

**Queensferry Cemetery,
Edinburgh, Scotland,
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



BOY 1ST CLASS 4459

RONALD R. WRIGHT

H.M.A.S. SYDNEY

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

21ST DECEMBER, 1916 Age 17

Erected By His Shipmates

Ronald Rothsay WRIGHT

Ronald Rothsay Wright's was born on 2nd June, 1900 at Peterhead, South Australia to parents Joseph Gibbon Wright & Charlotte Maria Wright (nee Hall). His birth was registered in 1900 in the district of Port Adelaide, South Australia.

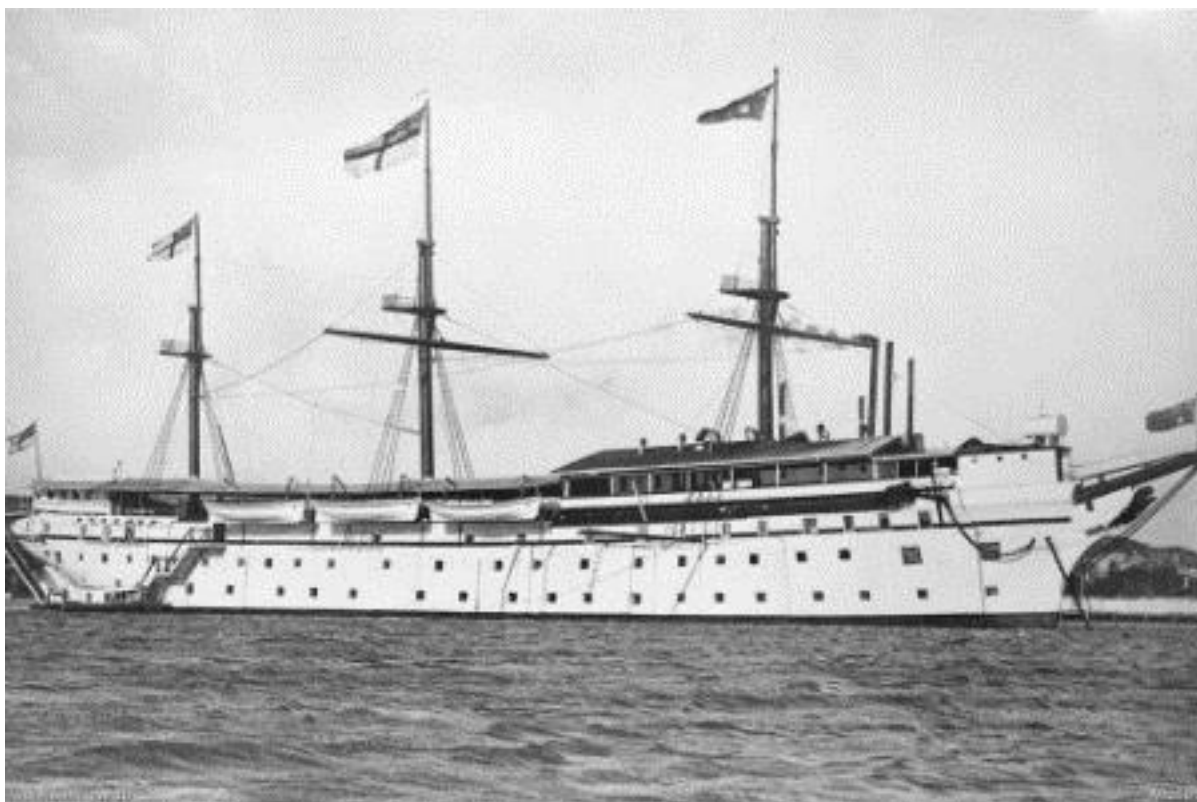
Ronald Rothsay Wright joined the Royal Australian Navy on 25th January, 1915, aged 14 years. He had signed up for a period of 7 years when he turned 18 on 2nd June, 1918. Ronald Wright was given a service number of 4459 & his next-of-kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Charlotte Wright of Semaphore, South Australia. He was 5ft 2 ¾ in tall with fair hair, blue eyes & a fair complexion. Ronald had a scar on his right thigh, about 5 inches in length.

Ronald Rothsay Wright joined H.M.A.S. *Tingira* on 25th January, 1915 as Boy 2nd Class. He was promoted to Boy 1st Class on 22nd October, 1915.

H.M.A.S. *Tingira*

H.M.A.S. *Tingira* (an aboriginal word for "open sea") was a training ship commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. Previously the *Sobraon* carried cargo and passengers between Australia & the United Kingdom once a year between 1866 & 1891. The *Sobraon* had been purchased by the NSW Government in 1891 & was used as a reformatory or Nautical School Ship for wayward boys until 1911.

The Royal Australian Navy refitted the *Sobraon* & was commissioned on 25th April, 1912 as H.M.A.S. *Tingira* & moored in Rose Bay, Sydney. Up to 250 boys between the ages of 14 ½ and 16 could be trained at any time, although the trainee complement rarely exceeded 200. Between 1912 and 1927, 3,158 boys were trained for naval service. As *Tingira* was immobilised, the steam yacht HMAS *Sleuth* was attached to the training ship as a tender, and used to provide seagoing experience to recruits.



H.M.A.S. *Tingira* moored in Rose Bay, Sydney in 1912

Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* on 7th November, 1915.

H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* – previously H.M.V.S. *Cerberus* was renamed H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* when the navy became the Royal Australian Navy in 1911. By World War I, the weapons and boilers on H.M.A.S. *Cerberus* were inoperable & was confined to Port Phillip Bay in Victoria, Australia. The ship was retasked as a guardship and munitions store, while carrying the personnel of the Royal Australian Naval College on her paybooks.]

Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright was transferred to London Depot on 23rd November, 1915.

Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright was transferred to H.M.A.S. *Sydney* on 14th January, 1916.

H.M.A.S. Sydney

H.M.A.S. *Sydney* was a *Chatham* class light cruiser of the Royal Australian Navy (R.A.N.). Laid down in 1911 and launched in 1912, the cruiser was commissioned into the R.A.N. in 1913.

H.M.A.S. *Sydney* arrived in Bermuda on 6th January, 1915 where she spent eighteen months uneventfully patrolling along the west coast of the Americas. On 9th September, 1916, the cruiser sailed for the United Kingdom, and after a brief refit in Greenock, joined the 5th Battle Squadron at Scapa Flow. On 15th November, *Sydney* was reassigned to the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron at Greenock of which H.M.A.S. *Australia* was the flagship. For the remainder of the war H.M.A.S. *Sydney's* service was confined to North Sea patrols.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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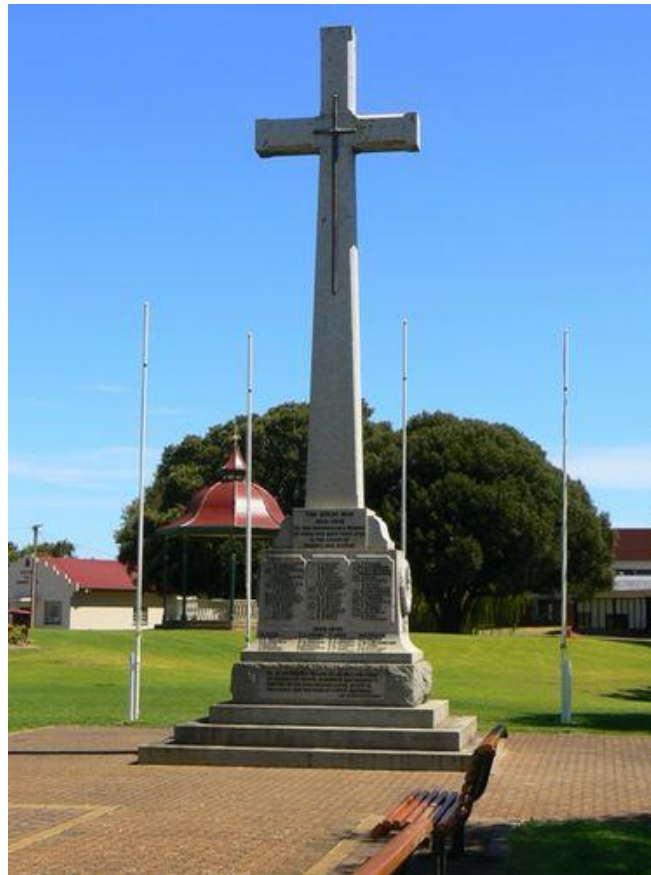
H.M.A.S. *Sydney* (January, 1918, Atlantic Ocean/North Sea)

Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright died on 21st December, 1916 from an accidental fractured skull, injuries sustained while in heavy seas off the coast of Norway in the North Sea/Atlantic Ocean. (Source: Australian War Memorial – Roll of Honour.)

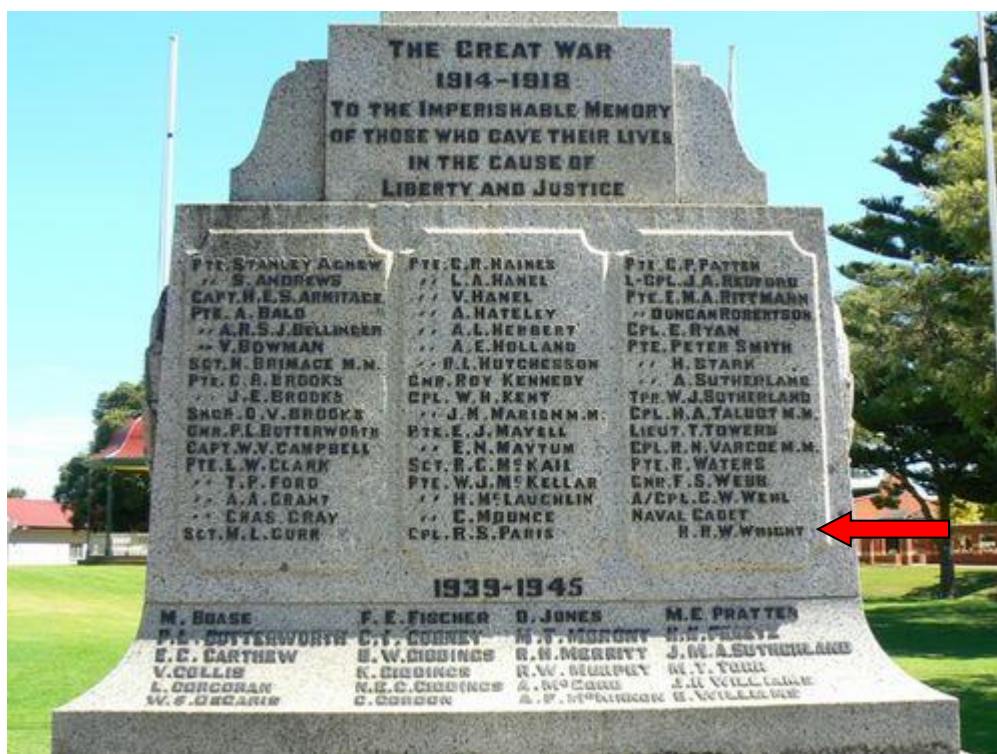
Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright was buried in Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland – Plot number 651. He has a private headstone, erected by his shipmates and his death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Boy 1st Class Ronald Wright – service number 4459, of H.M.A.S. "Australia, Royal Australian Navy. He was the son of Mrs C. Wright of George St., Millicent, South Australia.

R.R. Wright is remembered on the Millicent Cross of Sacrifice, located at North Terrace, Millicent, South Australia.



Millicent Cross of Sacrifice (Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)



Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright 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. He is one of 117 “boy soldiers” and “boy sailors” who have been identified among the 61,000 names on the Roll of Honour for the First World War.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Boy R. R. Wright 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)



Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour) & National Archives



Boy 1st Class Ronald Rothsay Wright



Newspaper Notices

LATE RONALD R. WRIGHT

Mr and Mrs J. G. Wright, of Millicent, were notified recently of the death of their youngest son. A telegram from the Base Records Office, Melbourne, conveyed the intimation in the following terms:- "Regret to inform you of the death of your son, Boy, first class, Ronald R. Wright, H.M.A.S. Sydney, from injury sustained by heavy sea. I am directed by the Minister to convey to you the deep regret and sympathy of Their Majesties the King and Queen, and of the Commonwealth Government, in the loss you and the navy have sustained by the death of your son." The boy was only 16 years of age. He joined the navy at 14 years, and had been on active service for 12 months.

(The Journal, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 13 January, 1917)

THE LATE SEAMAN R. R. WRIGHT.

Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Wright, of Millicent, have been notified by the Navy Office that their son, Boy, First-class, Ronald R. Wright, has died from an injury sustained aboardship in a heavy sea. The deceased was born at Peterhead in 1900. He lived with his family at Millicent for 15 months, and then joined the Tingira. In November, 1915, he left for London, and then joined a battle cruiser. He was a grand-son of the late Rev. J. G. Wright, a pioneer Methodist minister.



(Chronicle, Adelaide, Sth Australia – 13 January, 1917)

Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland contains 180 First World War burials, almost all of them naval. There are also eight burials of the Second World War. There are 11 War Graves from World War 1 belonging to members of the Royal Australian Navy.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Photo of Boy 1st Class Ronald R. Wright's Private Headstone in Queensferry Cemetery, Edinburgh, Scotland. His private headstone was erected by his shipmates.



(Photo by Finches – Find a Grave)



Sacred

*To The Memory Of
RONALD R. WRIGHT*

Of

*H.M.A.S. Sydney
Who Met His Death While Performing
His Duty 21ST Dec 1916, Aged 17 Years*

Erected by His Shipmates