

**Catholic Churchyard, Mitchelstown,  
County Cork, Republic of Ireland**

**War Grave**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**4069 PRIVATE**

**J. J. CAHILL**

**23RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**17TH JUNE, 1917**

## John Joseph CAHILL

John Joseph Cahill was born at Ballarat, Victoria in late 1887 to parents John Joseph & Amelia Cahill (nee Anderson).

Amelia Cahill, mother of John Joseph Cahill, died on 17th April, 1889 at Ballarat, Victoria.

John Joseph Cahill, father of John Joseph Cahill, died on 13th February, 1894 at Ballarat, Victoria.

John Joseph Cahill attended Christian Brothers for his education.

John Joseph Cahill was a 27 year old, single, Butcher from Walker Street, Ballarat, Victoria (same address as sister – Miss Queenie Cahill) when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 8th July, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4069 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his Aunt – Mrs Julia Roberts, 32 Hopetoun Street, Ballarat, Victoria.

Private John Joseph Cahill was posted to “F” Company 4th Depot Battalion on 8th September, 1914 for recruit training. He was promoted to Corporal on 21st August, 1915. Corporal Cahill was transferred to “Q” Company, 5th Depot Battalion on 18th January, 1916. He was transferred on 21st January, 1916 to 10th Reinforcements of 23rd Battalion.

Private John Joseph Cahill embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Wiltshire (A18)* on 7th March, 1916 with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 23rd Infantry Battalion, 10th Reinforcements.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private John Joseph Cahill proceeded overseas to France on 5th September, 1916 from 6th Training Battalion.

Private John Joseph Cahill was marched in to 2nd Australian Divisional Base at Etaples, France on 6th September, 1916 from England. He was marched out on 28th October, 1916 to join his Battalion & was taken on strength of 23rd Battalion from 10th Reinforcements in France on 1st November, 1916.

Private John Joseph Cahill was wounded in action in France on 8th November, 1916. He was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance on 9th November, 1916 with shrapnel wounds to scalp. He was transferred to 38th Casualty Clearing Station on 9th November, 1916 then transferred to 7th Ambulance Train. Pte Cahill was admitted to 12th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 10th November, 1916. He was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Aberdonian* on 11th November, 1916.

### War Diary – 23rd Battalion

*7th November, 1916 – Factory Corner, north of Flers:*

*B Company took over line from A Coy 21st Bn – 2 Officers & 60 men supplied on forward communication trench to complete same. Rest of line taken over from 21st Bn at p.m. Casualties 1 Killed 18 wounded Strength – 34 Officers 783 ORs.*

*8th November, 1916 – Front Trenches:*

*Line heavily shelled at night. “A” Company relieved “C” Company on left flank at 6.30 p.m. Part of “C” Coy moved to Carlton Camp; remainder at Flers trench. Casualties 7 Killed 17 wounded. Strength 34 Officers 755 ORs*

(Extract of War Diary for 23rd Battalion from The Australian War Memorial)

Private John Joseph Cahill was admitted to Reading War Hospital, England on 13th November, 1916 with a scalp wound in occipital region which was received on 8th November, 1916. No fracture was evident. He was discharged on 6th December, 1916 & transferred to No. 2 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Southall with gunshot wounds to head. He was discharged on 9th December, 1916 to furlo & was then to report to Perham Downs.

Private John Joseph Cahill was written up for being Absent without leave from No. 1 Command Depot, Perham Downs, Wiltshire from 3.30 pm on 31st December, 1916 till 4 pm on 3rd January, 1917. He was awarded 4 days F.P. (Field Punishment) No. 2.

Private John Joseph Cahill proceeded overseas to France on *Princess Clementine* via Folkestone on 16th January, 1917 from Infantry Draft Depot.

Private John Joseph Cahill was marched in 2nd Australian Divisional Base at Etaples, France on 17th January, 1917 & marched out to join his Unit on 18th January, 1917. Pte Cahill rejoined his Unit in France on 20th January, 1917 from wounded.

Private John Joseph Cahill was wounded in action in France (2nd occasion) on 20th March, 1917. He was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance on 21st March, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right thigh. He was then transferred to 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 21st March, 1917 & transferred to No. 29 Ambulance Train on 23rd March, 1917. Pte Cahill was admitted to 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen, France on 23rd March, 1917. He was invalided from Havre to England on Hospital Ship *Lanfranc* on 17th April, 1917.

#### War Diary – 23rd Battalion

*20th March, 1917 – Van Guard:*

*Orders to advance at 3 am & occupy NOREUIL in conjunction with 21 Bn. & establish posts at C . 11 Central & 17 Central. Enemy held position strongly owing to heavy casualties & after repealed attack established line MARICOURT WOOD to Road I 21 A 8. 4 Casualties 2 Off 115 OR (6 Killed 77 Wounded 2 sick 30 Missing). Relieved by 26th Bn 6.30 pm. In Bdge Reserve. Strength 34 Off 759 ORs.*

(Extract of War Diary for 23rd Battalion from The Australian War Memorial)

Miss Q. Cahill, Walker Street, Ballarat, Victoria, sister of the late Private John Joseph Cahill wrote to Base Records in May, 1917 stating she had received a letter from her brother telling her he had left her as next-of- kin & wondered why his Aunt received word that he was wounded. Miss Cahill states that her brother was writing to the Defence Department about it.

Pte J. J. Cahill wrote to Base Records on 13th March, 1917 from “somewhere in France” stating “*There seems to be some mistake in your books with my next of kin. You have it as Mrs W. Roberts 32 Hopeton St, Ballarat E. Vic. I now wish to be Miss Q. Cahill, Walker St. Ballarat North, Vic. Trusting you will see that change is made. Yours Respectfully J. J. Cahill, 4069, 23rd Batt, 6th Inf. Brigade.*” Base Records replied to Pte J. J. Cahill, on 16th May, 1917, advising him that the records had been altered to show his sister, Miss Q. Cahill, being nominated as next-of- kin.

Private John Joseph Cahill was admitted to Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, England on 18th April, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right thigh. The Admission to Hospital form records: “*Wounded 20.3.17 near Arras by bullet. Ops 26.3.17 & 23.4.17 for Drainage of wound. There is an incomplete fracture of the posterior surface of the shaft of the femur.*”

A Medical Report was completed on Private John Joseph Cahill on 28th April, 1917 at Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, England. Pte Cahill’s disability was reported as Gunshot wounds to right thigh (& Incomplete fracture of Femur) which had occurred on 20th March, 1917 near Arras, France while on active service. He had been wounded in right thigh by a bullet & had been operated on at Rouen, France on 26th March, 1917 for removal of the bullet & operated again at Netley on 23rd April, 1917 for drainage of the wound. The Medical Board had decided on 3rd May, 1917 that Pte John Joseph Cahill should be discharged as permanently unfit.

Miss Q. Cahill was advised on 17th June, 1917 that Corporal John Cahill was now dangerously ill.

Private John Joseph Cahill died on 17th June, 1917 at Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, England from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wound to right thigh. His next-of-kin – Mr I. Cahill, (Uncle), Mitchelstown, County Cork, Ireland was present at the death.

A death for John J. Cahill, aged 29, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of South Stoneham, Hampshire, England.

The body of Private John Joseph Cahill was sent to Mitchelstown, County Cork, Ireland for interment by his relatives. Private John Joseph Cahill was buried on 20th June, 1917 in Mitchelstown Catholic Churchyard, County Cork, Republic of Ireland (South-west of church) in a Private Family Grave. Private John Joseph Cahill is included on a Private Headstone but his death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Ellen Cahill, of Walker Street, Ballarat North, stepmother of the late Private John Joseph Cahill, was granted a War Pension in the sum of 30/ per fortnight from 30th August, 1917.

Base Records contacted Miss Q. Cahill, Walker Street, Ballarat, Victoria in November, 1921 asking if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc. Queenie Cahill, sister of the late Private John Joseph Cahill, advised Base Records that she was the only blood relation.

Private John Joseph Cahill was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Cahill's sister – Miss Queenie Cahill, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922). The personal effects of the late Private John Joseph Cahill were still sent to his previous next-of-kin – his Aunt – Mrs Julia Roberts, 32 Hopetoun St., Ballarat, Victoria, even though the records had been altered in May, 1917, to show Miss Queenie Cahill as the next-of-kin.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private J. J. Cahill – service number 4069, of 23rd Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private J. J. Cahill is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 98.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

J. J. Cahill is remembered on the Ballarat Memorial Wall & Rotunda located at Sturt Street and Learmonth Avenue, Ballarat, Victoria.



**Ballarat Memorial Wall & Rotunda** (Photo from Carol's Headstone Photos)

J. J. Cahill is also remembered on the Ballarat Avenue of Honour (1917-1919) where almost 4,000 trees were planted to represent the number of men and women from the Ballarat district who served in World War 1. The trees were planted at intervals of 12 metres along 22 kms of the Ballarat-Burrenbeet Road. The Ballarat Avenue of Honour is famous for being the first avenue of its kind in Australia. Tree number 842.



**The Arch of Victory was built as an entrance to the Avenue of Honour** (Photo from Monument Australia)



**Ballarat Avenue of Honour** (Photo from Victorian War Heritage Inventory)

(85 pages of Pte John Joseph Cahill's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR**

#### **BALLARAT AND DISTRICT MEN**

##### **PRIVATE J. J. CAHILL**

Miss Q. Cahill, of Walker street, Ballarat North has been notified by the Defence Department that her brother, Pte J. J. Cahill, of the 23rd Battalion, has been admitted to the Reading War Hospital, suffering from mild gunshot wound to the head.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 19 December, 1916)*

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### **ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR**

#### **BALLARAT AND DISTRICT MEN**

##### **CORPORAL J. J. CAHILL**

Mrs Roberts, of Hopetoun street, has been advised by the Defence Department that her nephew, Cpl. J. J. Cahill, was admitted to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, England, suffering from fractured thigh. This is the second time that he has been wounded.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 4 May, 1917)*

## **ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR**

### **BALLARAT AND DISTRICT MEN**

#### **PRIVATE J. J. CAHILL**

Miss Queenie Cahill, of Walker street, Ballarat North, has received information from the Base Records Hospital that her brother, John J. Cahill, is dangerously ill. He has been reported wounded on two occasions.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 19 June, 1917) & (The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 20 June, 1917)*

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## **ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR**

### **BALLARAT AND DISTRICT MEN**

#### **CORPORAL J. J. CAHILL**

The Rev. Father Reidy conveyed the sad news to the relatives of Cpl. J. J. Cahill of his death, which occurred on the 17th June at the Royal Victoria Hospital, England. He died of wounds received on 13th March. Cpl. Cahill had been an active service for 16 months. Prior to enlisting he was employed in Melbourne. He was a general favourite with all.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 23 June, 1917)*

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## **DEATHS**

CAHILL – On the 17th June, at the Royal Victoria Hospital, England, Corporal John Joseph Cahill, the beloved only son of the late J. J. and A. Cahill, loving brother of Queenie and the late Nellie, step-son of Nellie Cahill, Walker street, Ballarat North; aged 29 years. R.I.P.

*(The Ballarat Courier, Victoria – 23 June, 1917)*

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## **AUSTRALIA'S HEROES**

### **316th CASUALTY LIST**

#### **BALLARAT AND DISTRICT**

##### **DIED OF WOUNDS**

Cpl. J. J. Cahill, Ballarat (previously reported wounded, second occasion).

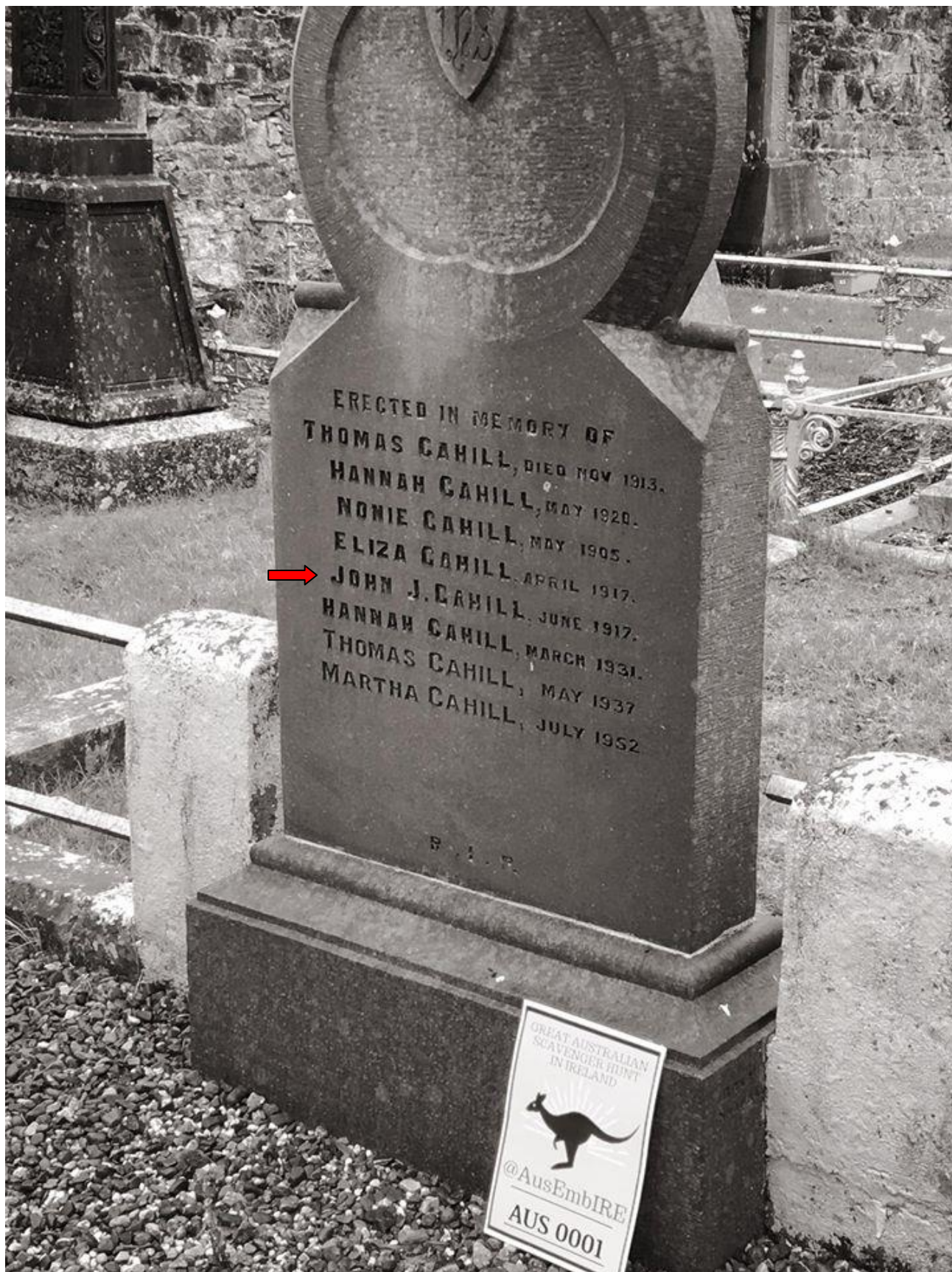
*(The Ballarat Star, Victoria – 28 June, 1917)*

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**Mitchelstown Catholic Churchyard, County Cork, Republic of Ireland**

Mitchelstown Catholic Churchyard, County Cork, contains only one Commonwealth War Graves Commission burial.

Private John Joseph Cahill's name on the Family Headstone in Mitchelstown Catholic Churchyard, County Cork.



*(Photo courtesy Australian Embassy, Ireland)*



Private John Joseph Cahill is buried in plot 33 with the following family members.

I.H.S.

Erected in Memory of

Thomas Cahill Died Nov. 1913

Hannah Cahill May 1920

Nonie Cahill May 1905

Eliza Cahill, April, 1917

**John J. Cahill, June 1917**

Hannah Cahill, March 1931

Thomas Cahill, May 1937

Martha Cahill, July 1952

R.I.P.

