

# We Remember Anzac Day 2023

## Vignacourt Cemetery

### 16 Queensland Soldiers who lie at rest.

When the German advance began in March 1918, Vignacourt was occupied by the 20th and 61st Casualty Clearing Stations. It also became a headquarters of Royal Air Force squadrons. The cemetery was begun in April and closed in August, and the burials reflect the desperate fighting of the Australian forces on the Amiens front. Six burials made in the communal cemetery between October 1915 and March 1918 were brought into the cemetery after the Armistice. Vignacourt British Cemetery contains 584 First World War burials. There are also two burials from the Second World War. The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. The cemetery also contains a monument erected by the village in honour of the Commonwealth dead, unveiled in August 1921. It is a statue of a French soldier, on the base of which are engraved the words: "Freres D'armes de L'Armee Britannique, tombes au Champ D'Honneur, dormez en paix. Nous veillons sur vous." ("Brothers in arms of the British Army, fallen on the field of honour, sleep in peace; we are watching over you.").



## **Lest We Forget**

- **PRIVATE GEORGE RICHMOND BATES**
- **PRIVATE PERCY BROOKS**
- **DRIVER HUGH McLAUGHLIN CARSON**
- **SERGEANT LESLIE THOMAS COLLINS**
- **PRIVATE HENRY JAMES BROWN**
- **PRIVATE WILLIAM JAMES LAMINGTON BROWN**
- **SERGEANT DAVID EMMETT COYNE**
- **PRIVATE GEORGE HAY**
- **LIEUTENANT JOHN GRANT**
- **LIEUTENANT HERBERT HENRY PARKE HAMILTON**
- **PRIVATE ROBERT LESLIE HALL**
- **PRIVATE ERNEST LYTTON JOHNSTONE**
- **LIEUTENANT WILLIAM CHARTERS McCULLOUGH**
- **PRIVATE JAMES McCORMACK**
- **PRIVATE ROY WESTGARTH MacARTHUR**
- **PRIVATE CHARLES HENRY LOCKE**

## PRIVATE GEORGE RICHMOND BATES

Service Number: 632

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

26th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 16 April 1918

Age 22 years old

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

I. B. 6.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional Info Son of George and Ellen Maria Bates, of Boompa, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

REST WELL BELOVED WE SOFTLY SAY YE WHO FOR US YOUR LIFE LAID  
DOWN

George Bates was born in Charleville. From the scant evidence available in the historical records, it is likely that George's parents died while George was young and he was taken in by his uncle, John Bates of Boompa near Biggenden. John Bates had become the official guardian for both George and his two sisters. Another uncle, William, was living at Lakeside which was the nearest rail station to Boompa. There is a suggestion that the two families were engaged in dairying and George and his cousin Leslie both stated their occupations as stockmen.

George presented himself for enlistment at Maryborough, having caught the train down to Mungar Junction, on 15th August 1916. He stated his age as 20 years and 5 months and had with him an enlistment document signed by his Uncle John as guardian and witnessed by a JP, as George was still technically underage and required either parent's or guardian's permission. George stated his occupation as stockman and he named his sister, Vera Evelyn Bates as his next of kin. The record shows George as measuring just over six feet in height and weighing 140 pounds.

He stated he had been granted an exemption from compulsory military training due to his occupation.

From Maryborough, George was given a rail warrant to travel to Enoggera in Brisbane where he was allocated to a depot battalion while going through some basic training. He was granted pre-embarkation home leave before being sent to Seymour on the outskirts of Melbourne in December 1916 where training in the use of the Vickers Heavy Machine Gun was conducted. George was officially taken on as reinforcement for the 7th Machine Gun Company and continued to train as part of a gun crew.

The 11th reinforcements of the 7th MG Coy embarked on the "Clan McGillivray" for overseas in Port Melbourne on 10th May 1917; disembarking in Plymouth on 28th July 1917. George was briefly admitted to the ship's hospital during the voyage with influenza. Upon arrival in England, George and the other reinforcements marched out to the 7th Australian Training Battalion at Rolleston. After a further two months of training, George may have been rather bored. On 3rd October, he went AWL for 6 days; long enough to travel to London and see the sights. Upon his return to camp, George was paraded before the camp commander who imposed a punishment of loss of leave for 14 days and a loss of pay for 18 days. Five days after returning to camp, George reported to the Military Hospital at Bulford with a case of venereal disease.

VD was huge problem for the AIF during the First World War. Particularly virulent strains of both syphilis and gonorrhoea were difficult to treat without recourse to antibiotics; which at that time did not exist. Sufferers were confined to special wards in hospitals; which were usually referred to as dermatological wards so as not to inflame sensibilities in the general population. VD patients could not perform their normal duties and the authorities considered cases to be self-inflicted; and as such had their pay stopped for the period of time in treatment. George was discharged from Bulford after 73 days on 26th December 1917. Perhaps in an effort to prevent further mischief, George was shipped out overseas on 17th January 1918. He travelled via ferry from Southampton to Havre where he was processed and reassigned to the 26th Infantry Battalion, which he joined on 22nd January.

The military situation at the beginning of 1918 was very different from that which had existed in the previous years of the war on the Western Front. The Bolshevik Revolution and subsequent peace treaty on the Eastern Front had released almost 50 divisions of German Troops from the east; and presented the German commanders with a temporary numerical advantage which could be exploited on the Western Front. The advantage would only be short lived though as the expected troop surge of almost one million men provided by the United States Army would begin to have an impact in the latter half of 1918. The British and French Commanders were expecting a large German offensive in the first half of 1918, but

their intelligence was unable to pinpoint where the offensive would strike. The British Commander on the Western Front, General Douglas Haig, expected the offensive in his sector to come in Belgian Flanders and as a consequence he kept his most reliable troops, the five Australian Divisions, in the area between Ypres and Armentieres to meet the threat.

When George was taken on strength by the 26th Battalion, the unit was rotating in and out of the line near Messines. This would have been George's first taste of action. The battalion remained in the northern sector of the front throughout the winter. Time not spent in the line was taken up with sports competitions, visits to divisional baths for change of underwear and socks, and time in rest camps far from the front. On 18th March 1918, George was granted nine days leave in Paris. While he was on leave, the much-awaited spring offensive codenamed Operation Michael began on 21st March with a well-executed drive by the German army from their defences on the Hindenburg Line down the line of the Somme Valley towards the vital communication hub of Amiens.

Haig had gambled that the advance would be in Belgium, and he had lost. The British 5th Army which held the line astride the Somme River near Peronne was completely overrun, with men falling back in disarray. Realising that if Amiens was taken the war would be lost, Haig began to order units of the AIF south to take up holding positions. George had just arrived back to the 26th Battalion at Warneton when orders were received to pack up and move by bus, train and forced march to the Somme.

The 26th Battalion, as part of the 7th Brigade of the 2nd Division AIF arrived at their designated defensive position on 9th April 1918 and occupied a line of support trenches near the village of Baizieux, overlooking the Amiens to Albert Road. At this time, the situation was dire with the British and Australians well out numbered on both sides of the river. In an attempt to bolster his troops, Haig delivered his famous "backs to the wall" speech and the text was read out to all.

On 15th July, while occupying the support trenches, George was hit by shrapnel from a high explosive artillery shell. He received a serious wound to his left thigh resulting in a fracture and other wounds to his wrist and arm. He was taken to the 20th Casualty Clearing Station near Vignacourt where he died of his wounds the next day without regaining consciousness. George was buried in what was to become the Vignacourt British Cemetery.

When news of George's death reached his sister, Vera, in Boompa, she wrote to the authorities to seek more information. It is likely that she also wrote to Leslie Bates,

her cousin who was also serving in the 26th Battalion. As a result of the request from Leslie, the Red Cross Wounded and Missing Inquiry Service began to trace possible witnesses to George's death. Several witnesses described the artillery barrage and George's wounding. One witness stated that George was with a group of men near the support trenches scrounging potatoes when he was hit.

Vera wrote several times to the authorities in Melbourne and her letters in a beautiful flowing script give some sense of the grief that was felt by Vera and her sister. Vera had requested that any personal effects that George may have had be returned to her as she and her sister were planning to create a memorial book to commemorate the sacrifice of their only brother.

In due course, some personal items were packaged to be despatched back to Australia. The package was one small part of the cargo of the S.S. Barunga, a German registered freighter which had been requested by the Australian Government in Sydney at the outbreak of the war. The Barunga sailed from Plymouth in late July 1918 with a number of soldiers returning to Australia, and the personal effects of many deceased servicemen on board. Four days out of port, the Barunga was torpedoed by a U-Boat off the Scilly Isles. All passengers and crew were rescued but all the cargo was lost.

In the 1920's, Vera married a Methodist Clergyman and moved to the parsonage in Beaudesert. She signed for her brother's service medals, memorial bronze plaque and scroll signed by the King.



PRIVATE GEORGE BATES,  
of Boonpa station. Died of wounds  
in France, April 18, aged 22 years.  
He enlisted in August, 1916.

## PRIVATE PERCY BROOKS

Service Number: 1883

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

41st Bn.

Date of Death

Died 08 August 1918

Age 24 years old

Buried or commemorated at

V. A. 20.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of William and Harriet Maria Brooks, of Kedron Park Rd., Woolloowin, Brisbane, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

THOUGH LOST TO SIGHT TO MEMORY EVER DEAR SORROWING FATHER & MOTHER

Mr. and Mrs. W. Brooks, of Kedron Park road, Woolloowin, have received the sad news that their son, Private Percy Brooks, 41st Battalion (who has been on active service for 2 years and 7 months), died of wounds at No. 61 Casualty station on 8th August. Private Percy Brooks had been wounded twice and gassed once and had returned to duty on 22nd June.



22 Jan 1916:**Enlisted** AIF WW1, Private, SN 1883, [49th Infantry Battalion](#), Brisbane, Qld.1 May 1916:**Involvement** Private, SN 1883, [49th Infantry Battalion](#)1 May 1916:**Embarked** Private, SN 1883, [49th Infantry Battalion](#), HMAT Clan McGillivray, Brisbane

## DRIVER HUGH McLAUGHLIN CARSON

Service Number: 6069

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Field Artillery

3rd Army Field Artillery Bde.

Date of Death

Died 29 May 1918

Age 23 years old

Buried or commemorated at

III. A. 1.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional Info Son of Hugh Robert and Elizabeth Carson, of Harrisville, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

HE GAVE HIS YOUNG LIFE FOR KING AND COUNTRY HE COULD DO NO MORE



Driver Hugh (Hughie) McLaughlin Carson, 3rd Field Artillery Brigade, who died of wounds in France on 29 May 1918. Carson was wounded at Franvillers when he and fellow drivers were attempting to rescue their horses from wagon lines which were being shelled.



## SERGEANT LESLIE THOMAS COLLINS

Service Number: 4408

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

25th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 10 August 1918

Buried or commemorated at Vignacourt

V. E. 18.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional InfoSon of William James and Jane Collins, of Bridge St., Albion, Queensland. Native of Upper North Pine, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS



31 Mar 1916: Involvement Private, SN 4408, 25th Infantry Battalion

31 Mar 1916: Embarked Private, SN 4408, 25th Infantry Battalion, HMAT Star of Victoria, Sydney

10 Aug 1918: Involvement Sergeant, SN 4408, 25th Infantry Battalion

## PRIVATE HENRY JAMES BROWN

Service Number: 502

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Machine Gun Corps

3rd Bn.

Date of Death

Died 10 May 1918

Age 23 years old

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

II. A. 14.

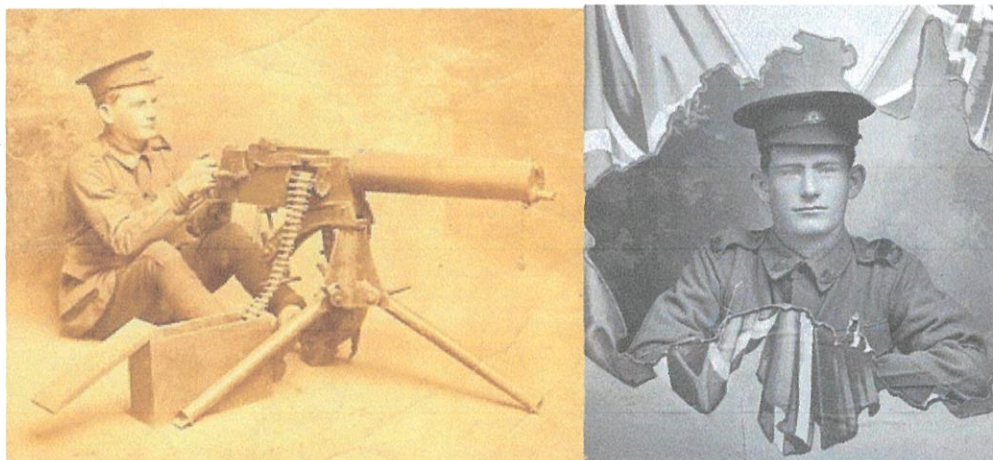
France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of James and Minnie Brown, of Ipswich St., Toowoomba, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

ETERNAL REST GRANT HIM O LORD AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM



22 Dec 1916:Involvement Private, SN 502, 15th Machine Gun Company

22 Dec 1916:Embarked Private, SN 502, 15th Machine Gun Company, HMAT Persic, Melbourne

10 May 1918: Involvement Private, SN 502, 3rd Machine Gun Battalion

## PRIVATE WILLIAM JAMES LAMINGTON BROWN

Service Number: 3369

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

49th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 15 June 1918

Buried or commemorated at

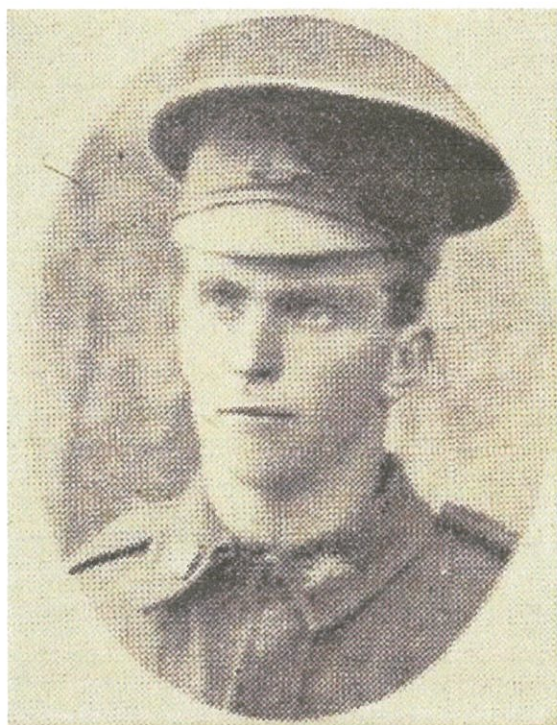
VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

III. E. 1.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional Info Son of William Arthur Lowder Brown and Martha Ann Brown, of Neil and Herries Sts., Toowoomba, Queensland.



Pte 3369 William James Lamington Brown

49th Australian Infantry Battalion,

13th Brigade, 4th Australian Division

The Somme, on the red fields of poppies, in silence, walk like ghosts, thousands of young men who during one of the most terrible battles in history, fought and fell in the trenches, in the mud and the barbed wire, caught in the fury and chaos that tons of shells and hail of lead spat on them, caught too early in the flower of their age, in their youth that they gave in the hell that was their war but who, with the greatest bravery, with devotion and loyalty, with pride served alongside their comrades for their country and gave their young lives, their today in the name of peace and freedom on the soils of northern France where today stand solemnly in the light of remembrance, row after row their white graves that tell us the stories of these young boys who did not have the chance to return home but who here will always be honored with respect and loved forever like our sons that I will always watch over with gratitude to bring them back to life, so that their courage and their sacrifices, their deeds will never be forgotten, so that their names will live forever.

Today, it is with the utmost respect and infinite gratitude that I would like to honor the memory of one of these young men, one of my boys of the Somme who gave his today for our tomorrow. I would like to pay a very respectful tribute to Private number 3369 William James Lamington Brown who fought in the 49th Australian Infantry Battalion, 13th Brigade, 4th Australian Division, and who died of his wounds 104 years ago, on June 15, 1918 at the age of 21 on the Somme front.

William James Lamington Brown was born on December 27, 1896 in Warwick, Queensland, and was the son of William Arthur Lowder Brown and Martha Ann Brown, of Neil And Herries Street, Toowoomba, Queensland and before the outbreak of the war, he worked as blacksmith.

William enlisted on October 14, 1916 in Toowoomba, in the 49th Australian Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcement, battalion whose nickname was "The Stanley Regiment" and whose motto was "Semper Fidelis" (Always Faithful). After a training period of a little over two months, William embarked with his unit from Sydney, New South Wales, on board HMAT A33 Ayrshire on January 24, 1917 and sailed for England.

On March 16, 1917, during his sea voyage, William fell ill and was admitted to the ship's hospital, was discharged to duty on March 19 and arrived in England on April 12, 1917 where he was disembarked in Devonport, joined the 13th Training Battalion the next day in Codford then embarked from Folkestone on August 6 and proceeded overseas for France.

Later in the day on August 6, 1917, after a quick trip up the English Channel, William arrived in France and was disembarked at Le Havre where he joined the 4th Australian Divisional Base Depot, marched out to unit on August 22 and was taken on strength in the 49th Australian Infantry Battalion on August 25 at "Red Lodge", Dranoutre, Belgium where they were billeted until the end of the month.

A month later, on September 26, 1917, William fought his first major battle with the 49th Battalion at Polygon Wood.

Polygon Wood was the second of three battles between 20 September and 4 October 1917 in which "step by step" or "bite and hold" tactics were used to batter down the formidable German defensive positions. After an opening bombardment the infantry would advance for a prescribed distance behind a "creeping" barrage of shells. This barrage would keep the Germans in their pillboxes until British soldiers were almost upon them. The enemy positions would then be captured consolidated and protected from counter-attack by artillery. Artillery would be brought forward and the next "bite" attempted. In this way the British aimed to work their way from their start lines near Ypres to the heights of the ridge ten kilometres away at Passchendaele village.

At Menin Road on 20 September 1917, in the first use of the "bite and hold", the Australians sustained 5,000 killed and wounded but the tactics had been proven and, combined with the allied superiority in artillery, showed that, with fine weather, the allies were now in a superior position. Both the British and the Germans suffered similar casualties, but while the British were elated at the results, the Germans were crushed by the defeat.

The next battle was Polygon Wood and Charles Bean, the Australian Official Historian described the opening barrage on 26 September as the most perfect that ever protected Australian troops and that it rolled ahead of the troops roaring "like a Gippsland bushfire".

The name Polygon Wood derived from a plantation forest that lay along the axis of the Australian advance. Shelling had reduced the wood to little more than stumps and broken timber. Seven divisions, five British and two Australian, advanced behind the screen of shells the "creeping barrage" as it was known and seized most of their objectives. The Germans launched several counter-attacks but these were thwarted by the heavy defensive artillery barrages used to protect the infantry consolidating their objectives. However, despite the success, 5,770 Australian were killed or wounded.

Unfortunately, it was during the battle of Polygon Wood, on his first day on the front line that William was wounded by a gunshot wound to his right knee, was evacuated and admitted to the 32nd Casualty Clearing Station, transferred the next day at the 18th General Hospital in Camiers (Pas-De-Calais) then after recovering, was admitted on October 4 to the 6th Convalescent Depot, transferred on October 6 to the 11th Convalescent Depot in Buchy, was discharged to duty on November 6 and sent the same day at the 4th Australian Divisional Base Depot in Le Havre.

On November 12, 1917, William joined his unit at Rechlinghem (Pas-De-Calais) and a few days later on November 16 "whilst on active service, absenting himself without leave after being warned for guard duty". After this small incident, he joined his comrades on November 27 in Aigneville, in the Somme where they alternated between training and sports exercises including a rugby football competition with the men of the 51st Australian Infantry Battalion and remained there until December 6.

On December 6, 1917, William and the 49th Battalion left Aigneville and marched through Peronne, Etricourt, arrived at Templeux-La-Fosse on December 10 and were billeted here until December 18, marched to Moislains on December 20 where they followed a new training period including exercises of attacks in brigades and the handling of grenades followed by a period of rest which ended on January 10, 1918.

On January 11, 1918, the 49th Battalion marched into Billets for Strazeele (Hauts-De-France) and less than a week later, on January 16, moved back to the Ypres Salient and fought in an area called "Spoil Bank". and "Larch Wood" until February 8, when they were relieved by the 51st Australian Infantry Battalion and marched to Ridge Wood Camp where the men alternated between rest, training and working parties then on February 28, moved to "Birr Barracks" before joining Locre on March 1.

Almost three weeks later, on March 21, 1918, in a last desperate attempt by the Germans to break through the Allied lines, General Erich Ludendorff launched the German Spring Offensive, also called "Operation Michael" between Arras and St Quentin, in the Somme and at first, put the 3rd and 5th British armies in a very critical situation and threatened the vital and strategic railway junction of the city of Amiens and to stop them, the five Australian divisions, which had been grouped together as part of the Australian Corps, were transferred to the Somme to help blunt the attack.

On March 27, 1918, William and the 49th Battalion arrived in the Somme, at Forceville, took up position at Dernancourt, along the Ancre River, where on April 5, played a significant part in repelling a German attack there during the Second Battle

of Dernancourt, and faced the strongest mounted attack against Australians during the war. For their part, the 49th Battalion, supported by part of the 45th, put in a vital counter-attack late in the afternoon amidst heavy rain, which saved the situation for the Australians, whose line had been penetrated by a German counterattack across a railway bridge west of the town; in doing so they suffered heavily, though, losing 14 officers and 207 other ranks. Later in the month, they took part in the Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux, launching an Anzac Day attack that successfully recaptured the town, which had been lost the previous day following an attack by four German divisions.

On May 1, 1918, after the Australian victory at Villers-Bretonneux, the 49th Battalion moved to Blangy-Tronville where they fought until May 20, then marched to Querrieu for training and then on June 5, joined the front line at Sailly-Le-Sec where they were continuously bombarded by German artillery, partly by gas shells. Unfortunately, it was during one of these bombardments at Sailly-Le-Sec that William met his fate on June 15, 1918 and was seriously injured by a shrapnel wound to his head and was immediately evacuated to the 61st Casualty Clearing Station in Vignacourt where he died shortly after being admitted, he was 21 years old.

Today, William James Lamington Brown rests in peace with his friends, comrades and brothers in arms at Vignacourt British Cemetery, Somme.

William, Proud and brave, it is with ardor and conviction that you answered the call of duty in the flower of your life to do what was right, to serve your country with loyalty and courage alongside your comrades who, confident and determined left behind the hopes of a life full of promise to wear the colors with pride but who, with heavy hearts, said their farewells to their mothers and their loved ones in a last embrace and embarked on the battlefields, towards dark days but which, coming from the other side of the world, carried on their young shoulders the hopes of all peoples in love with freedom and walked side by side, in long columns alongside their friends who had in their hearts and in their smiles the desire to fight and who, guided by the ardor of their youth, walked singing behind the bagpipes and the bugles which resounded through the fields of poppies of the north of France, a country they did not know but which they adopted and loved and for which, in mud and blood, they did and gave so much. Under the sky shattered by thunder they reached the trenches blackened with mud and blood and were greeted in the darkness by the fire of the artillery, by the mournful symphony of the shells which crushed the lines under tons of shells which did not cease to fall all around them bringing death and destruction to young men who thought they would live the greatest adventure of their lives, a short war that would be over before Christmas but through their children's eyes, through their innocence, they found only death and saw their friends, their brothers being pulverized under storms of steel and were soon covered in blood in these slaughterhouses which were the reddened fields of the Somme whose poppies grew between the khaki uniforms, between the bodies of these young men who were taken under the murderous fire of the machine guns and who collapsed one after the

other in the barbed wire from which it was impossible to escape but to through which so many men charged wave after wave into the fury and madness of a world at war. Through the bullets, through the poison gas, through the flames, it was with extreme courage that they held the line but found in unity, in camaraderie and brotherhood the strength to stand and together, at the sound of whistles, watching over each other, climbed the wooden ladders and charged bayonets forward across the fields of Amiens, Pozieres and Villers-Bretonneux where so many fell for freedom and peace in which we live thanks to them who paid the supreme sacrifices and who in the silence after the storm, saw their brothers, their best mates who lay lifeless in the shroud of poppies and who gave their today until their last breath of life in thinking of their mothers, their fathers who would never see them again but who fell with in their hearts, the comfort and the pride of having done what was right, of having fought for this war to end all wars and thanks to whom we are privileged to live in a world at peace and over whom I am proud to watch today, among whom I feel proud and honored to stand when I walk in silence in front of their white graves and for whom I would always give my heart , my today and my life to honor their memory and share their stories so that their sacrifices are never forgotten, so that their names live forever. Thank you so much William, for everything. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember him, we will remember them.



## SERGEANT DAVID EMMETT COYNE

Service Number: 3347

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

31st Bn.

Date of Death

Died 15 May 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

II. D. 6.

France

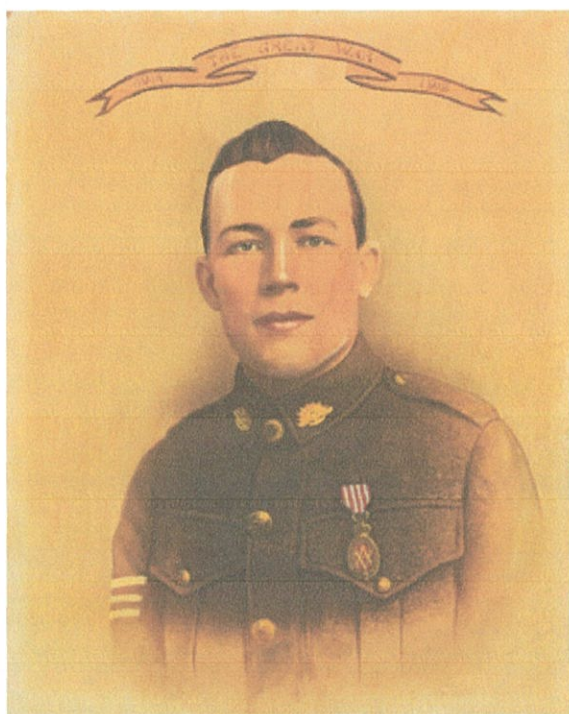
Country of Service Australian

Awards Albert Medal

•Additional Info Son of David Coyne and Annie Hughes Coyne, of Marian, Mackay, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

HE GAVE HIS LIFE TO SAVE HIS COMRADES REST IN PEACE



Today, to honour his memory, I would like to pay a very respectful tribute to Sergeant number 3347 David Emmett Coyne who fought in the 31st Australian Infantry Battalion and who died to save the lives of his comrades 102 years ago, on May 15 1918 at the age of 22 on the Somme front

David Emmett Coyne was born on March 14, 1896 in Ballinrush near Mackay, Queensland and was the eighth child of David and Annie Hughes Coyne, of Marian, Mackay, Queensland. He was educated at Marian State School and then worked with his father as a farmer

Coyne enlisted as a private in the Australian Imperial Force on January 25, 1916 and went into training at Fraser's Hill Camp, Brisbane. While there he showed considerable athletic prowess and figured in an incident which was perhaps a pointer of the selfless act which resulted in his death two years later. After the horses of an express wagon had bolted, endangering several soldiers' lives, Coyne leapt on to the back of one of the horses and managed to bring the wagon to a halt. He embarked for France with reinforcements in May and on 24 December was taken on strength with the 31st Battalion. His unit spent the winter of 1916-17 on the Somme engaged in raiding and patrol work, then in March took part in the advance on Bapaume. On April 21, 1917 he was promoted lance corporal and for the next six months was absent from his unit qualifying as a bombing instructor and serving temporarily with the 67th Battalion. He was promoted sergeant in June and rejoined the 31st Battalion in October.

From November 1917 until March 1918 the battalion served in Flanders in the Messines-Wytschaete sector, then returned to the Somme. On the night of 15 May, while in the line at Vaire-sous-Corbie, Somme, Coyne was testing some Mills grenades which he believed had been affected by damp. He threw one of them but it rebounded off the parapet and fell into the trench in which he and several others were standing. Ordering his men out, he tried to find the grenade in the darkness, then, realizing that his companions were not clear, deliberately threw himself over the grenade's approximate position and received over twenty wounds when it exploded. His wounds proved worse than expected and he died within hours. He was posthumously awarded the Albert Medal in Gold, the highest class of that decoration. He was the only member of the A.I.F. to gain such a distinction.

Today, David Emmett Coyne rests in peace with his friends and brothers in arms at Vignacourt British Cemetery, Somme

Thank you David, you who courageously answered the call of duty, for the king, for your country, for your family and friends, you fought bravely here, in the Somme, you gave and sacrificed your life to save that of your friends during this tragic night of May 15, 1918, there is no greater sacrifice than to give one's life to save those of others and it is with great respect that we bow to salute your sacrifice, your courage, we will never forget what you did for your comrades but also for France, for a better world and we will always be grateful to you Sir, we will never forget and we will always keep your memories in our hearts for pass it on to future generations so that they will know what so many courageous men have sacrificed for our tomorrow, for a peaceful future. 🌹

## PRIVATE GEORGE HAY

Service Number: 3826

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

31st Bn.

Date of Death

Died 10 August 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

VI. A. 11.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of Daniel and Harriet Hay, of Barmunduj Gladstone, Queensland.  
Native of Rodds Bay, Gladstone, Queensland.

•Personal InscriptionTHE LORD GAVE AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY



Born c1896 at Bororen, Qld.

Son of Harriet HAY

Of Barundu, Byrne Valley Line, Qld.

Occupation prior to enlistment Labourer

Complexion 'Dark' Eyes 'Brown' Hair 'Dark'

Enlisted 11 April 1916 at Rockhampton, Qld.

Embarked 19 September 1916 per 'Seang Choon' from Brisbane, Qld.

Served in France

Wounded in action 26 September 1917 GSW to Left Leg

Wounded in action 09 August 1918 Shell Wound to Right Shoulder

*Died of wounds 10 August 1918*

# LIEUTENANT JOHN GRANT

Regiment & Unit/Ship 6775

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

15th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 23 May 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

II. C. 19.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Awards Military Medal

•Additional Info Son of Alex. and Mary Ann Grant, of Mackay, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

HE DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE

Military Medal

'Showed conspicuous gallantry and brave leadership in action near ZONNEBEKE on 26th September, 1917. On one occasion his Platoon met with stubborn resistance from an enemy post, he quickly appreciated the situation, rallied his section and got round on the flank of the post, cleared the situation up and the advance was continued with very little delay. Right through the operation he showed great dash and leadership of the highest standard.'

Source: 'Commonwealth Gazette' No. 31

Date: 7 March 1918

HE DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE

DEATH OF LIEUT. JOHN GRANT

The following letters referring to the death of Lieut. John Grant, in France, have been received by Mr. and Mrs. A. Grant senr. The sentiments expressed by the writers prove that the sterling qualities he manifested in private life were associated with his military career.

Captain S. F. Porter writes :— My dear Mrs. Grant.— You will no doubt have been officially advised of the death of your son, Lieut. John Grant, who died of wounds on May 23, at No. 20 Casualty Clearing Station, France. As I was with him all the time I am able to tell you how it happened.

On May 23rd we came from the front line for a short rest. We reached a certain village, and John, as usual, busied himself with the comfort of the men. After that we all went for a bathe in a canal near by. The weather was lovely so we decided to sleep under canvas in the garden, in preference to indoors. There were six of us lying side by side. At about 11 o'clock an enemy air raid took place but no bombs dropped near us. We went off to sleep again. At about 2 a.m. on the 23rd a second raid took place, the enemy airman on this occasion dropping a bomb a yard from where our heads were. John and another officer both received compound fractures of the skull. Your son also had a broken arm. How the rest of us were not injured is one of those mysteries which none of us can explain. All I remember is being shaken by the explosion and having the canvas torn near my face. Poor John was not conscious so we got him on a stretcher and carried him to a first aid post which was nearby. The doctor, who is a Dr. Cooney of America, shook his head and said he thought there was no hope. However, he did all he could and we got him away in a motor ambulance. He reached the 20th Casualty Clearing Station, where he died the same afternoon at 3 o'clock, without having recovered consciousness. We arranged for his funeral and he was buried in the military cemetery at Vignacourt at 4.30 on the afternoon of the 24th of May. Cpl. Vestergaard, Pte. W. W. Peele, his brother, and myself, were present at the funeral. The last sacred rites were performed by a *Methodist padre of the Casualty Clearing Station*. You will hear from him in due course. Since John has been in this battalion he has been all that a soldier should be. He was very brave and danger did not prevent him from doing his work. The fact that he received a commission and was decorated the first time he was in action is sufficient proof of his great courage. We very often have to put up with trying conditions, the details of which you know. No matter how cold it was, or how muddy, I never once heard John grumble; he was cheerfulness personified. He was always solicitous for the welfare of his men and his loss is very keenly felt by them, and also by us, his brother officers. On looking over this letter it seems rather formal, but you must forgive me for this, as events of this kind are of common occurrence.

Pt. J. V. Murphy writes:— I beg to offer by deepest sympathy in the great loss you have sustained. I came from Brisbane to London with your son, Lieut. John, and found him to treat one and all alike. He had a happy knack of being able to control himself in calm or in rough conditions. He was a born soldier, as his promotion when he came to France as a private clearly showed, for, in a few months, he was decorated and promoted. Everyone respected him. We have lost a soldier and a gentleman and our sympathy is with you and yours.

J. H. Shearer writes: - It is with the deepest feelings of regret and sense of personal loss that I pen these few lines conveying to you my heartfelt sympathy in the irreparable loss sustained by the untimely death of the late Lieut. J. Grant. It had been my privilege to share the friendship of both your sterling sons for the past year and a half, and our army can ill afford to lose men of the sterling Christian qualities of the one which had such a promising career cut short. In the dark hour of your affliction you have the sweet consolation that his example lives on, impelling men to nobler aspirations and higher ideals. I am voicing the sentiments of the comrades of the battalion when I say that no more popular officer held commission in the Australian Imperial Forces, and his place will indeed be hard to fill.

## PRIVATE ROBERT LESLIE HALL

Service Number: 730A

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

31 st Bn

Date of Death

Died 21 May 1918

Age 18 years old

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

II. C. 2.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional Info Son of William James and Margaret Hall, of Mowbray St.,  
Hughenden, Queensland, Australia.

•Personal Inscription

BELOVED WAS HE WAS.

Service Numbers: 730, 730A

Enlisted: 7 February 1917, Place of Enlistment, Toowoomba, Queensland.

Last Rank: Private

Last Unit: 31st Infantry Battalion

Born: Hughenden, Queensland, Australia, 21 June 1899

Home Town: Hughenden, Flinders, Queensland

Schooling: Hughenden State School, Queensland, Australia

Occupation: Drover

Died: Died of wounds, France, 21 May 1918, aged 18 years



Cemetery: Vignacourt British Cemetery

Plot II, Row C, Grave NO. 2, Vignacourt British Cemetery, Vignacourt, Picardie, France

Memorials: Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, Hughenden R.S.S.A.I.L.A. Roll of Honour, Hughenden War Memorial



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P06811.001



## LIEUTENANT HERBERT HENRY PARKE HAMILTON

Regiment & Unit/Ship 73

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

26th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 14 August 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

V. C. 7.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional Info Son of Robert David and Emilie Hamilton, of Brisbane. Native of Middlesex, England.



Mr. R. Hamilton (late of Morningside) has received information from the military authorities that his son, Lieutenant H. H. P. Hamilton died of gun-shot wounds in head and legs on 14th instant, in France. The late officer was born in London 23

years ago, arriving in Queensland in September, 1908. He was a patrol leader in the Sandgate Boy Scouts, and among the first boys called up for military training. He was on the teaching staff at the Technical College, Brisbane, when he joined the A.I.F. early in 1915, proceeding with his battalion to Egypt and Gallipoli, thence France. He was promoted to sergeant before leaving, was wounded at Pozieres, and in rejoining the battalion was recommended for a commission, and sent to Cambridge University for training. On returning to France he was soon promoted to first lieutenant, and recommended for Air Service. He died at the 20th Casualty Clearing Station, France." - from the Brisbane Courier 24 Aug 1918 (nla.gov.au)

"WITH OUR BOYS. A LIAISON OFFICER. EXPERIENCES OF A HERO NOW DEAD.

Writing from France on July 8, Lieut. H.H.P. Hamilton, an Anzac, who has since made the supreme sacrifice, gave an interesting account of his experiences as a "liaison" officer. He wrote:

"The most interesting time I have spent in the war was as liaison officer to another battalion doing a stunt. We were in reserve, and my job was to keep our commander supplied with news. Zero was at 9.45, dusk. I arrived early and wished somebody else had got the job, a flare-proof dug-out in a small hollow beside a main road just in the rear of supports, and stoke mortared all round. Duty was duty, so, getting all the information I could - on this job one has to crib it, as every one is fearfully busy, nerves a trifle strung, for the trenches are crowded, and if the enemy twigs one move and settles a barrage on us, the whole show would go 'plunk' — settled myself in a corner, pencil and note book in hand, beside the adjutant, looking a trifle worried. Very little was said. A gunner would appear, keen and alert, sometimes a little white, and report such and such a company in position. The C.O. sat on a petrol tin with the telephone to his ear, sang songs, and occasionally swore at the staff captain over the 'phone. A Hun 'plane appeared a couple of hundred yards over our heads; not a word — would he notice? He must, but apparently he didn't. A few 5.90's lobbed on supports. 'What'a the time?' 15 minutes to go; pass me the bottle.' The barrage table is studied, and the C.O. asks the adjutant if all companies have, their S.O.S. signals. The adjutant says they have, and murmurs something about 'they won't want any bally S O.S.' Time again, two minutes to go. I tremble a little, and look unconcerned. A commotion outside; for the first time the C.O. gives vent to his feelings. 'Let the runner in there; stand clear. What is it, sonny?' A message, sir,' says a bright kid of 17. 'How's things?' says the high officer. 'Good' says the kid. "What time's the balloon go up?' 'Just about on - gee, I must get back before they send those woolly bears (big shrapnel) over. Away he scurries with the answer. Great lads, these. "I think she'll go alright,' says the colonel. Bet your life,' says the adjutant. Nerves are at concert pitch now, and ears listening for that which will not need ears, and will make the dug-out, such as it is, like a ship in a rough sea. Booms and crash! like a row of houses to the rear, and crash! like a row of houses falling. The ball opens, the lads are over the bags. Let's hope they don't rush it and get into our own barrage. The tension is slackened; the show is now in the "diggers" hands, with platoon

commanders to guide them. We sit tight for about ten minutes, a fearful din going on. At such a time one thinks how absurd the whole war is. The field guns send their shells whizzing over the roof, almost touching it, like rain, and they burst with a clatter on the other side of the hollow. They don't worry us much - a few feet of earth stops them. The howitzers concern us more; they land with a 'crump' on the road, and all round us. The C.O. can't get through to the left half battalion, The linesmen have to go out in that hell, trace the wire, and fix it up. They don't have to be sent; it is their job; and with no band playing. They're off before the colonel has finished swearing and doing the semaphore act with the 'phone. Seven hundred yards they had to go. I reckoned on hearing something within 25 minutes. Squatting at the door I saw a figure in the dim light, head down, half running. Ah! news. I slipped back to my position, and scanned the C.O.'s face as he read. Nobody spoke; the runner stood by panting, sweating, waiting to answer the questions we were going to ply him with. 'The right company in position and digging in. Casualties very slight. Prisoners 40 as yet,' read the C.O. 'Who was hit?' 'Did they fight?' 'What was the barrage like?' The kid did his best to answer all, but said what was uppermost in his mind: 'Any amount of souvenirs.' The colonel broke in and asked a few curt questions, and 'Tell Captain ----- to connect with his flanks, and see about S.A.A. and bombs.' 'Right sir,' and away he went, the C.O. quite satisfied that his message would get home. The left had higher ground opposed to them, and more opposition was expected there.

We had distinguished the slow, sharp crack of the German No. 9 up to 15 minutes past zero. So we expected trouble on the left. A Hun gunner had held out to the last, and had to be bombed out. I returned to the door, despatched a message, and waited, not long. At about 10.30 about a dozen figures came scurrying out of the trench, and made for the rear. Their helmets gave them away as Huns, and I hopped out and yelled. They looked at me and hesitated. I beckoned them to me, and they came crowding around, hands in the air and down on their knees. They were a scraggy lot. Getting what information we could we packed them off. This crowd had come without escort, rushing to our lines immediately the barrage fell. After that many more came in, some wounded. We utilised them to carry our own chaps away. We had few casualties. The show was a complete success. Consolidation and many things had to be done in the usual routine. If I were not lazy, and tea not ready, I could carry on with this war talk, because there is little else to talk about." - from the Queenslander 02 Nov 1918 (nla.gov.au)

# PRIVATE ERNEST LYTTON JOHNSTONE

Service Number: 3064

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

42nd Bn.

Date of Death

Died 18 April 1918

Buried or commemorated at

I. B. 13.

France

•Country of Service Australian

•Additional Info Son of Osborne and Eliza Ann Johnstone, of Erewood, Oman-ama, via Warwick, Queensland.

•Personal Inscription

THOUGH LOST TO SIGHT TO MEMORY DEAR BY HIS LOVING MOTHER



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

PO3435.002 Studio

portrait of two Australian soldiers. Known to be in this photograph is 3064 Private (Pte) Ernest Lytton Johnstone, B Company, 7th Reinforcements, 42nd Battalion, from Inglewood, Qld. Pte Johnstone enlisted on 2 November 1916; he died of wounds (DOW) on 18 April 1918 and is buried in Vignacourt British Cemetery, France. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C963452>

2 Nov 1916: Enlisted AIF WW1, Private, SN 3064, Longreach, Queensland

7 Feb 1917: Involvement AIF WW1, Private, SN 3064, 42nd Infantry Battalion,  
Enlistment/Embarkation WW1

7 Feb 1917: Embarked AIF WW1, Private, SN 3064, 42nd Infantry Battalion, HMAT  
Wiltshire, Sydney

4 Oct 1917: Involvement AIF WW1, Private, SN 3064, 42nd Infantry Battalion,  
Broodseinde Ridge

16 Apr 1918: Wounded AIF WW1, Private, SN 3064, 42nd Infantry Battalion,  
German Spring Offensive 1918, GSW (abdomen)

# LIEUTENANT WILLIAM CHARTERIS McCULLOUGH

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

25th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 11 August 1918

Age 23 years old

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

VI. A. 1.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of John and Janet Gillespie McCullough, of Guildford St., Kelvin Grove, Brisbane. Native of Kelvin Grove, Brisbane.

•Personal InscriptionWE LOVED THEE WELL GOD LOVED THEE BEST.

30 Jul 1916: Enlisted AIF WW1, Second Lieutenant, SN Officer, Brisbane, Queensland

21 Oct 1916: Involvement AIF WW1, Second Lieutenant, 25th Infantry Battalion, Enlistment/Embarkation WW1

21 Oct 1916: Embarked AIF WW1, Second Lieutenant, 25th Infantry Battalion, HMAT Boonah, Brisbane

4 May 1917: Wounded AIF WW1, Second Lieutenant, SN Officer, 25th Infantry Battalion, Bullecourt (Second), GSW (right leg)

15 May 1917: Promoted AIF WW1, Lieutenant, 25th Infantry Battalion

20 Sep 1917:Wounded AIF WW1, Lieutenant, SN Officer, 25th Infantry Battalion,  
Menin Road, GSW (right hand)

10 Aug 1918:Wounded AIF WW1, Lieutenant, SN Officer, 25th Infantry Battalion,  
The Battle of Amiens, GSW (severe chest)

11 Aug 1918:Involvement AIF WW1, Lieutenant, 25th Infantry Battalion





## PRIVATE JAMES McCORMACK

Service Number: 10692

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

31st Bn.

Date of Death

Died 07 June 1918

Age 33 years old

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

III. D. 15.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of Julia and the late Owen McCormack, of Given Terrace, Paddington, Queensland. Native of Brisbane.

•Personal InscriptionHAVE MERCY UPON HIM LORD AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM

From Kieran McCarthy

Wild Colonial Boys

1069A Pvt James McCormack

240 Pvt Patrick Kelly

Labourers James "Sandy" McCormack (b. Co. Sligo 1883) & Patrick "Paddy" Kelly (b. Ipswich Q 1886) enlisted in Brisbane on 20.7.1915. Both were single men. They were allocated to 31st Bn, & served together in 3 Platoon A Coy until 1918. They would fight at Fromelles one year to the day they said goodbye to their mothers, at Given Terrace and Great George Street.

Before Fromelles, though, the mates saw plenty of other action, both going AWL almost on arrival in Egypt in February 1916, & being charged for drunkenness on

post in April. There were other infractions Sandy's part, insubordination being but one.

The 31st went into the AIF's first major action in France suffering 567 casualties (over half its strength) in 12 hours. Paddy suffered GSW to the chest & legs and was evacuated to the UK. Sandy followed in December 1916, contracting severe bronchitis at the Front during the notorious Somme Winter, but only after going AWL again in November.

The mates clocked up 21 days AWL in England between them before reuniting in a training battalion (the 69th) & going AWL together again for four days in July 1917.

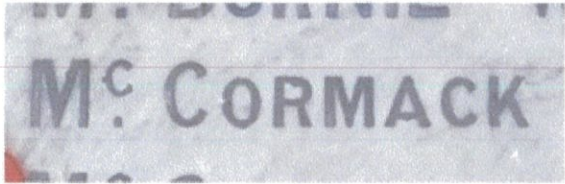
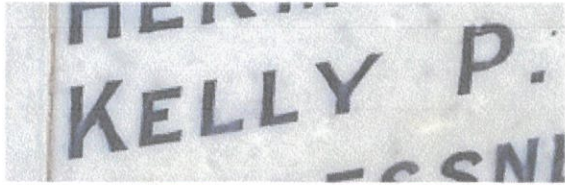
Both returned to the 31st in October were wounded ( GSW arms) during a night patrol on 11.12.17 in No Man's Land near Warneton, Belgium, again returning to England for treatment.

Sandy went AWL in April 1918 before returning to his unit at the end of May, as the 31st was coming out of the line after a record 53 days near Villers-Bretonneux. While in camp at Rivery, Sandy broke bounds for the last time on 5 June 1918.

Paddy, who at the time was AWL himself in England, later wrote to Mrs McCormack to say her son had been shot dead by a French soldier, while Sandy was sticking up for an American in a fight. Other versions of the story abounded. An Enquiry found that McCormack & two other 31st men had been on a drinking spree in a village called Argoeuvres, near Amiens, trashed an estaminet & forced entry to a house, where McCormack was wounded by an occupant with a shotgun, succumbing to his wounds after two days. 1069A Pvt James McCormack, late of Given Tce, Paddington Q is buried at Vignacourt British Cemetery III.D.15. His epitaph reads: "Have Mercy upon him Lord May Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him".

Paddy Kelly returned to the unit a month after his mate's demise & was killed on 29.8.1918 by shellfire on the approach to Peronne & Mont St Quentin. 240 Pvt Patrick Kelly, late of Great George St, Paddington Q is buried in Assevillers New British Cemetery II.E.2. His grave bears no epitaph.

Never to play the wild rovers no more



Service Numbers: 1069A, 1069

Enlisted: 20 July 1915

Last Rank: Private

Last Unit: 31st Infantry Battalion

Born: Sligo, Ireland, February 1883

Home Town: Paddington, Brisbane, Queensland

Schooling: Petrie Terrace State School, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Occupation: Labourer

Died: Accidental, 61st Casualty Clearing Station, France, Argoeuves, Amiens, Picardie, France, 7 June 1918

Cemetery: Vignacourt British Cemetery

Plot III, Row D, Grave No. 15, Vignacourt British Cemetery, Vignacourt, Picardie, France

## PRIVATE ROY WESTGARTH MacARTHUR

Service Number: 6841

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

25th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 12 June 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

III. C. 11.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional Info Son of Peter and Annie MacArthur, of Mackay, Queensland. Native of Innisfail, North Queensland



Service Number: 6841

Enlisted: Not yet discovered

Last Rank: Private

Last Unit: 25th Infantry Battalion

Born: Not yet discovered

Home Town: Mackay, Mackay, Queensland

Schooling: Not yet discovered

Occupation: Not yet discovered

Died: Died of wounds, France, 12 June 1918, age not yet discovered

Cemetery: *Vignacourt British Cemetery*

Vignacourt British Cemetery, Vignacourt, Picardie, France

# PRIVATE CHARLES HENRY LOCKE

Service Number: 5622

Regiment & Unit/Ship

Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

26th Bn.

Date of Death

Died 30 May 1918

Buried or commemorated at

VIGNACOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

III. B. 5.

France

•Country of ServiceAustralian

•Additional InfoSon of George and Annie Locke, of Dragon St., Warwick, Queensland.

•Personal InscriptionHE SLEEPS NOT IN HIS NATIVE LAND BUT FAR FROM THOSE WHO LOVED HIM



Service Number: 5622

Enlisted: 9 May 1916, Brisbane, Queensland

Last Rank: Private

Last Unit: 26th Infantry Battalion

Born: Warwick, Queensland, 5 June 1897

Home Town: Warwick, Southern Downs, Queensland

Schooling: Warwick State School

Occupation: Process engraver

Died: Died of wounds, France, 30 May 1918, aged 20 years