

The AIF Project



Gordon Ruthven HOUSTON

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| Regimental number | 3868 |
| Place of birth | Wallsend, Newcastle, New South Wales |
| Place of birth | Wallsend, New South Wales |
| School | Wallsend, Cooks Hill High School, Newcastle, New South Wales |
| Religion | Presbyterian |
| Occupation | Stenographer |
| Address | 90 College Street, Balmain, Sydney, New South Wales |
| Marital status | Single |
| Age at embarkation | 19 |
| Next of kin | Mother, Mrs C Houston, 90 College Street, Balmain, Sydney, New South Wales |
| Enlistment date | 2 September 1915 |
| Date of enlistment from Nominal Roll | 27 September 1915 |
| Rank on enlistment | Private |
| Unit name | 18th Battalion, 9th Reinforcement (/showUnit?unitCode=INF18REIN9) |
| AWM Embarkation Roll number | 23/35/2 |
| Embarkation details | Unit embarked from Sydney, New South Wales, on board HMAT A54 <i>Runic</i> on 20 January 1916 |
| Rank from Nominal Roll | Private |
| Unit from Nominal Roll | 19th Battalion |
| Fate | Killed in Action 14 November 1916 |
| Place of death or wounding | Flers, France |
| Age at death | 20 |
| Age at death from cemetery records | 20 |
| Place of burial | No known grave |
| Commemoration details | Australian National Memorial, Villers-Bretonneux, France Villers-Bretonneux is a village about 15 km east of Amiens. The Memorial stands on the high ground ('Hill 104') behind the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, Fouilloy, which is about 2 km north of Villers-Bretonneux on the east side of the road to Fouilloy. |

The Australian National Memorial, Villers-Bretonneux is approached through the Military Cemetery, at the end of which is an open grass lawn which leads into a three-sided court. The two pavilions on the left and right are linked by the north and south walls to the back (east) wall, from which rises the focal point of the Memorial, a 105 foot tall tower, of fine ashlar. A staircase leads to an observation platform, 64 feet above the ground, from which further staircases lead to an observation room. This room contains a circular stone tablet with bronze pointers indicating the Somme villages whose names have become synonymous with battles of the Great War; other battle fields in France and Belgium in which Australians fought; and far beyond, Gallipoli and Canberra.

On the three walls, which are faced with Portland stone, are the names of 10,885 Australians who were killed in France and who have no known grave. The 'blocking course' above them bears the names of the Australian Battle Honours.

After the war an appeal in Australia raised £22,700, of which £12,500 came from Victorian school children, with the request that the majority of the funds be used to build a new school in Villers-Bretonneux. The boys' school opened in May 1927, and contains an inscription stating that the school was the gift of Victorian schoolchildren, twelve hundred of whose fathers are buried in the Villers-Bretonneux cemetery, with the names of many more recorded on the Memorial. Villers-Bretonneux is now twinned with Robinvale, Victoria, which has in its main square a memorial to the links between the two towns.

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| Panel number, Roll of Honour, Australian War Memorial | 88 |
| Miscellaneous information from cemetery records | Parents: William and Christina HOUSTON, "Ruthven", 116 Trafalgar Street, Annandale, New South Wales |
| Family/military connections | Cousin: James Scott and William Scott, both killed in Action. |
| Other details | War service: Western Front Medals: British War Medal, Victory Medal |

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