



Albert Arthur Harris
Private 640
Australian Machine Gun Corps



Albert Arthur Harris was born at Throckmorton, near Ranelagh, Tasmania in 1894, the son of Arthur and Eliza Harris. He was a 22 year old, single, orchardist from Ranelagh, Tasmania when he enlisted at Claremont, Tasmania, on 12th April 1916 with the 4th Machine Gun Company, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 640 and his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father - A. Harris of Ranelagh, Tasmania.

Private Harris embarked from Melbourne on HMAT Shropshire (A9) on 11th May 1917 and disembarked at Plymouth, England on 19th July 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain and surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

He was marched in to the 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 19th July 1917 and was admitted to the Group Hospital at Codford on 23th July 1917.

He died at 4.15 p.m. on 27th July 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire. A Post Mortem was carried out on 27th July 1917 and the cause of death was stated to be heart failure following blood infection - Septicaemia. Later reports state that Private Harris died of Septicaemia following Peritonitis.

His death at age 23, was registered in the September quarter of 1917 in the Warminster Registration District.

From the burial report of Albert, the coffin was good and made of elm with brass fittings. He was buried on 31st July 1917 at St. Mary's Cemetery, Codford in Grave No. 38, Australian Section. Albert was buried with Military Honours. His headstone bears the inscription "Abide With Me A Loved One Gone But Not Forgotten."

In regard to Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones, the Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of deceased World War I soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone that had been erected. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space



between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) and the rate per letter was around 3½d (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.

Private Albert Arthur Harris requested in his Will, dated 7th May 1917, that he appoints his mother, Eliza Harris as his Executrix and bequeaths all his real and personal estate to her.

A War Pension was awarded to Eliza Harris, Albert's mother for the sum of 14/- per fortnight payable from 3rd April 1918.

Private Harris was entitled to be awarded the British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll and Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Harris's father - Arthur Harris - in August 1921 and September 1922 respectively.

There are 47 pages of Private Albert Arthur Harris' Service records available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website.

Albert Arthur Harris is also commemorated on Panel 178 of the Australian War Memorial, Hall of Memory Commemorative Area, Canberra, Australia.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Much of the information above has been sourced from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll), Official letters sent to the next of kin and National Archives

Newspaper Reports

HARRIS – On July 22, 1917 at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, Albert (Sonny) dearly beloved eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Harris, Ranelagh, aged 23 years. Gone, but not forgotten. *The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Tuesday, 7 August 1917*

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES List No. 333 -Tasmania Died of illness - A. A. Harris *The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria, Tuesday, 28th August 1917*

IN MEMORIUM Died on Active Service HARRIS - In loving Memory of our dear son and brother, Private Arthur Albert Harris (Sonny), who died at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on July 27, 1917. He heard his country calling For men to fight the foe; He felt that he was needed, So he volunteered to go. Just when his life was brightest, Just when his hopes were best, He was called from this world of sorrow To a home of eternal rest. Sweet is the memory, that never will fade, Dear is the place where dear son is laid. Only those who have lost are able to tell The pain in the heart at not bidding farewell. Inserted by his sorrowing parents, sisters, and brothers. *The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Saturday, 27 July 1918*

IN MEMORIUM Died on Active Service HARRIS - In loving Memory of our dear son and brother, Pte. Arthur Albert Harris (Sonny), who died at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on July 27, 1917. Nothing but memories as we journey on, Longing for a face that is dead and gone, None knows the depths of our regret, But we remember when others forget. Gone from this earth so swiftly, Plucked like flowers in bloom; So young, so fair, so loving, Yet called away so soon. Inserted by his sorrowing parents, sisters, and brothers. **The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Wednesday, 27 July 1921**

IN MEMORIUM Died on Active Service HARRIS - In loving Memory of our dear son and brother, Private Arthur Albert Harris (Sonny), who died at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on July 27, 1917, aged 23 years. Gone from the world of sorrow To the beautiful home of rest, We are sad, for we loved you, But God knows what is best. It was the 27th of July, That sad and fatal day. He gave his life that we might live In a country far away. Loved in life, honoured in death, Treasured in memory. Inserted by his sorrowing parents, sisters, and brother, Ranelagh. **The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Tuesday, 29 July 1924**

IN MEMORIUM Died on Active Service HARRIS - In fond and loving Memory of our dear son and brother, Private Albert Arthur (Sonny), who died at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on July 27, 1917. He faced life's battles bravely, He patiently bore the test; God alone knew when He took him, He knew He took one of the best. A tender chord of memory, Is softly touched to-day; And never will the one we loved, From memory pass away. 'Tis sweet to know we'll meet again, Where parting is no more; And that the one we loved so dear, Has only gone before. Inserted by his loving father, mother, brother, and sisters, Ranelagh. **The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Wednesday, 27 July 1927**

IN MEMORIUM Died on Active Service HARRIS - In fond and loving Memory of our dear son and brother, Private Albert Arthur (Sonny), who died at the New Zealand Hospital, Codford, England, on July 27, 1917. In our hearts your memory lingers, Sweet, tender, fond and true; As the years go by, dear son, We will always think of you. Although his voice is silent, And his smile we see no more, In our hearts his name will linger Just as fondly as before. Inserted by his loving parents and family, A. and E. Harris, Lucaston, Huon **The Mercury, Hobart, Tasmania, Thursday, 27th July 1933**