. Topping on 16th February, 1923 with notation on receipt *"Only surviving Brother, Mother & Father deceased."* A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Topping's father – Mr J. Topping, as the closest next-of-kin & as listed on both Stamp Records, however Mr John Topping had died on 29th September, 1918. (Scroll sent May, 1922 & signed for by J. H. Topping on 6th June, 1922. Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper Lynton Robert Topping – service number 10367, of 10th Field Coy., Australian Engineers. No family details are listed.

L. Topping is remembered on the Memorial Gates at Keith Styles Municipal Gardens, Mentone Parade, Mentone, Victoria.



Memorial Gates at Keith Styles Municipal Gardens (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



L. Topping is remembered on the Mentone War Memorial, located at RSL Club, Mentone Road, Mentone, Victoria.



Mentone War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)



Sapper L. R. Topping is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 25.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(36 pages of Sapper Lynton Robert Topping'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

DEATHS

On Active Service

TOPPING – A tribute of love to my dearest friend, Sapper Lynton Topping, who died on service 31st July.

To know him was to love him, and he will never be forgotten.

-Inserted by his deep sorrowing friend, Violet Eaton.

TOPPING – A tribute to our dear friend, Sapper Lynton Topping, who died on service 31st July.

A more generous boy never lived.

-Inserted by his sorrowing friends; Mr and Mrs Eaton and family.

TOPPING – Died on the 31st July, at sea, of pneumonia, Sapper R. Lyn. Topping, youngest son of John Topping, of Mentone.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 19 August, 1916)

DIED ON SERVICE

TOPPING – Died on the 31st July, at sea, of pneumonia, Sapper R. Lyn. Topping, youngest son of John Topping, of Mentone.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 19 August, 1916)

AUSTRALIANS IN WAR

TWO CASUALTY LISTS YESTERDAY

The 200th and 201st casualty lists issued to-night.....

DIED OF ILLNESS

Sapper L. R. TOPPING, Mentone

(*Hamilton Spectator*, Victoria – 29 August, 1916)

BEREAVEMENT CARDS

TOPPING – Mr J.TOPPING and Sons desire to express their sincere THANKS to all kind friends and relatives for letters, cards, telegrams, and personal expressions of sympathy in the loss of their dear son and brother, Lynton, who died at sea on the 31st July, Florence street, Mentone.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 September, 1916)

Unveiling an Honor Roll

MENTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

On Sunday evening at the above church, a large congregation gathered notwithstanding the wet weather, to take part in a special service. The resident minister; (Rev W. Agnew) conducted the service and preached an appropriate service. Before the conclusion of the meeting, an address was given by the Rev J. H. Hewitt, M.A. The Honor Roll was unveiled by Mr W. Blackwood, who, the Rev Agnew stated, was the oldest member of the church and who had the names of three sons and a brother inscribed on the roll. The complete list contained thirty-three names, as follows: J. Balding, P. Balding, A. Blackburn J. Blackburn, A. S. Blackwood, J. Blackwood, R. Blackwood, V. Blackwood, H. D. Brown, J. A. Burns, E. C. Chenney, E. Cook, W. L Finn, G. Fricker, R Harvey, T. Harvey, H. Harry, G. Heywood, A. S Malcom, R. Maskell, L. McBean, W. Nichol, J. Penny, M. Penny, W. Penny, E. C. Pepper, N. Richardson, A. J. R. Smith, W. Sones, **L. Topping**, H. Whitehead, C. H. Storey.

Advantage was taken of the service to unveil a memorial tablet to the late Private L. Topping, who it will be remembered was a close adherent of the church and who died at sea after a brief illness. The tablet bore the words:- On Active Service. Erected to the memory of Sapper Robert Lynton Topping, 10th Field Company, Engineers, A.I.F., Died of illness at sea, 31st July 1916 Aged 24 years. Thy will be done.

The church was decorated with flags of the allied nations and hymns suitable for the occasion were sung, the proceedings terminating with the singing of the National Anthem.

(*Moorabbin News*, Victoria – 16 June, 1917) & (*Seaside News*, Cheltenham, Victoria - 16 June, 1917)

***Note: According to Churches Australia the Mentone Presbyterian Church – now the Mentone Uniting Church closed for services on 30th November, 2019.

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

TOPPING – In memory of my pal, Sapper L. R. Topping, who died on a transport, 31st July, 1916.

One of the best.

(Inserted by his friend, G.B.)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 1 August, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

TOPPING – In sad but loving remembrance of my dear nephew, Private Lynton Topping, who passed away at sea July 31, 1916.

Not one that he loved could go to his side
To hear his last faint sigh,
Or breathe in his ear some parting word
Before he closed his eyes.

-(Inserted by E. Finnie)

TOPPING – In loving memory of my dear son and brother, Sapper Robert Lynton Topping, 10th Field Coy. Engineers, who died at sea July 31, 1916. (Inserted by his father and brothers)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 1 August, 1918)

DEATHS

TOPPING – On the 8th August, at Mentone, John Stanley, second son of the late John and Margaret Topping, brother of James Henry and the late Robert Lynton (A.I.D.), aged 31 years.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 10 August, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

TOPPING – In loving memory of our dear brothers, who passed away; John Stanley, August 8, 1921; also Robert Lynton, A.I.F., who died at sea, July 31, 1916. (Inserted by their loving brother, Harry, and sister-in-law, Nellie, Mentone).

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 8 August, 1922)

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.

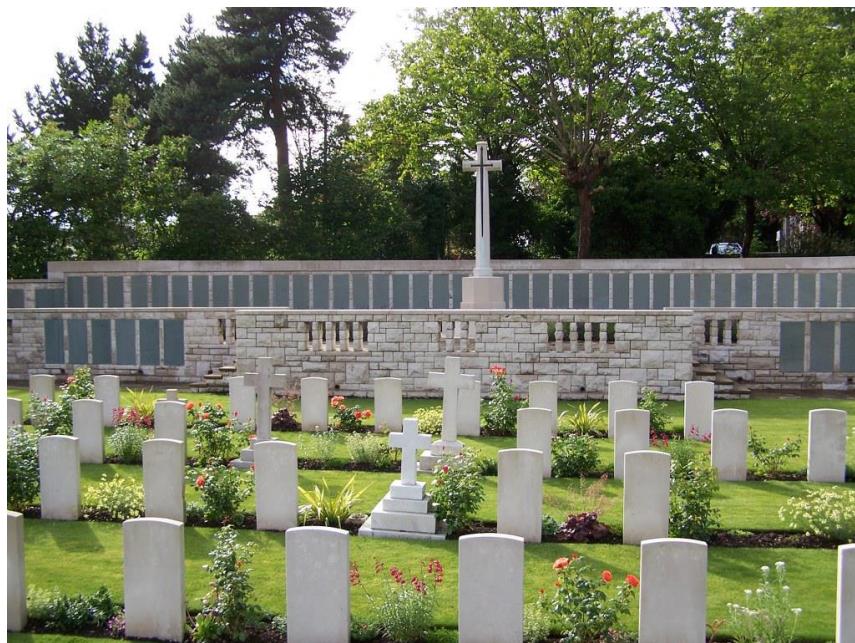
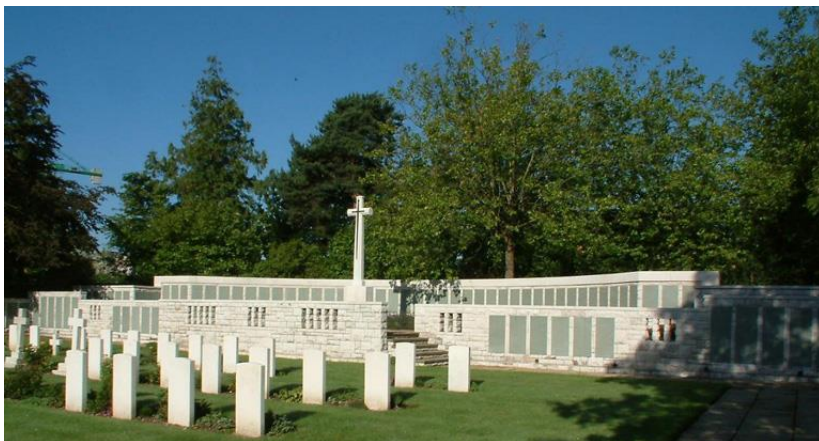
(Information & photos from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice

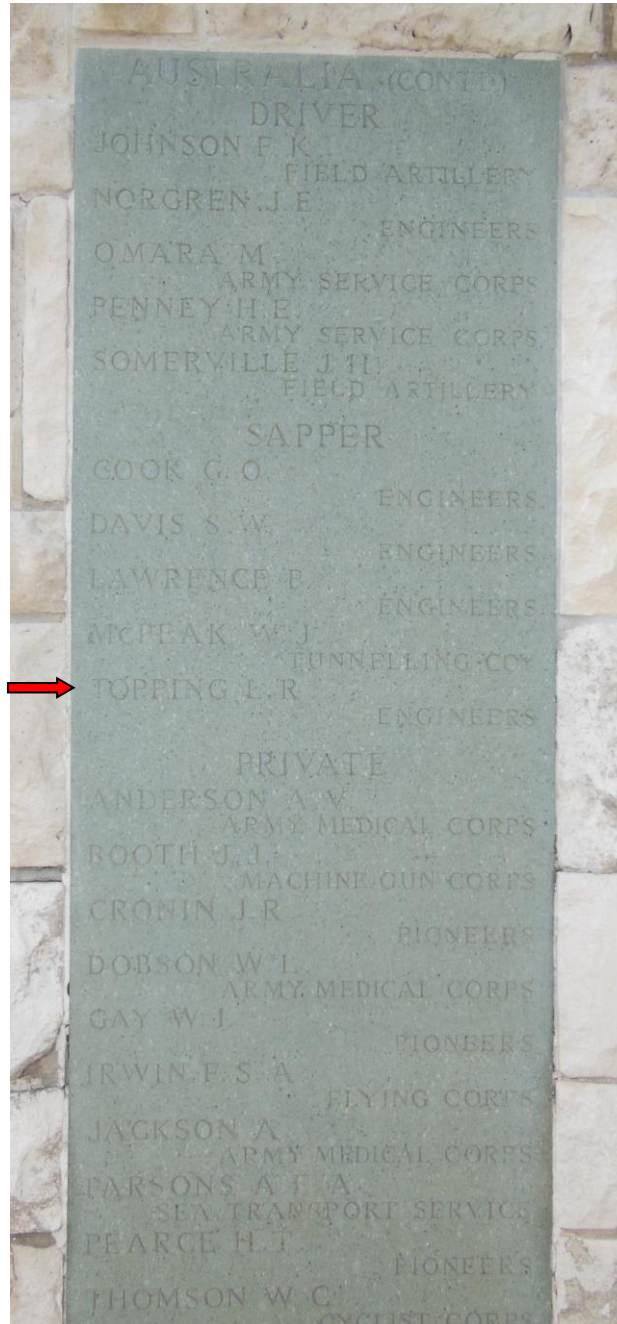


Name Panels behind Cross of Sacrifice *(Photo from CWGC)*



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

Photo of Sapper L. R. Topping's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Hollybrook Memorial, Southampton, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by julia&keld – Find a Grave)

