AWM ~ Roll of Honour

Service Number: 2166
Rank: Lance Corporal
Unit: 5th Australian Infantry Battalion (Private Schools Company)
Date of death: 9 September 1915
Place of death: At sea (HS Maheno)
Cause of death: Died of wounds
Place of association: Melbourne, Australia
Memorial details: Lone Pine Memorial (Panel 24), Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey

From “The Xaverian” 1917 p. 32

Rupert Hepburn (1907—1910) was one of several brothers who have been educated at the College. It seems only the other day since he was in our midst cracking jokes in his quiet way, or training for the big football contests in 1910…. The call of his country took him into sterner contests than those of his school days, and he has laid down his life in the noble fulfilment of his duty.

Rupert Hepburn was born in East Melbourne. He received his early education at Johnsonville, East Gippsland, then Dandenong, and finished up at Xavier College. He represented his school in both cricket and the football fields. On leaving college, he joined the staff of the New Zealand Loan and Agency Co., where he stayed till enlisting. His genial disposition made him many friends. His career at the front was short, for leaving Egypt on 1st August, he died of wounds in Gallipoli on the 9th of September.

Two of his brothers, Eric and Austin, are at the front … It is to be hoped that the Reaper will be satisfied with the war toll that he has exacted from the Hepburn brothers.” Writing from the trenches in September, Austin writes: “poor old Rupert was shot in the head in the trenches just two days ago, nothing serious, I believe. I did not see him, but his sergeant assured me it was not a serious wound. I tried to find out about him at the clearing hospital, but they did not seem to know anything about him at all. I think that he will pull through allright according to all accounts.”

From a report received later from the Defence Department, it appears that Rupert died on shipboard while on his way to hospital at Malta. Mr Hepburn (Rupert’s father), referring to his sad loss, says: “I knew when the boys went to the war that they were not going on a picnic, and so did they; and I was prepared to hear bad news about one or other of them at any time, but when the blow came it was none the less severe.”

Out sincere sympathy to Mr Hepburn, to Austin, Douglas,

Rupert Hepburn appears on the Melbourne Cricket Club’s Roll of Honour—No. 54. “As volunteers in the Australian and British Forces in World War 1, members of the Melbourne Cricket Club rendered distinguished service in almost every area of conflict, from Gallipoli to the Western Front.”