



In Memory of

Sergeant

THOMAS CUNNAH HOBGEN

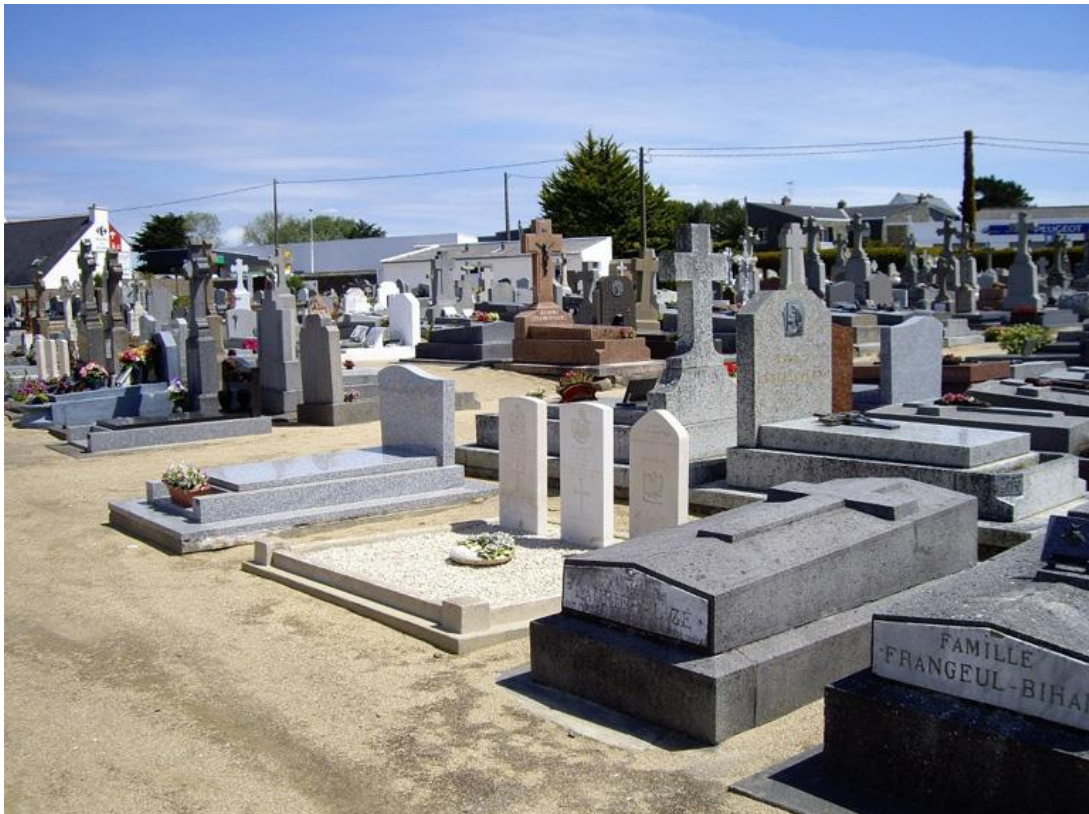
404313, No. 460 Squadron, R.A.A.F.

who died age 21

on 4 August 1942

Son of Thomas Hobgen and Daisy Adelaide Hobgen,
of Toowong, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
QUIBERON COMMUNAL CEMETERY, FRANCE



SERGEANT

THOMAS CUNNAH HOBGEN

No. 460 SQUADRON, R.A.A.F.

SERVICE NUMBER: 404313

Sergeant Thomas Cunnah (registered on his military records and Toowoomba Grammar School Records as Cunnah) Hobgen, the son of Thomas Hobgen and Daisy Adelaide Hobgen (nee Cunnah), was born at Toowoomba in Queensland on 29th December 1920. He was educated at the Southport State School during the years 1934 until 1936. He then attended the Queensland Tutorial College in 1936. He attended the Toowoomba Grammar School during the years 1937 until 1938 where he completed the University of Queensland Junior Public Examination. Whilst a student at Grammar he served for one year in the Grammar School Cadets. He was enrolled at the Queensland Agricultural College at Gatton during 1938 and 1939. Whilst a student at the Agricultural College he served one year in the 1st Cavalry Mobile Veterinary Section of the College Militia unit. After leaving school he worked as a Junior Officer at the Fairymead Sugar Company Limited before becoming an Assistant Marine Engineer for Point Lookout Amity Resorts & Cruises Company. He applied for aircrew training in the Royal Australian Air Force on 2nd May 1940. He was enrolled in the Reserve of the R.A.A.F. on 20th May 1940 after swearing an Oath of Affirmation. At the age of 18 years and 7 months he was enlisted into the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane on 16th August 1940 after giving an undertaking that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. He was allotted the service number of 404313. At the time of his enlistment his physical description was that he was 5 feet 10 inches in height and weighed 152 pounds. He had a fresh complexion, auburn hair and blue eyes. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion. He gave his next of kin as his father, Mr Thomas Hobgen, residing at "Sidlesham", Curlew Street, Toowong, Brisbane. On 20th April 1942, Mrs T.F. Roberts, a cousin of Thomas Hobgen, residing at 57 Breakspears Road, Brockley, requested that she be notified in the event of him becoming a casualty.

Sergeant Thomas Hobgen joined No. 2 Initial Training School at Lindfield in New South Wales on 19th August 1940. He joined No. 2 Elementary Flying Training School at Archerfield in Queensland on 17th October 1940. He rejoined No. 2 Initial Training School on 22nd December 1940. He joined No. 2 Embarkation Depot at Bradfield Park in New South Wales to prepare for movement overseas on attachment to the Royal Canadian Air Force on 4th January 1941. He embarked by sea transport on 20th January 1941 and disembarked in Canada. After his arrival in Canada he joined No. 2 Air Observer School at Edmonton in Alberta on 17th February 1942. He joined the Composite Training School, Trenton on 17th May 1941. He joined No. 1 Wireless School at Montreal on 24th June 1941. He joined No. 4 Bombing and Gunnery School at Royal Canadian Air Force Station Fingal in Ontario on 7th December 1941. He qualified as an Air Gunner and was promoted to the rank of

Temporary Sergeant on 6th January 1942. He joined No. 1 (Y) Depot at Halifax in Nova Scotia on 6th January 1942 for transfer to England on attachment to the Royal Air Force. He embarked by sea transport from Canada on 24th January 1942. He joined No. 3 Personnel Despatch and Reception Centre on 10th February 1942. He joined No. 27 Operational Training Unit at Royal Air Force Station Lichfield on 29th April 1942. He was transferred to No. 1 Signal School at Royal Air Force Station Cranwell North in Lincolnshire on 11th March 1942. He joined No. 460 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force at Royal Air Force Station Binbrook in Yorkshire on 17th July 1942.



*Australian War Memorial photograph P00270.017
Two members of No. 460 Squadron in front of a Wellington Bomber.*

Sergeant Thomas Hobgen was Wireless Operator/Air Gunner and crew member of a 460 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force Wellington Bomber Z1422 that went missing on air operations on 4th/5th April 1943. A German report, obtained through the International Red Cross Committee, reported that Sergeant Thomas Hobgen was killed in action. A subsequent report revealed that Sergeant Hobgen's body had been washed ashore near Port Ivy, Brittany, and that it was buried at Quiberon on 24th August 1942.

The No. 1 Missing Research and Enquiry Unit reported the results of their investigation of the bodies buried in the Quiberon Cemetery on 9th July 1946. The report was based on interrogation of local residents and investigations carried out in the Quiberon area. It confirmed the body of Sergeant Hobgen was washed ashore near Port Ivy and buried in the Quiberon Cemetery. The town of Quiberon is situated on the French coast approximately 20 miles south west of Vannes and Port Ivy is located about three and a half miles north west of Quiberon. In view of the fact that Sergeant Hobgen's body was washed ashore and no trace of the aircraft was ever found, it was assumed that it crashed into the sea. His headstone in the Quiberon Cemetery has the family inscription 'They shall grow not old as we who are left grow old'. Thomas Hogben's name is

commemorated on Panel No. 107 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Grammar School WW2 Honour Board.

Note:

Thomas Hobgen's father, Major Thomas Hobgen (Q185017), enlisted in the Australian Army on 16th October 1939 and served as a Major at Headquarters of the Queensland Line of Communication Area until 22nd January 1944. A sister, Jane Adelaide Hobgen (101994), served in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War 2 with the Brisbane Wireless/Telegraphic Station.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00048.125

Australian War Memorial Photograph P00048.125

Description:

*Left to right: 411390 Flight Sergeant (Flt Sgt) Claud Besnard Sautelle (lost on operations over France on 8 November 1942); Mr G. Pike, Westmount Cricket Club, Montreal; 411530 Sergeant (Sgt) Ronald Henry Sankey (killed in an accident in the United Kingdom on 3 December 1942); 411634 Flt Sgt Donald Sydney Lister (lost on operations over the Middle East on 26 April 1942); 408706 Flight Lieutenant (Flt Lt) Ronald Kenneth Senior; probably 411372 Sgt Frederick Harley Paterson (lost over the Frisian Islands in the Netherlands on 11 February 1943); G. K. Owens; S. Jerrem (Captain); "Dude" Opie; **404313 Sgt Thomas Cunnah Hobgen (lost on operations over France on 4 August 1942);** probably 411552 Flt Lt Charles Bernard Thomson; L. Stuart; possibly 408715 Flying Officer [FO]*

*Frederick Anthony Wallis (killed in an accident at Eskdale, Vic on 4 June 1945), H.L. Gates, Secretary
Ottawa Valley Cricket Club. No.1 Wireless School Cricket Team in Uniform*

Thomas Hobgen's photo and the following report was published in the Brisbane Telegraph on Monday 10th August 1942:

Airman Missing - Sergeant. Thomas C. Hobgen (21), elder son of Major and Mrs T. Hobgen, Sidlesham, Curlew Street, Toowoomba, is reported missing as the result of air operations on the night of August 4/5. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School, and before enlisting in the RAAF in August 1940, he was a student at the Gatton Agricultural College, and was employed as an assistant engineer on a bay passenger vessel. Both sons of Major and Mrs Hobgen are missing: Sergeant John E. Hobgen was posted missing on May 8, 1942.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he was enrolled as a student on 1st January 1937 and that he left the School on 31st December 1937. He was a member of the 1st XV Rugby in 1937.

External Links:

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[NAA Service Records](#)