*Web Gilbert: Prisoners of War*

# Charles Web Gilbert

*Sculptor*

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Charles Web Gilbert was born at Amherst, Victoria in 1867. His interest in sculpture developed early. By the age of nine he was working as an apprentice chef in a Melbourne café, where he hand-modelled decorations for wedding cakes.

As a sculptor, Gilbert was predominantly self-taught, although from 1876 to 1880 he attended private drawing classes and eventually went on to study part time at the National Gallery School in Melbourne under Fredrick McCubbin, Bernard Hall and G.F. Follingsby. It was not until 1908 that he established his own studio and foundry in Fitzroy.

In 1914, aged 47, Gilbert moved to London. When war was declared, he spent some time working in a munitions factory. In December 1918, he was made an honorary lieutenant in the modelling subsection of the Australian War Records Section working with other artists. Together they travelled through France making studies and models of significant battlefields where Australians had fought.

He returned to Australia in 1920 and continued producing sculptures for war memorials. In 1923, he resigned his position as head sculptor to pursue other commissions for memorials, such as those located at Broken Hill, Burnside, South Australia, at the University of Melbourne and outside St. Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne.

Gilbert died in 1925 at the age of 57 from heart problems. His death occurred while he was in the middle of constructing a major memorial sculpture to the Desert Mounted Corps, in remembrance of Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought at Port Said in Egypt from 1916 to 1918.

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