

**Efford Cemetery,
Plymouth, Devon, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



15164 GUNNER

W. TOWN

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

23RD AUGUST, 1916

William TOWN

William Town was born in mid-1893 at Perth, Western Australia to mother Frances Town.

[Frances Town was born on 19th September, 1869 in Brighton, Sussex, England to parents William & Mary Margaret Town (nee Sargeant).

On 18th February, 1892 Frances Town departed from London, England on board the "Echuca" bound for Fremantle, Western Australia – as per Western Australian Government Agency List. She was aged 22 & a General Servant, arriving with many other single girls.

Frances Gertrude Lindsay (widow, aged 24) married James Henry Maddock (age 34) on 22nd February, 1899 at Agricultural Hall, Mingenew, Western Australia.

Frances Gertrude Maddock (nee Town) died on 2nd March, 1905 at Yandanooka, Western Australia, 8 days after the birth of her 3rd child (named James Maddock) to James Henry Maddock (Other children – Olive aged 5 years & Cecil aged 2 ½ years). She was buried on 3rd March, 1905 at Mingenew Cemetery, Western Australia.

(Note: The death certificate for Frances Gertrude Maddock recorded her father as Thomas Town & her mother's maiden name was not known. The death was certified in writing by H. J. Lee Steere, employer, Yandanooka, Western Australia.)

William Town was a 22 year old, single, Cook from "Toronto" Leake Street, Cottesloe, Western Australia when he enlisted on 30th September, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 15164 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his friend – Mrs Elizabeth Lee Steere, "Toronto" Leake Street, Cottesloe, Western Australia.

Private William Town was posted to 32nd Depot for recruit training on 11th October, 1915. He was transferred to Field Artillery on 11th November, 1915 as Gunner. Gunner Town was posted to 10th Field Artillery Brigade on 1st June, 1916 & posted to 3rd Reinforcements on 1st July, 1916.

Gunner William Town embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Berrima* (A35) on 4th July, 1916 with the 10th Field Artillery Brigade, 3rd Reinforcements.

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.

Gunner William Town died on 23rd August, 1916 at Military Hospital, Devonport, England from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis. [Note: A handwritten note in the Service Record file for Gunner William Town reads: "15164 Gunnr Town William 3rd Rfts 10th F.A.B. Died 22.8.16 between Keyham Docks & Mil Hosp Devonport..."]

A death for William Town, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Devonport, Devon, England.

Gunner William Town was buried in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England – Plot number R.C. C. 3351 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Mrs Harrison, a friend of the late Gunner William Town, requested a Certificate of death from Base Records on 31st October, 1916.

Base Records advised the District Paymaster, Perth (W.A.) on 17th May, 1917: "Your P999 Allotment three shillings Allottee Mrs Sarah Harrison 32 Moscoma Street Ascot Vale Victoria."

Augustus S. Roe, Solicitor & Notary, Perth, Western Australia wrote to Base Records on 15th December, 1916 stating he was acting for the Executor of Gunner William Town & requested a Certificate of his death.

Base Records replied to Augustus S. Roe. Esq., on 11th January, 1917 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 15164 Gunner W. Town, 10th Brigade Field Artillery.

A package containing the personal effects of the late Gunner William Town were sent on 23rd May, 1917 to Mrs E. Lee-Steele, "Toronto" Leake St., Cottesloe, Western Australia who was listed as next-of-kin (friend). The package was signed for as receipt on 1st June, 1917 by Elizabeth Lee Steere. Another package was sent to Mrs E. Lee-Steele on 28th February, 1918.

Base Records wrote to District Finance Officer, 5th Military District on 17th August, 1922 with the following: *"I shall be obliged if you will let me know whether your files (War Gratuity of Estates) disclose the existence of any blood relations of the late No. 15164 Gunner W. TOWN, 10th Field Artillery Brigade, or if not, whether Mrs Elizabeth Lee Steere of Moora, W.A., has any claim to the late soldier's war medals, etc."*

The Finance Officer, 5th District Base replied to Base Records on 6th September, 1922 advising that *"no claim for War Gratuity has yet been received, and further that the deferred pay was paid to Mr Herbert J. LeeSteere on production of Probate of Will. It is, therefore, regretted that my records do not disclose the existence of any blood relations of the deceased soldier."*

The Savings Bank Department, Commonwealth Bank, Melbourne, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 16th August, 1924 regarding *"A/c 90774 William Town"* with the following: *"We should be glad if you could supply us with an extract of report of death of above soldier, who, we understand, died of pneumonia on board ship on the voyage to England during 1916. Please also supply us with the name and address and next-of-kin nominated by this soldier. We regret that we are unable to supply any further Military particulars."*

Base Records replied to The Superintendent, Savings Bank Department, Commonwealth Bank, Melbourne, on 20th August, 1924 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 15164 Gunner W. Town, 10th Field Artillery Brigade. They also advised that the soldier's next-of-kin was recorded as friend – Mrs Elizabeth Lee Steere, "Woolawa" Moora, W.A.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. Lee Steere, "Woolawa" Moora, West Australia on 19th January, 1925 advising that a circular order form for purchase of copies of the register of the Eford Cemetery, Plymouth where the remains of the late No. 15164 Gunner W. Town, 10th F.A.B. were interred, would be forwarded to her. The letter continued with *"I should also be glad to learn whether you have any knowledge of the whereabouts of the parents of the late Gnr Town, or the name and address of a brother or sister or other surviving blood relatives, This information is required to enable me to dispose of the British War Medal and other memorial items issuable on account of the late soldier's services in keeping with the regulations...."*

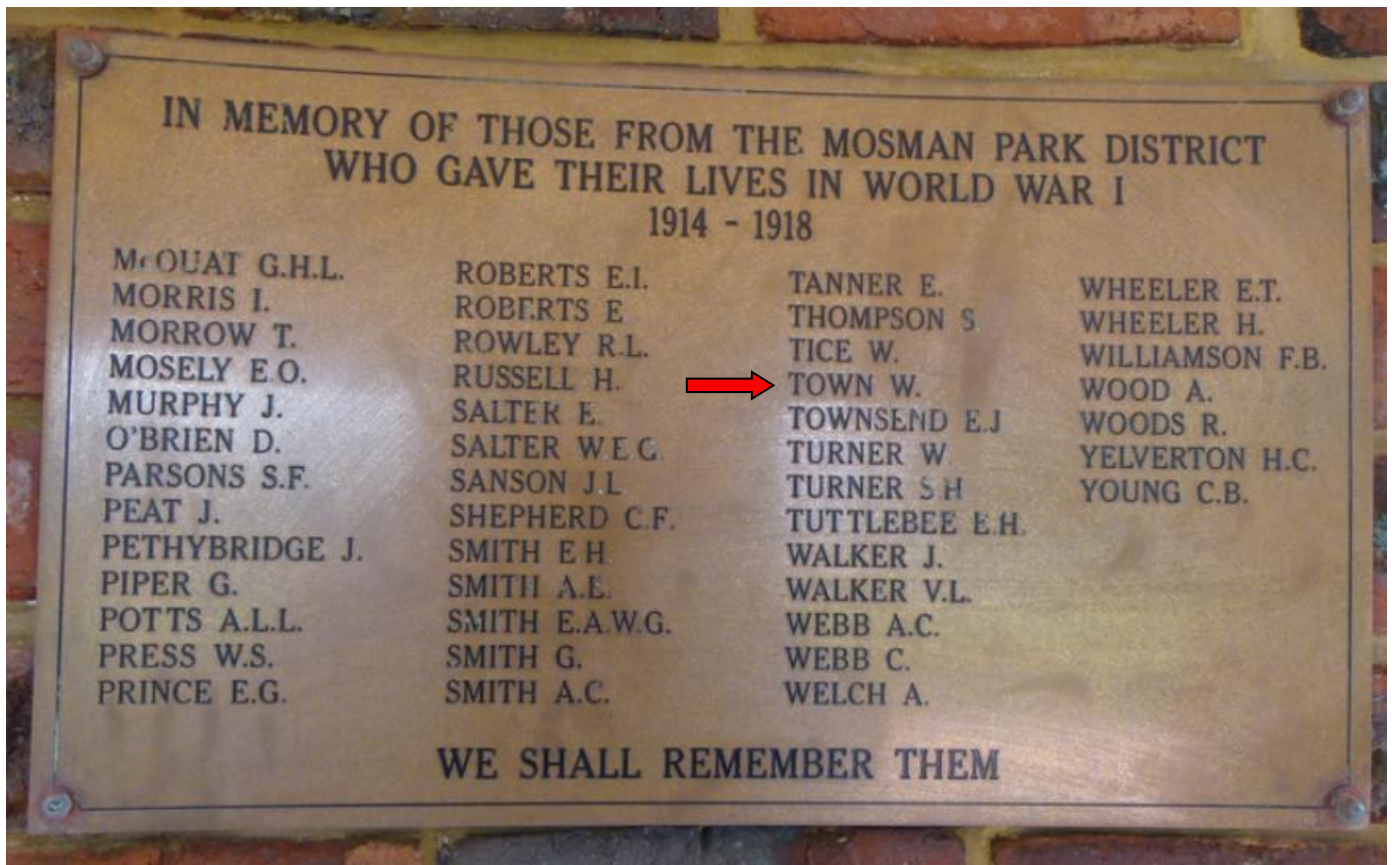
Gunner William Town was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were to be sent to Gunner Town's next-of-kin but as no blood relatives were able to be located they were sent to Untraceables. (Scroll & Plaque sent to Untraceable in September, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner William Town – service number 15164, of 10th Bde, Australian Field Artillery. No family details are listed.

W. Town is remembered on the Memorial Park Rotunda on Mosman Park Memorial Park, Palmerston Street, Mosman Park, Western Australia.



Mosman Park Memorial Park Rotunda (Photo above from Monument Australia; below by Gordon Stuart)



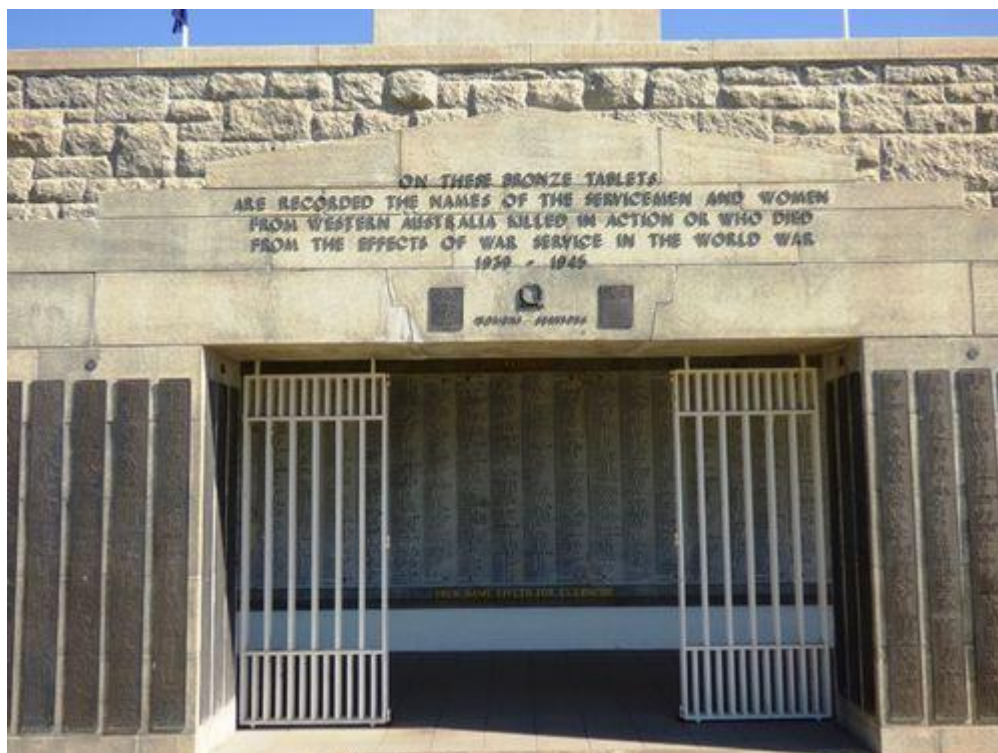
W. Town is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



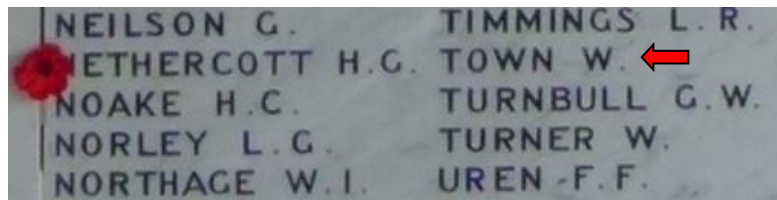
**Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names**

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)





Corps of Artillery Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)



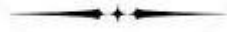
Gunner W. Town is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 16.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(53 pages of Gunner William Town'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



Post Card sent by Will Town from Marybyrnong, Victoria to his brother Cecil on 1st June, 1916



Newspaper Notices

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

209th AND 210th LISTS

.....

210th LIST

DIED, CAUSE NOT STATED

Gunner W. Town (Cottesloe)

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 12 September, 1916)

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)

Gunner W. Town does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Efford 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 (EFFORD) CEMETERY contains 338 scattered burials of the First World War. The 109 Second World War burials, including 5 unidentified, are also scattered apart from a small group in Section C, in a plot set aside for service burials that was actually little used. The Commission also maintains five non-war burials within the cemetery and 12 war graves of other nationalities, most of them Greek merchant seamen. PLYMOUTH CITY CREMATORIUM is situated in Plymouth (Efford) Cemetery and 61 servicemen and women of the Second World War whose remains were cremated there are commemorated on a screen wall set into a recess in the hedge behind the Cross of Sacrifice.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth *(Photo from CWGC)*



War Graves in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth *(Photo from CWGC)*



War Graves in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth *(Photos courtesy of Rebecca Smith)*



Photo of Gunner W. Town's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Cliff Barry)