

**Earlham Road Cemetery,  
Norwich, Norfolk  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**2008 PRIVATE**

**T. D. WATSON**

**28TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**30TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 27**

*For King And Country*

## Thomas David WATSON

Thomas David Watson was born in Deniliquin, NSW on 22nd June, 1891 to parents Thomas David and Minnie Mary Watson (nee Randle).

Thomas David Watson attended Broad Arrow Public School, Western Australia.

Thomas David Watson was a 23 year old, single, Miner when he enlisted at Blackboy Hill, Western Australia on 24th June, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Minnie Clinton, of Broad Arrow, Western Australia.

Private Thomas David Watson, Service number 2008, embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Geelong* on 5th June, 1915.

Private Thomas David Watson was posted to 3rd Reinforcements of 28th Battalion on 29th June, 1915.

Private Thomas David Watson joined 28th Battalion at Anzac on 12th October, 1915.

Private Thomas David Watson was wounded on 10th December, 1915. He was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance on 10th December, 1915 with shrapnel wounds to head then transferred to 13th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Watson was transferred to Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* on 10th December, 1915 & admitted to No. 3 Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis in 14th December, 1915. A Medical Report dated 17th December, 1915 reads "S.W. Scalp – from Gallipoli – there 17 weeks. Struck on scalp by piece of shrapnel 1 week ago. small \_\_\_ wound, quite clean over post fontanelle." He was marched in to Overseas Base at Ghezireh on 23rd December, 1915 & discharged to his Unit on 28th December, 1915. Private Watson returned to duty at Tel-el-Kebir on 10th January, 1916.

### War Diary – 28th Battalion

*Russell's Top 10th December, 1915:*

*Our warships (2 cruisers & 3 Monitors) open fire on the enemy gins at Olive Grove. The bombardment lasting for 20 mins, 30 or 40 minutes. In retaliation the enemy shell our lines, Russell's Top particularly coming in for a heavy fire – shrapnel & H. E. Shells.*

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Thomas David Watson proceeded overseas from Alexandria on 16th March, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 21st March, 1916.

Private Thomas David Watson was transferred to Anzac Base at Marseilles on 15th July, 1916 & returned to duty on 21st July, 1916.

Private Thomas David Watson was wounded in action between 3rd & 6th November, 1916. He was admitted to 5th Field Ambulance on 5th November, 1916 with shrapnel wounds to hand then transferred to 39th Casualty Clearing Station on 6th November, 1916 with gunshot wounds to left hand (accidental). Private Watson was transferred to 36th Casualty Clearing Station then transferred to Ambulance Train on 6th November, 1916. He was admitted to 5th Casualty Clearing Station on 15th November, 1916. Private Watson was admitted to 2/2 London Casualty Clearing Station on 19th December, 1916 with gunshot wounds to hand – self inflicted & rejoined his Battalion on 20th December, 1916.

### War Diary – 28th Battalion

*3rd/4th November, 1916 – Took over front line from 53rd Bn A.I.F. Trenches in very bad order & mud from 12 inches to 3 feet deep. Location M.24.A. GUTDECOURT Map.*

*4th November, 1916 – General work improving front trenches & preparing for attack of next day.*

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*5th November, 1916 – The Bn in conjunction with 27th Bn & Coys of 25th & 26th Bn who were on our Right and the British Division on our left made an attack on the German line known as GIRD TRENCH. Owing to the inaccuracy of our Artillery fire, through lack of observation, the enemy were not kept down in their trenches by our barrage and the advancing troops were subjected to very heavy rifle & machine gun fire which prevented them reaching the objective. Our losses in this attack were 1 Officer (Lieut. W. R. Moore) killed and two wounded (Lieut. F. Mullen, Lieut. A. W. Curran). Previous to the attack four officers were wounded, Capt. R. C. Phillips, 2/Lieut. M. G. Hammond, Lieut. C. C. Flower, Lieut. R. H. Gill. The casualties of other ranks were as follows 58 Killed, 166 wounded, 50 missing, 27 other ranks were evacuated to Hospital suffering effects of wet ground (?).*

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

A Field General Court Martial was held in France on 23rd January, 1917 concerning Private Thomas David Watson – “*When on active service conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline in that he, in the trenches north of Fleurs on 15/11/16 negligently discharged his rifle and thereby wounded himself.*” Private Watson pleaded not guilty. Finding – Found Guilty. He was awarded a forfeiture of 30 days’ pay.

Private Thomas David Watson was detached from 28th Battalion with 7th Field Company Engineers in France on 12th February, 1917.

### **28th Battalion**

The 28th Battalion was raised at Blackboy Camp in Western Australia on 16 April 1915 from recruits previously earmarked for the 24th Battalion, which was instead being raised in Victoria. The battalion left Australia in June, and, after two months spent training in Egypt, landed at Gallipoli on 10 September.

At Gallipoli, the 7th Brigade, which included the 28th Battalion, reinforced the weary New Zealand and Australian Division. The 28th had a relatively quiet time at Gallipoli and the battalion departed the peninsula in December, having suffered only light casualties.

After another stint in Egypt, the 7th Brigade proceeded to France and the Western Front, as part of the 2nd Australian Division. The 28th Battalion took part in its first major battle at Pozieres between 28 July and 6 August 1916. After a spell in a quieter sector of the front in Belgium, the 2nd Division returned to the south in October, where the 28th Battalion took part in confused and costly fighting to the east of Flers, in the Somme Valley.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Thomas David Watson was on leave to England from 1st August, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 13th August, 1917.

Private Thomas David Watson rejoined 28th Battalion on 31st August, 1917 from 7th Field Company Engineers.

Private Thomas David Watson was sent sick to Hospital on 7th September, 1917. He was admitted to 7th Australian Field Ambulance on 7th September, 1917 then transferred & admitted to 58th General Hospital at St. Omer the same day. Private Watson was listed for transfer to England on 17th September, 1917 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship St. Denis on 18th September, 1917.

Private Thomas David Watson was admitted to Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, Norfolk, England on 18th September, 1917 with Laryngitis Pleurisy.

Private Thomas David Watson died at 10.55 pm on 30th October, 1917 at Norfolk War Hospital, Norwich, Norfolk, England from Pulmonary Haemorrhage & Tuberculosis. (Note –The Burial Report form in the Service Record file for Private Thomas David Watson has the date of death incorrectly listed as 31st October, 1917).

A death for David T. Watson, aged 25, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Blofield, Norfolk, England.



Private Thomas David Watson was buried at 12.30 pm on 3rd November, 1917 in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England – Plot number 54. 720 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Thomas David Watson - *Coffin was good polished Elm with brass mountings. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Gun Carriage, Buglers and Bearers being supplied by the Army Service Corps stated at Norwich. A wreath from the Nurses and Patients was placed on the grave. Several Imperial and Australian patients attended the funeral. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. An oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Private Thomas David Watson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Watson's mother – Mrs Minnie Clinton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas David Watson – service number 2008, aged 27, of 28th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas David and Minnie Clinton Watson, of 33 George Street, South Fremantle, Western Australia.

Private T. D. Watson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 114.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

T. D. Watson 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.

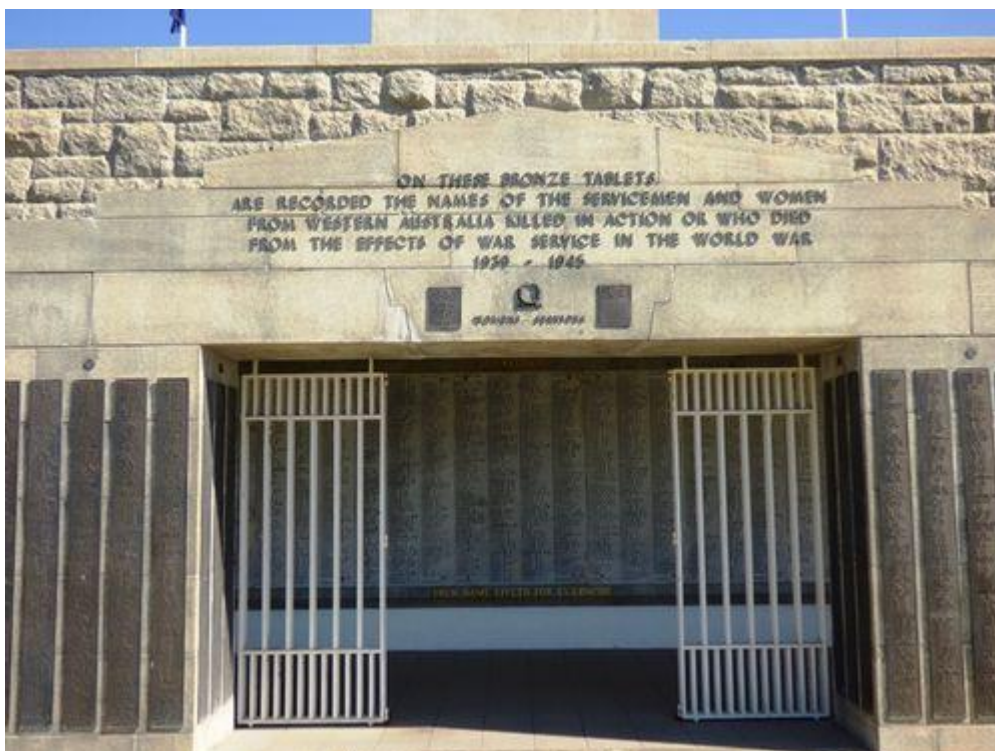
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a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





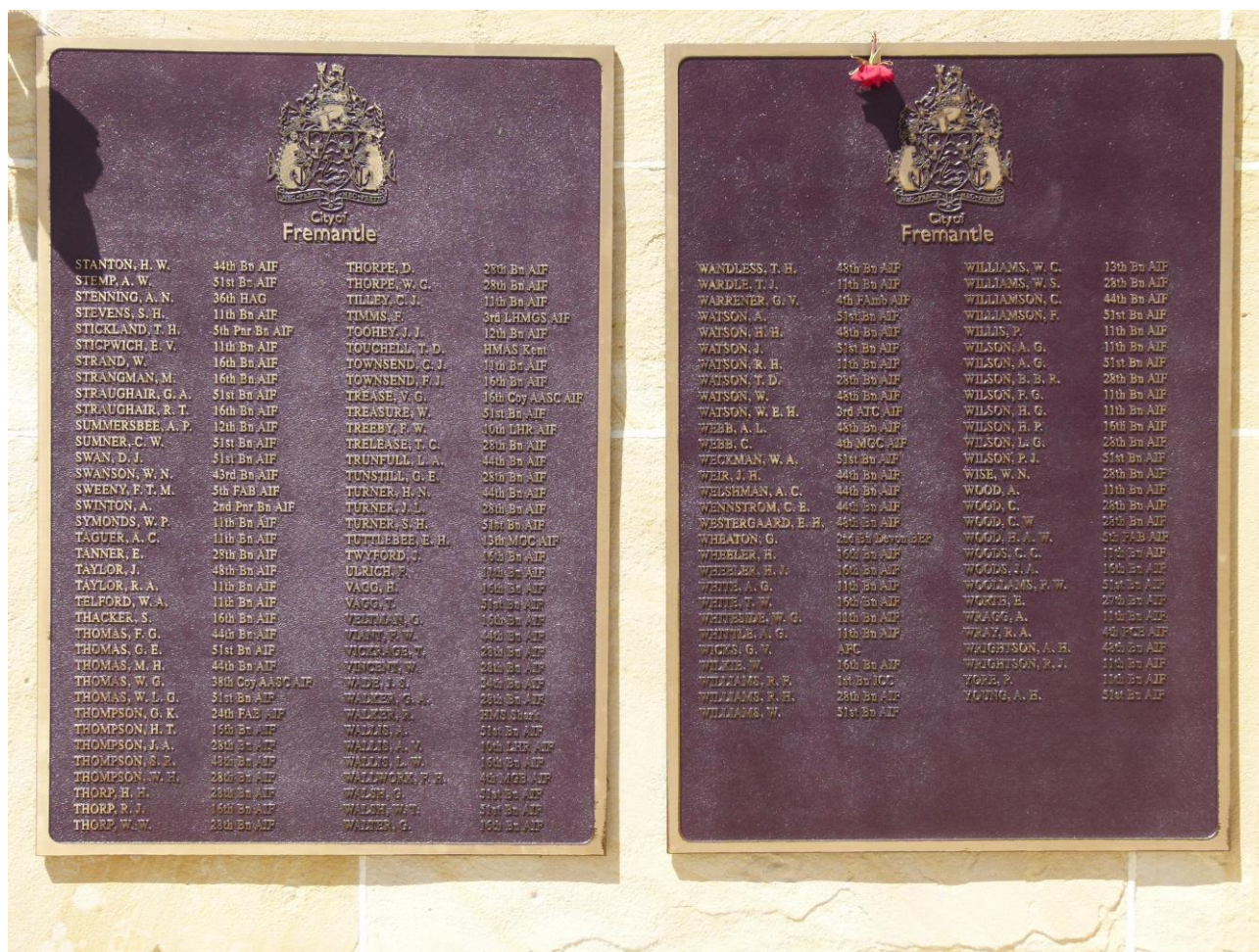
28th Battalion Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

T. D. Watson is remembered is remembered on Fremantle's 849, located at War Memorial, Monument Hill Memorial Reserve, High & Swanbourne Streets, Fremantle, Western Australia. Twelve plaques contain all 849 names of the Fremantle servicemen who died in service or were killed in action during World War One. The plaques were created as part of the Centenary of Anzac commemorations.

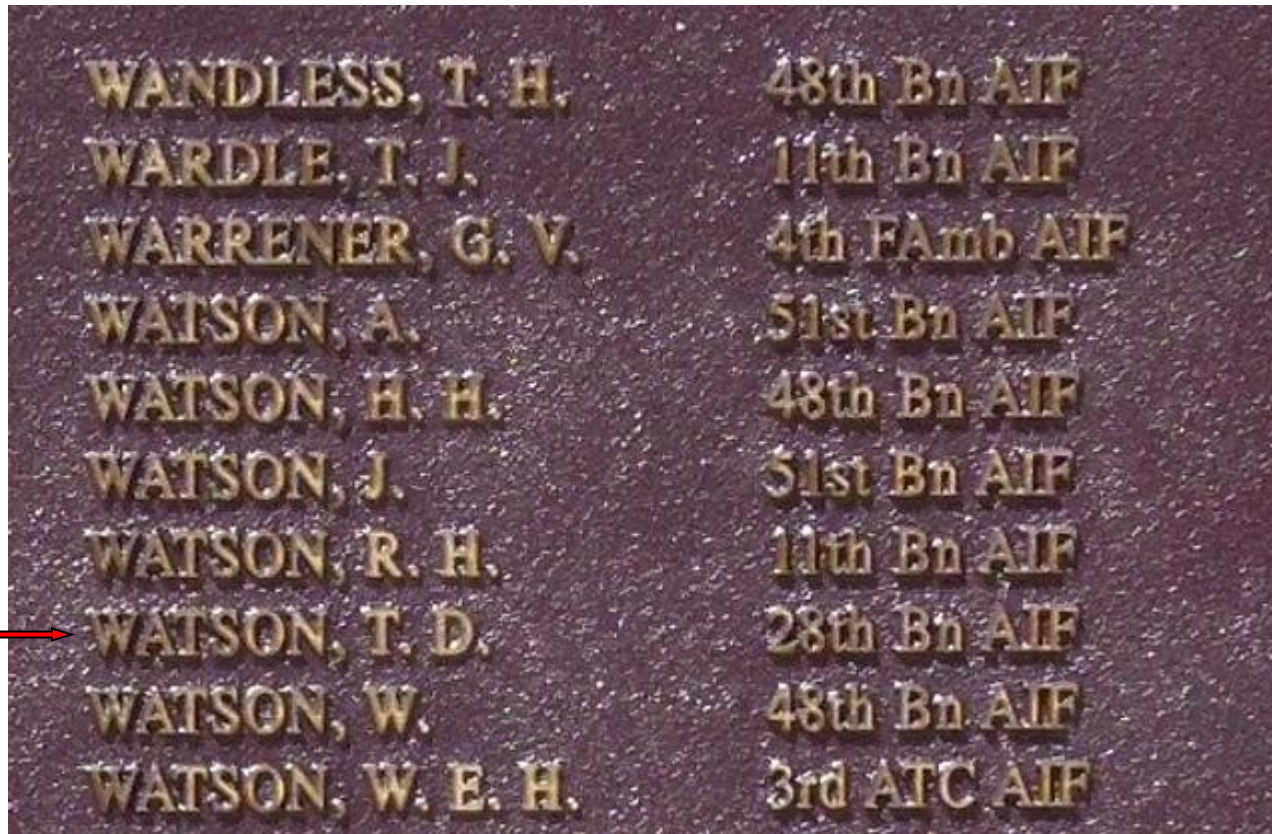




Fallen Sailors & Soldiers Memorial



Fremantle's 849 Memorial (Photos – Gordon Stuart)



**Fremantle's 849 Memorial**

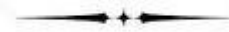
(48 pages of Private Thomas David Watson's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives*



**[Connected to Private Thomas David Watson](#)**

Younger Brother – Robert Henry Watson, 2244, 11th Battalion. Enlisted 14th April, 1915. Embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on 6th June, 1915 with 11th Battalion, 6th Reinforcements. Killed in action 25th July, 1916. Remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France.





## Newspaper Notices

### W.A. Soldiers Who Have Done Their Bit



**PTE T. D. WATSON**  
Wounded second time

(*Sunday Times*, Perth, Western Australia – 28 January, 1917)

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## AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

### W.A. ROLL OF HONOUR

ILL

Thos. David Watson, Broad Arrow

(*Western Argus*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia – 6 November, 1917)

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### 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 T. D. Watson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*For King And Country*

## Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England

Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich contains 533 Commonwealth War Graves.

The cemetery was laid out in 1856 and casualties of the South African War were buried in the oldest part. Nearly half of the 1914-1918 burials are to be found in two military plots; one in the North-Eastern part and the other in the Western part of the burial ground. Ground immediately adjoining the latter was reserved for service burials of the 1939-1945 War and is now combined with it to form the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 War Graves Plot. The Cross of Sacrifice, which honours the servicemen of both Wars who are buried in the cemetery, stands in the plot, and carved upon two of the panels of its base are the dates 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. There are now nearly 350, 1914-1918 and nearly 200, 1939-1945 war casualties commemorated in this site. In addition, a special memorial is erected to one soldier buried among civilian air raid victims in a grave on which it was not possible to erect a headstone.

*(Information & photo from CWGC)*



Photo of Private T. D. Watson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England.

*(Note – The date of death on the headstone is incorrect – should be 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1917. CWGC were advised of the error at the time of researching this soldier)*

*\*\*\*Update – see new headstone photo below*

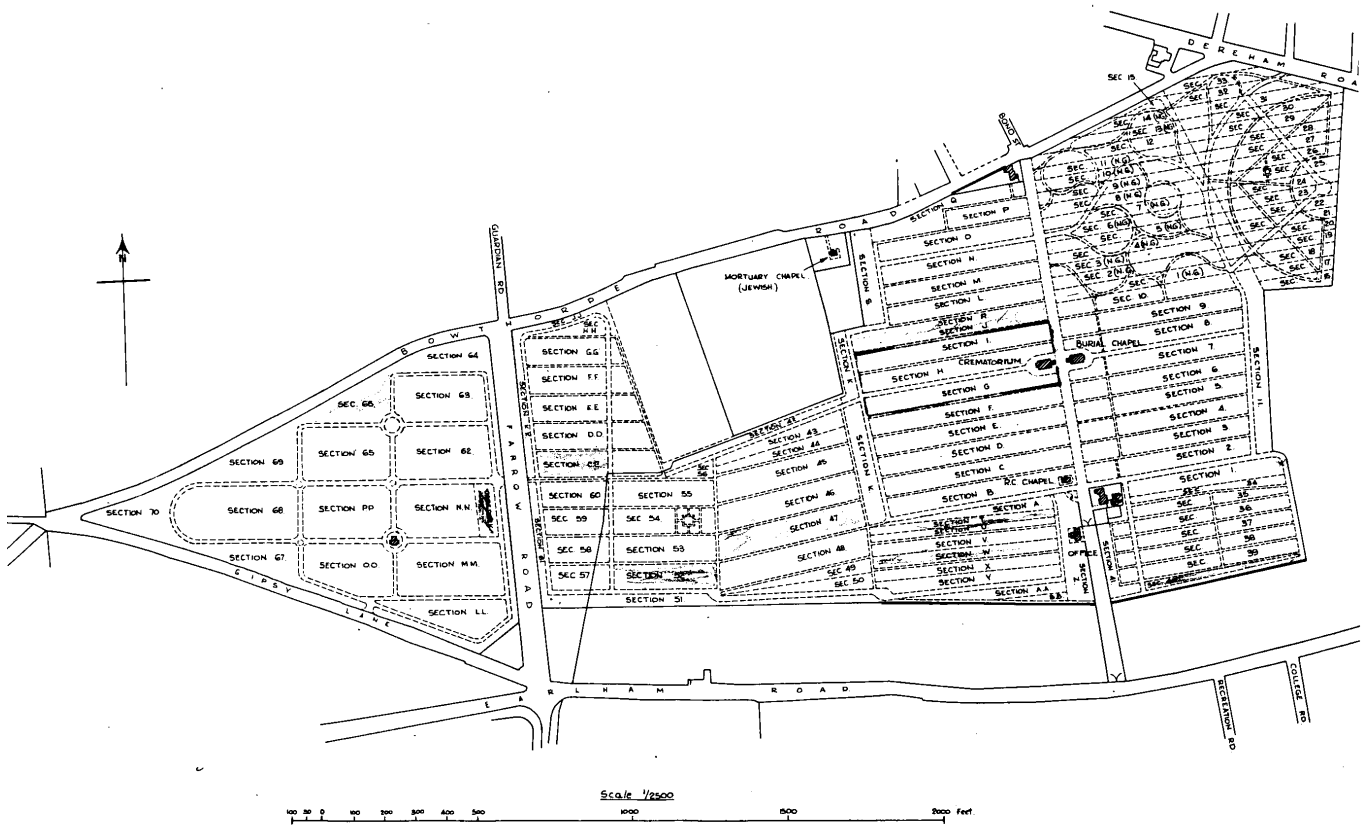


*(Photo by Jennifer Hart – Find a Grave)*

\*\*\*New CWGC headstone with correct date of death – 30th October, 1917.



*(Photo from Find a Grave – Grasshopper 26 Oct 2023)*



Map of Earlham Road Cemetery, Norwich, Norfolk, England

