

**MAJOR HUBERT RICHARD JOSEPH HARRIS**  
**A.A.M.C. – 2nd Tunnelling Company**

Hubert Richard Joseph Harris was born in Newcastle, NSW on August 18, 1888 the son of John and Jane Harris. He studied at the Sydney University, NSW and graduated with a Bachelor of Medicine (MB). Some examination results were published in various newspapers:

<p><i>The Queenslander</i> Saturday January 9, 1909:</p> <p style="text-align:center">SYDNEY UNIVERSITY RESULTS OF EXAMINATIONS</p> <p>The following results have been posted at the Sydney University: First Degree Examinations: Pass: H.R.J. Harris</p>	Article abridged
<p><i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> Monday March 22, 1909:</p> <p style="text-align:center">THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY</p> <p>The following additional results of examinations which have been posted: Organic Chemistry: Pass: H.R.J. Harris.</p>	Article abridged
<p><i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> Saturday December 23, 1911:</p> <p style="text-align:center">THE UNIVERSITY DECEMBER EXAMINATIONS</p> <p>The following are the results of the December examinations. Faculty of Medicine – Fourth Year: Pass: H.R.J. Harris.</p>	Article abridged
<p><i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> Saturday August 30, 1913:</p> <p style="text-align:center">THE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION RESULTS Faculty of Medicine</p> <p>The following have been successful in the examinations recently held. Fifth Year: H.R.J. Harris</p>	Article abridged

He married and had a daughter Evangelina but his wife died.

On July 27, 1915 the widowed Medical Practitioner applied for a Commission with the Aust Army Medical Corps, A.I.F. and passed the medical examination. Details from the certificate reveal he was 179cms (5ft 10½ins) tall and weighed 70kgs (154lbs) with a chest expansion of 87-94cms (34-37ins). Good vision resulted from the eye test. Other information shows he was 26 years and 11 months of age and his next-of-kin was his daughter whose guardian was Miss Mary Catherine Harris of 109 Church Street, Newcastle, NSW. Roman Catholic was his religious denomination.

His application was accepted on July 30, 1915 and recommendation that he be appointed Captain and assigned to the General Reinforcements, Egypt & Europe to depart on RMS *Orontes*. The mail ship departed Sydney, NSW on July 31, 1915 with Captain Harris appointed to serve at the 2nd Aust. General Hospital.

On arrival in Egypt he reported for duty and was taken on strength of the No.2 Australian General Hospital about the last few days of August, 1915 but by September 7, 1915 was sent and reported to the A.D.M.S. & N.Z. & Aust Division at Zeitoun.

He embarked from Zeitoun on the transport *Anaise* for Alexandria and reported for duty at No.2 A.G.H. at Mudros West on December 7, 1915. He left the hospital at Alexandria on January 21, 1916 departing on the ship *Dunvegar Castle* then transferred to the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade on January 31, 1916.

The following day went to the 2nd Field Ambulance but by February 29 was attached to the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters at Tel-el-Kebir.

Still attached to the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade on March 22, 1916 he proceeded to join the B.E.F. at Alexandria and embarked on the transport *Grampian* disembarking at Marseilles on March 28. The medic was admitted to the No.2 Clearing Hospital in France on April 9 and discharged to duty on April 11, 1916.

He remained on duty with the 2nd F.A.B. until December 6, 1916 when he was sent to the 1st Aust. Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, Eng suffering from eye trouble.

From February 2, 1917 he was detached from 2nd F.A.B. and rejoined the 2nd Field Ambulance in France being taken on strength the same day. Two days later he was admitted to the 1st Aust C.R.S. suffering from a Septic Heel then transferred to the 5th Divisional Rest Station and rejoined on February 14, 1917.

He was temporarily attached to the 1/1st South Midland Casualty Clearing Station for duty on February 21, 1917. On March 24, 1917 he went sick to the C.C.S. with N.Y.D. (not yet diagnosed) and transferred to the 2/1st South Midland C.C.S. and admitted with Rose Measles. He rejoined his unit on April 3, 1917.

He left the 56th C.C.S. on April 27, 1917 and proceeded on leave and rejoined on May 7, 1917. On May 13, 1917 Captain Harris was detached from duties with the 1/1st South Midland C.C.S. and detailed at Temporary Medical Officer to the 11th Battalion.

On August 24, 1917 he was promoted to Major, as per A.I.F. List no 227.

He left the 2nd Field Ambulance on September 1, 1917 for furlough to the U.K. returning on September 13th. A transfer to the 2nd Aust Auxiliary Hospital at Southall took place on September 30, 1917 and Major Harris returned to England where he was attached to the hospital for duty on October 6, 1917.

On March 27, 1918 Major Harris was detached from the 2nd A.A.H. He married Emily Hilyard Smith at Ealing, Middlesex, England on the same day. Emily became his next-of-kin with her address was given as 559 Stratford Road, Old Stratford, Manchester, Eng.

He marched out to the D.M.S. in London and on April 1, 1918 proceeding again overseas via Folkstone to be attached to the 2nd Aust General Hospital at Wimereux the following day.

The next day April 3rd he was detached for duty at the Convalescent Depot at Havre until April 22, 1918 when he returned to the 2nd A.G.H.

On May 21, 1918 Major Harris was posted as Medical Officer to the 2nd Tunnelling Company.

He went sick to the 12th Field Ambulance on July 8 and transferred to the 47th C.C.S. and rejoined his unit on July 13, 1918.

He proceeded on short leave to England on July 28, 1918 and assessed by the Medical Board. He was recommended for 1 month's sick leave to convalesce and to report to the Medical Section, Room 9, A.I.F. Headquarters on August 21, 1918. The Board's recommendations were:

Granted 4 weeks sick leave.

Unfit for General Service – 10 weeks.

Unfit Hospital Service (active duty with troops) – 8 weeks.

Fit for Hospital Service (sedentary employment only)

He was to report to the D.M.S. A.I.F. on September 19, 1918 and an appointment set to go before the Board again on October 16, 1918. The next day Major Harris was granted further sick leave until September 19, 1918 and to report for further assessment that day.

The Major returned to Australia suffering from Effort Syndrome (also called Soldier's Heart, nervous heart or cardiac neurosis. Patient exhibits a group of symptoms he thinks are heart disease but has a healthy heart. Underlying disorder is anxiety) and was struck off strength on October 3, 1918.

Permission was given for Major Harris to return to Australia at his own expense and was invalided home by the admiralty transport S.S. *Olympic* which was due to depart Liverpool, England on 28th September, 1918 and he embarked on October 3rd. In San Francisco connection was booked with the S.S. *Sonoma* leaving on October 22nd. On October 14, 1918 his next-of-kin was informed of his return to Australia. Although not mentioned in military correspondence his wife would have accompanied him. As from October 20, 1918 he was on leave without pay.

The S.S. *Sonoma* arrived in Sydney, NSW on November 17, 1918. Details appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday November 18, 1918:

WAR WORKERS RETURN BY THE SONOMA

Distinguished Australians

The Oceanic Steamship Co.'s steamer *Sonoma*, from San Francisco, which had been detained in quarantine for several days, was released yesterday. She carried a number of Australian soldiers and Red Cross workers, most of whom served at Gallipoli and have returned either on leave or invalided.

Amongst the military passengers were: Major H.R.J. Harris (A.A.M.C.), Newcastle.

Article abridged

Termination of his appointment was recommended for December 3, 1918 and was officially terminated due to his medical unfitness on that date.

On January 17, 1920 his Will was returned to the 2nd Military District.

Major Hubert Richard Joseph Harris, A.A.M.C., Medical Officer, 2nd Tunnelling Company and 2nd Field Artillery Brigade received the 1914-15 Star (22401) the British War Medal (17477) and the Victory Medal (17259) for his service to his country.

A Statement of his Service was sent to the Repatriation Commission on January 7, 1938.

On June 14, 1939 the Honorary Secretary of the 102nd Howitzer Battery Association wrote to Base Records requesting the name of the Doctor who served in France in 1916-17 attached as the Medical Officer to the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade and if possible his present address.

Base Records replied on June 23, 1939 to the Honorary Secretary that Major H.R.J. Harris was the Officer in question and any correspondence forwarded to him via their office would be forwarded on to his present address.

Base Records corresponded with the Repatriation Commission in Sydney, NSW on July 4, 1939 enquiring if they had the present address of Major Hubert Richard Joseph Harris – ex A.A.M.C., A.I.F. The Commission replied on July 6, 1939 that the last recorded address of Dr. H.R.J. Harris was 94 Barney Street, Armidale, NSW.

Doctor and Mrs Harris resided at Barney Street, Armidale where he was a Medical Practitioner in the 1930's. In the 1940's they were at Southall, Markson Street, Armidale and still registered as a Medical Practitioner. Mrs Emily Harris passed away on January 31, 1962 aged 73 years.

Dr Hubert R.J. Harris died on August 18, 1968 in NSW at 80 years of age. Their graves can be located in the Church of England section of the Armidale Cemetery, NSW in Row 15A Plot 26. The inscription reads:

Sister Harris (nee Smith)  
Died 31 January, 1962  
Aged 73 years  
H.R.J. Harris Major – A.A.M.C.  
Died 18 August, 1968  
Aged 80 years  
Father of Evangeline, Hubert, Roy and Pamela

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Note: Aust War Memorial holds 25 pages of memories at - 1DRL/0337.