

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6880 PRIVATE

H. B. YOUNG

17TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH JANUARY, 1918 Age 18

Harold Bede YOUNG

Harold Bede Young was born at Gulgong, New South Wales in 1899 to parents William Ralph & Catherine Young (nee MacMahon/McMahon).

Catherine Young, mother of Harold Bede Young, died on 12th April, 1903.

Harold Bede Young attended the Convent of Mercy, Mudgee, New South Wales.

Harold Bede Young was an 18 year old, single, G.P.O. Messenger from Paddington, Sydney, New South Wales when he enlisted at East Sydney, NSW on 20th April, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr William Ralph Young, 54 Gordon Street, Paddington, Sydney, NSW. Harold Young stated on his Attestation Papers that he had completed Cadet Training (4 years).

As Harold Bede Young was under the age of 21 years – his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. His father signed his consent on the “*Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force*” form & recorded “*mother deceased 12.4.03*”.

Private Harold Bede Young was posted to Recruits at Show Ground Camp, Sydney, NSW on 3rd April, 1917. He was transferred to “A” Company, 1st Depot Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 7th June, 1917. Private Young was posted to 20th Reinforcements of 17th Battalion on 14th June, 1917.

Private Harold Bede Young, Service number 6880, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 16th June, 1917 with the 17th Infantry Battalion, 20th Reinforcements. He was admitted to Ship’s Hospital on 14th August, 1917 with “*Pleurisy ? TB*” & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 25th August, 1917.

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.

17th Battalion

The 17th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Harold Bede Young was admitted to Military Hospital, Devonport, England on 25th August, 1917 – seriously ill. He was transferred to No. 1 Section, Military Hospital, Devonport on 28th August, 1917 with T.B. Lung.

Base Records advised Mr W. Young, 54 Gordon Street, Paddington, NSW, father of Private Harold Bede Young, on 3rd September, 1917 that Private H. B. Young had been admitted to Devonport Military Hospital, England on 25th August, 1917 suffering from a severe illness.

Mr W. Young, 54 Gordon Street, Paddington, NSW, wrote to The Minister for Defence, Melbourne, on 7th November, 1917: “*My son, No 6880 Pte Harold Bede Young, 20/17 Bat left here on the Beltana on 16th June 1917. On arrival in England he was taken to the hospital “Keppel Place” Hospital, Stoke, Devonport, & the Military authorities here notified me that he was dangerously ill. Since then I have received two letters from the Matron, date Sept 3 & Sept 12 & also one from Rev Fr Breen, (?) Bishops House, Plymouth & from the three letters I am sorry to say that I think there is very little chance or hope of him returning. The Nature of the Disease is Tubercle of the lung & there is a large cavity in one lung. The Nurse advises me that the illness was only of three weeks standing & my boy wrote to me from Durban & at that date he was well but had a slight cold. I may state here that the lad is eighteen years of age & never had in his life any illness but the mumps, he was in the G.P.O. here being a postal employee & was complimented by the Govt Medical Officer on his splendid physique.*

The Beltana arrived in Sydney on 16th May of this year with returned soldiers among whom were 25 Consumption Cases, two of whom died on the way out. My son has evidently got a germ & a very virulent one on board ship. Now I wish you to do this for me, as no one else can do it, ascertain his present condition. Secondly, is there any chance of him being returned & when. I wish to go over to him & be with him at the last. In my opinion there is no hope but

there is just a chance of him being returned and I would not like to pass him on the way I have given all of my sons (5) five, to my country, one is dead nr France, another is home a cripple and this poor boy is the youngest. Of course I do not complain of that, if I had five more I would not like a shirker among them. Will you kindly get this information for me by cable so that I may make arrangements to go & give me the necessary permission to travel surely the country will st_____ me his return, the price of a cable – The expense of the journey I will, although no wealth, manage to defray myself.”

Base Records replied to Mr W. R Young on 19th November, 1917: *“With reference to your communication of the 7th instant addressed to the Minister for Defence I have to advise that in the circumstances a cable is being despatched to London with a view to ascertaining the present condition & whereabouts of your son, No. 6880 Private H. B. Young, 17th Battalion & the reply when to hand will be immediately transmitted to you. Should any notification of return be received, you will be at once advised.”*

Base Records replied to Mr W. R Young on 7th December, 1917: *“In continuation of this office memo of the 20th ult., concerning your son No. 6880 Private H. B. Young, 17th Battalion, a reply in response to the cablegram despatched to A.I.F. Headquarters, London, has now come to hand which states that investigations are being made into this case. As soon as further information is received you will be promptly communicated with.”*

Mr W. Young was advised by Base Records on 14th December, 1917 that Private Harold Young was dangerously ill on 26th November with Tubercle Lung. Another notification was sent on 27th December, 1917 advising Private H. B. Young's condition was stationary.

Private Harold Bede Young died at 9.15 am on 8th January, 1918 at Military Hospital (No. I Section), Devonport, England from Tubercle of Lung.

A death for Harold B. Young, aged 18, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Devonport, Devon, England.

Private Harold Bede Young was buried at 11.30 am on 10th January, 1918 in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England – Grave No. 3501 Section “C”.

From the burial report of Private Harold Bede Young - *Coffin was Military. Good. Military Funeral. Officiating Clergyman – The Rev. D, O'Connor, James Street, Devonport. Firing Party and Band supplied by 3rd Devon Regt.*

Private Harold Bede Young's burial plot is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number R.C. C. 3501 and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Harold Bede Young contains the following letters:

- Colonel, R.A.M.C., in charge Military Hospital wrote to the Australian Red Cross with the following letter on 29th November, 1917: *“In reply to your letter of the 27th inst re No. 6880 Pte Harold Bede Young, 17th Battalion, A.I.F. This man is still a patient in No. 1 Section Hospital, Keppel Place, Stoke, Devonport, which is a section of this Hospital. He was not discharged from Hospital on August 27th. He is, I regret to say, dangerously ill suffering from Tubercle of lung. I enclose herewith for your information a report by the M.O. i/c of case.”*
- The O.C. Devonport Military Hospital wrote the following letter on 29th November, 1917:
*“Ad Devonport Mil. Hpl. 25.8.17 – sick slight.
On 27.8.17 ser. Ill.
The above man is suffering from the last stages of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and has been on the “Dangerously ill” list since 27.8.17.
On several occasions during the last 6 weeks I have expected his decease within a few hours but on such occasions he has rallied. I am of opinion that he will probably not live more than two or three weeks – in any case there is no likelihood of his father seeing him alive in February next.”*

- The Matron, Military Hospital, Devonport wrote the following letter on 16th March, 1918: *“Re Pte Harold B. Young. He landed here from an Australian Transport in Sept. last, was brought straight to this Hospital from the boat. Was found to have contracted tubercle of lung, on board the boat, was transferred to Keppel-Place Hospital - the Auxiliary to this Hospital, where they have a special open air ward for tuberculous patients – where he lingered in for nearly four months – and he died on 8th January, and was buried a few days later at Egg Buckland Cemetery, Plymouth. I wrote every week during Harold Young’s illness to his people in Australia, so that they were informed at the time of every detail about him – and one of his brothers came several times to see him, from Sutton Veny Camp Warminster. His father started home from Sydney as soon as heard from me of the boy’s serious condition, and he arrived, I am thankful to say, two days before his son’s death, and was with him at the end. His father and one brother attended the funeral and another brother got leave from France and got here just afterwards. Mr Young stayed here for some time and saw about a stone being placed on the grave, himself – and he sailed again for Australia about 3 weeks ago. I have since posted, at his request, a registered packet to the sisters in Australia – giving a full account of Harold Young’s death and funeral. This was done in case Mr Young was torpedoed going home again. The family are very devout Roman Catholics and the priest visited Harold constantly, and was a great comfort to them all at the end.”*

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney, New South Wales, wrote to Base Records on 24th January, 1918 with the following letter: *“I have to intimate it was reported in the 380th Casualty List that “Private Harold Bede Young, Paddington”, has died of illness. I shall be glad if you will kindly advise me whether this refers to Private Harold Bede Young, 20th Reinforcements, 17th Battalion, who joined the Australian Imperial Forces in May last, and embarked on active service on 16th June last. If so, please state the date of death, and name and address of next-of-kin.”*

Base Records replied to Deputy Postmaster-General on 30th January, 1918 regarding No 6880 Private Harold Bede Young, 17th Battalion: *“...the abovenamed is identical with the subject of your enquiry. He is reported as having died on 8.1.18 from tubercle lung, at Devonport Military Hospital. This report has not yet been confirmed. He gave his next-of-kin his father – William Ralph Young, residing at 54 Gordon Street, Paddington, Sydney, N.S.W.”*

Base Records wrote to Mr W. Young, 54 Gordon St, Paddington, Sydney, NSW on 9th August, 1918 with the following: *“Your late son No. 6880 Private Harold Bede Young, 17th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force was, prior to enlisting for Active Service, a member of the Area 41b and while so serving was issued with a Record of Service Book (khaki cover). This book is now required for completion of service, and I should deem it a favor if you would forward same to this office at your earliest convenience. The Area Officer of the area 41b had been communicated with, and he informs me the book was in your son’s possession at date of enlistment.”*

Mr W. R. Young, 54 Gordon St, Paddington, NSW, replied to Base Records on 8th August, 1918 with the following: *“The late 6880 Pte Harold Bede Young 17 Batt I regret that I cannot supply you with this although my official address, is, as above. I have removed to two different residences since my late son embarked & I was absent from Australia on my journey to England, via America, to see my son, from Nov 28th to Ap 16th. But, as I had five sons who served their country at the front, one Pte J. H. Young was killed in May 1916 & their record of Service Books was never asked for; it did not occur to me to get it from my son & put it aside & may stated that in all cases I notified the respective area officers that my sons had enlisted giving battalions. Rfts & c.”*

Mr W. R. Young, 222 Cowper Street, Waverley, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 9th September, 1920, next of kin of No 6880 Private Harold Bede Young, to advise his change of address from 54 Gordon St, Paddington, NSW. *“Will you kindly have that altered to the address as given below & also have the record altered to this (my) state? Letters have come to me to the old address, which caused unnecessary delay.”*

Base Records replied to Mr W. R. Young, 222 Cowper St, Waverley, NSW on 18th September, 1920 advising that change of address had been noted on the records of his two sons & the New South Wales Authorities had also been advised.

Base Records wrote to Headquarters, 2nd Military District, on 20th September, 1920, to advise that Mr W. R. Young, next of kin of the late No. 3537 Private J. H. Young & the late No. 6880 Private H. B. Young, had notified his change of address from 54 Gordon Street, Paddington, NSW to 222 Cowper Street, Waverley, NSW.

Private Harold Bede Young was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Young's father – Mr W. R. Young, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent June, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Public Trustee, Sydney, New South Wales, wrote to Base Records, Canberra, ACT on 25th May, 1957 regarding Estate of Catherine Young – deceased. *"The Public Trustee is the Administrator of the estate of the above-named who died on the 12th April, 1903, late of Gulgong. Two of the deceased's sons Jame and Harold, died while members of the Armed Forces, James in France in 1916, and Harold on board a troopship between Australia and England in 1918. Would you kindly search your records and furnish the Public Trustee with certificates of these events? At the same time would you please confirm that the deceased's two sons were single as at the dates of their deaths?"*

Base Records replied to The Public Trustee, on 10th April, 1957, forwarding Certificates of Death for 6880 Private Harold Bede Youn, 17th Battalion & 2812 Private James Young, 55th Battalion.

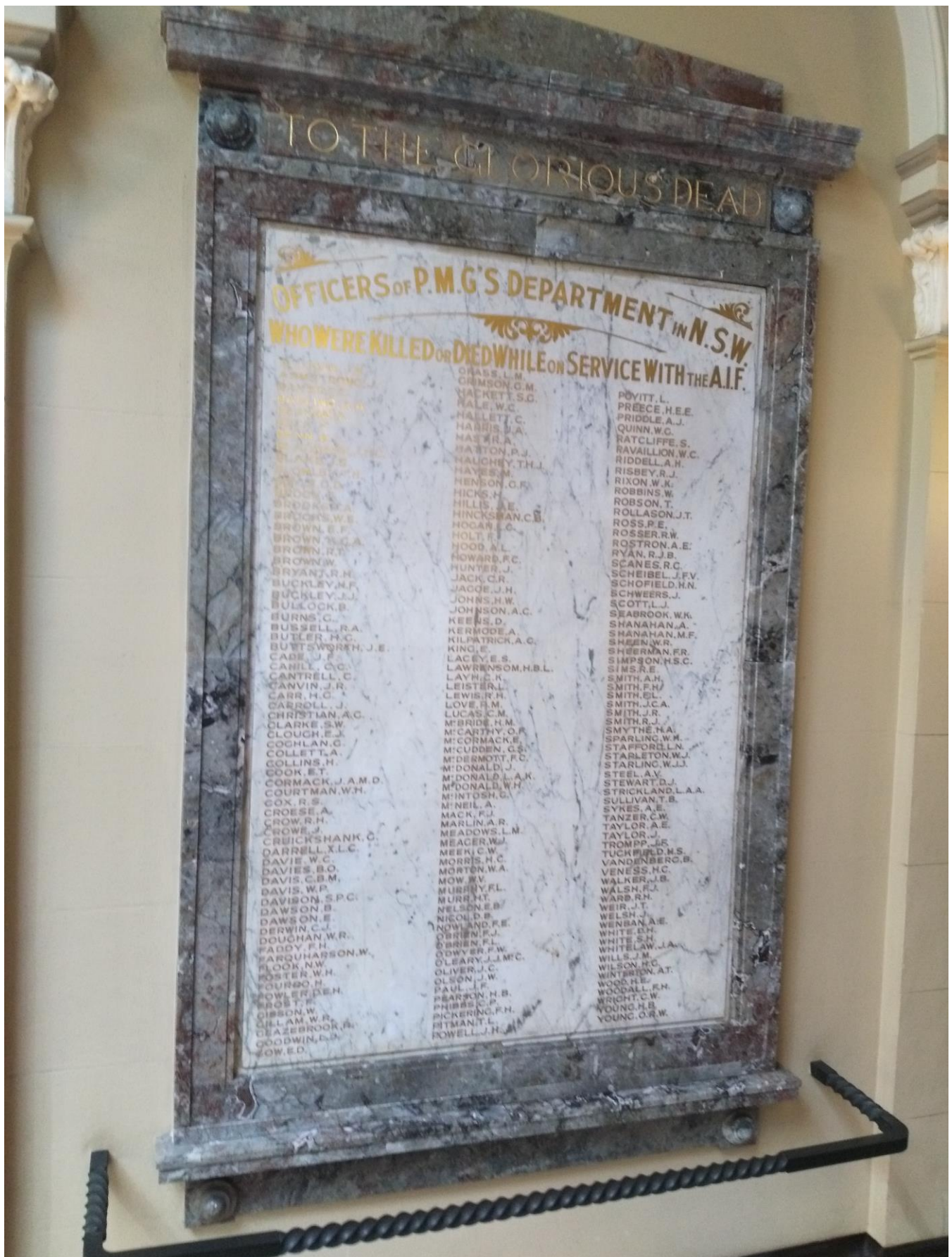
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Harold Bede Young – service number 6880, aged 18, of 17th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of William Ralph & Catherine Young, of 222 Cowper St, Waverly, New South Wales.

Private H. B. Young is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 84.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

H. B. Young is remembered on the Postmaster General's Roll of Honour for NSW, located in the foyer of the old G.P.O. Building (now Fullerton Hotel), Martin Plaza & George Street, Sydney, New South Wales



Postmaster General's Roll of Honour for NSW (Photo by Cathy Sedgwick)

H. B. Young is remembered on the Coonamble War Memorial, located at 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble, New South Wales.



Coonamble War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)



H. B. Young is remembered on the Coonamble Municipality & Wingadee Shire Honour Roll, located at Coonamble Shire Council, 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble, New South Wales.



Coonamble Municipality & Wingadee Shire Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – Sandra Brown)

Information provided for the Roll of Honour by W. R. Young, father of the late Private Harold Bede Young:

7. Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment -

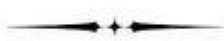
"5 Brothers including deceased enlisted, two gave their lives, one is permanently disabled as a result of wounds. Two uncles also were killed in action, eight (8) cousins enlisted, two dying of illness & one C. R. Mahone gained the M.M., one lost his leg."

8. Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself (Please state Relationship) –

"Brother to James Henry Young 1st Batt died of wounds. Brother to Douglas Young permanently disabled by wounds. Nephew to J. H. Young Killed in action France 29 July 1916. Nephew to A. R. Young killed in action France 4 May 1917. Cousin to E. G. Young died of illness in France 1 January 1919. Cousin to Frank Ciceran (?) died Liverpool 1915. Cousin to C. R. Mahoney who gained M.M."

(71 pages of Private Harold Bede Young'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



LAST POST CEREMONY

Private Harold Bede Young, 6880, 17th Battalion, A.I.F., was remembered in the Last Post Ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on 3rd August, 2017.

Commencing at approximately 4.45 pm AEST, the Memorial farewells visitors with its moving Last Post Ceremony in the Commemorative Courtyard. Each night the ceremony shares the story behind one of the names on the Roll of Honour.

The ceremony begins with the Australian national anthem followed by the piper's lament. Visitors are invited to lay wreaths and floral tributes beside the Pool of Reflection. An individual's story is told, and the Ode is recited by Australian Defence Force personnel. The ceremony ends with the sounding of the Last Post.

(Information from The Australian War Memorial)



Speech transcript

6880 Private Harold Bede Young, 17th Battalion, AIF
DOD 8 January 1918

Story delivered 3 August 2017

Today we remember and pay tribute to Private Harold Bede Young.

Harold Young was born in 1899 in Gulgong, New South Wales, to William and Catherine Young. His mother died when he was only three or four years old. He attended school at the Sisters of Mercy at St Matthew's Convent Schools in Mudgee, before going on to work in the post office.

Four of Harold's older brothers had enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force before Harold turned 18, and he expressed a strong interest in enlisting once he came of age. In May 1916, his brother, Private James Young of the 1st Battalion, died of wounds the day after being shot in the head. The following September Private Douglas Young of the 3rd Battalion was shot through the neck and spent months in hospital before returning to Australia severely

disabled.

Harold remained undaunted, and in April 1917, two months after he had turned 18, he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in East Sydney with his father's permission. He told his father that during the process he was complimented by the medical officer on his splendid physique. He underwent a period of training in Australia before leaving Sydney on 16 June 1917 with reinforcements to the 17th Battalion.

En route to England the troopship stopped at Durban, and Private Young took the time to send a letter to his father, mentioning in passing that he had a slight cold. By the time the ship arrived in England, he was seriously ill with what was diagnosed as tuberculosis. He was taken to Keppel-Palace Hospital in Devonport, which specialised in treatment of tuberculosis.

William Young was sent weekly updates of his son's condition, and eventually it became clear to him that it was unlikely that Harold would recover. He wrote to the authorities to say, "I wish to go over to him and be with him at the last ... I have given all of my sons (five) to my country ... of course I do not complain of that, if I had five more I would not like a shirker among them." With confirmation that Harold was too ill to be sent back to Australia, William Young set out on the long journey to England to be with his dying son.

One of Harold Young's brothers had visited regularly during his illness, and on 6 January he was joined by their father. William Young remained by his youngest son's side until he died just two days later.

Harold Young was 18 years old.

His name is listed on the Roll of Honour on my right, among more than 60,000 Australians who died while serving in the First World War.

This is but one of the many stories of service and sacrifice told here at the Australian War Memorial. We now remember Private Harold Bede Young, who gave his life for us, for our freedoms, and in the hope of a better world.

Meleah Hampton
Historian, Military History Section

Newspaper Notices

Australian Casualties

List No 339

New South Wales

Seriously Ill

Pte H. B. YOUNG (Paddington)

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 26 September, 1917)

Death of Pte Harold Young

IN A LONDON HOSPITAL

FOURTH OF THE FAMILY

TO DIED IN THE WAR

The Very Rev. Father Flanagan, V.F., on Wednesday evening was advised by wire from Sydney that Private Harold Young, son of Mr. W. R. Young, of Sydney, formerly of Mudgee, had died in a hospital in England. Private Harold Young was taken seriously ill on board the transport on which he was being conveyed from Australia to England for the completion of his military training. He was carried from the transport ashore and was immediately admitted to a hospital. That is now several months back. The unfortunate young soldier never rallied, nor was sufficiently well to leave the hospital, and, as already stated, he died within the past few days. Mr. Young, learning of the illness of his son, left Australia for England, and arrived in London a few days before his son's death. Private Harold Young was a native of Mudgee, and was educated by the Sisters of Mercy at St. Matthew's Convent Schools. The Young family have suffered severely in the war. Mr. Young has lost two brothers and two sons (one died of wounds), whilst a third son has returned to Australian permanently invalided.

(Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative, NSW – 10 January, 1918)

Our Soldiers

Word has been received by Father Flanagan, of Mudgee, that Pte Harold Young, cousin of Mesdames D. McGuinn, W. B. Ogilvie, and E. T. Fitzgerald, of Dubbo, died in hospital in England. Private Young was stricken with illness on board the transport to England, and did not regain his health. He was a son of Mr W. R. Young, of Sydney. The Young family have suffered severely in the war. Mr Young has lost two brothers, and tow sons, while a third son has returned to England permanently invalided.

(Dubbo Dispatch and Wellington Independent, NSW – 18 January, 1918)

Latest Casualties

380th LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

Died of Illness

Pte H. B. Young, Paddington (previously reported seriously ill)

(The Land, Sydney, NSW – 25 January, 1918)

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 H. B. Young 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 *(Photo courtesy of Rebecca Smith)*

Photo of Private H. B. Young's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Efford Cemetery, Plymouth, Devon, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Cliff Barry)