

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



144 PRIVATE

NICHOLAS WILSON CLARKE

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

7TH JUNE, 1918 Age 25

Willie

Beloved Son Of

N.W. AND B.T. Clarke

Nicholas Wilson (Willie) CLARKE

Nicholas Wilson Clarke was born at Rockhampton, Queensland on 11th June, 1893 to parents Nicholas Wilson Clarke & Bridget Teresa Clarke (nee Costello) (Name is listed as Nicholas Nilson Clarke on Queensland BDM's website)

Nicholas Wilson Clarke was educated at Christian Brothers, Queensland.

Nicholas Wilson Clarke was a 22 year old, single, Tinsmith (listed as Warehouse employee in information supplied by his mother for the Roll of Honour) from Hargrave Road, West End, South Brisbane, Queensland when he enlisted in Brisbane, Queensland on 29th November, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 144 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Bridget Theresa Clarke, Hargrave Road, West End, South Brisbane, Queensland.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was posted to 10th Depot Battalion on 29th November, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 35th S. Battalion on 22nd January, 1916 then transferred on 22nd February, 1916 to 41st S. Battalion.

Lance Corporal (rank as per Embarkation Roll) Nicholas Wilson Clarke embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Demosthenes* (A64) on 18th May, 1916 with the 11th Infantry Brigade, 41st Infantry Battalion "A" Company & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 20th July, 1916.

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 Nicholas Wilson Clarke was promoted to Lance Corporal on 29th August, 1916 while posted at Camp No. 24, Larkhill, Wiltshire, England.

Lance Corporal Nicholas Wilson Clarke was written up for "*conduct to the prejudice of good order & military discipline in that he used insolent language to his superior officer*" on 1st November, 1916. He was deprived of his Lance Corporal stripes by Commanding Officer of 41st Battalion on 7th November, 1916.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 24th November, 1916.

[There is no record in his Service Record file of his whereabouts between 25th November, 1916 & 7th April, 1917.]

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was sent to 3rd Divisional School from his Unit on 8th April, 1917 & rejoined his Unit on 15th April, 1917.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was sent to a Signalling Course on 15th May, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 28th May, 1917.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke reported sick on 2nd August, 1917. He was admitted to 9th Australian Field Ambulance on 2nd August, 1917 with Influenza & transferred the same day to 3rd D.R.S. (Divisional Rest Station). Private Clarke was transferred & admitted to 56th General Hospital at Etaples, France on 5th August, 1917. He was marked for transfer to England on 9th August, 1917 & embarked on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerp* on 10th August, 1917 for England.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was admitted to 2nd Birmingham War Hospital, Northfield, England on 10th August, 1917 with Influenza. He was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, Kent, England on 14th September, 1917 & discharged to Depot at Weymouth on 19th September, 1917.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth, Dorset on 19th September, 1917. He was marched out from No. 2 Command Depot, Weymouth on 22nd September, 1917 & was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 23rd September, 1917. Private Clarke was medically classified on 23rd September, 1917 as B1 A1 (fit for light duty for 4 weeks). He was medically classified on 28th September, 1917 as B1 A2 (fit for overseas training camp in 3 – 4 weeks) while at Hurdcott. Private Clarke was medical classified on 4th October, 1917 as B1 A3 (fit for overseas training camp in 2 – 3 weeks) while posted at Hurdcott.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 30th October, 1917 from Hurdcott.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Fovant, Wiltshire on 28th November, 1917 from Longbridge Deverill. He was On Command at Group Signalling School at Fovant from 1st December, 1917.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was A.W.L. (Absent without Leave) from 24.00 on 5th March, 1918 till 22.00 on 8th March, 1918. He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment No.2 & a total forfeiture of 10 days' pay.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was marched in to 9th Training Battalion on 27th March, 1918 from 3rd Divisional Signalling School.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 31st March, 1918 from 9th Training Battalion at Fovant. He was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Rouelles, France on 1st April, 1918 then marched out to Front on 5th April, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion in the Field on 19th April, 1918.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was wounded in action (Gas) on 26th May, 1918. He was admitted to 10th Australian Field Ambulance on 26th May, 1918 (being Gassed was classed as Wounded) then was admitted to 12th Casualty Clearing Station the same day – G.S.P. Private Clarke was transferred & admitted to 1st General Hospital at Etretat, France on 2nd June, 1918. He was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Essequibo* on 4th June, 1918.

41st Battalion

The 41st Battalion was raised at Bell's Paddock Camp in Brisbane in February 1916 with recruits from Brisbane, northern Queensland and the northern rivers district of New South Wales. It formed part of the 11th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division.

After training in Australia and Britain, the 41st Battalion arrived in France on 25 November 1916. It entered the front line for the first time on Christmas Eve and spent the bleak winter of 1916-17 alternating between service in the front line, and training and labouring in the rear areas.

Compared to some AIF battalions, the 41st's experience of the battles in Belgium during 1917 was relatively straightforward. It had a supporting role at Messines on 7 June, captured its objectives at Broodseinde on 4 October with little difficulty, and was spared the carnage of Passchendaele on 12 October. It was some of the battalion's more "routine" tasks that proved its most trying experiences. At the end of June 1917, the 11th Brigade was ordered to establish a new front line west of Warneton, in full view of the Germans. Work carried on night and day under heavy shellfire and the period became known to the battalion as "the 18 days". The start of August found the 41st holding ground captured by two of its sister battalions in a feint attack on 31 July. Enduring continual rain, flooded trenches and heavy shelling many of the battalion's platoons dwindled from 35 men to less than ten.

Belgium remained the focus of the 41st Battalion's activities for the five months after its action in October 1917 as it was rotated between service in the rear areas and the front line. When the German Army launched its last great offensive in March 1918, the battalion was rushed south to France and played a role in blunting the drive towards the vital railway junction of Amiens.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 41st Battalion

Villers Bretonneux – 26th May, 1918 (written in War Diary as "26-5-17")

At daylight our planes were very active over the enemy lines. The shelling during the day was more severe, especially in the village. A fair amount of the shelling was gas.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was admitted to V.A.D. Hospital, Tottenhall, (affiliated to Edmonton) on 5th June, 1918 having been gassed & was dangerously ill.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke died at 5.55 pm on 7th June, 1918 at Tottenhall V.A.D. Hospital, Palmers Green, N. (affiliated to Edmonton General Military Hospital), London, England from Pneumonia following Gas Poisoning. (Note: The Report of Death of a Soldier – (Army form B 2090) & Morning State of Sick form recorded his rank as Signaller.)

A death for Nicholas W. Clarke, aged 25, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Edmonton, Middlesex, England.

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was buried at 1.30 pm on 11th June, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 181,118.

From the burial report of Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party being supplied by Headquarters, A.I.F. London, and Bearers by A.I.F. on leave from France. The service was conducted by Chaplain the Rev. C. Murphy, R.C. A.I.F. London. The "Last Post" was sounded by a Bugler of the A.I.F. No relatives were present at the funeral. An oak cross has been erected by the A.I.F. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mr Clarke, Hargreave Road, West End, Brisbane, Queensland on 25th May, 1923 stating that the site of his son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row D Grave 23. *"While the actual place of burial remains unchanged, the grave number has been altered to conform with the general layout of this Cemetery."*

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. D. 23. Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

According to information provided by his mother for the Roll of Honour - Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was the *"Holder of Corporal, Grenadier and First Signaller's certificates. Born 11th June 1893, buried 11th June 1918 just 25 years intervening."*

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke requested in his Will dated 30th March, 1918, taken from his Pay Book, that in the event of his death he wished for all his property & belongings to be handed over to his mother – Bridget Theresa Clarke, Hardgrave Road, West End, Brisbane, Queensland.

Bridget T. Clarke, mother of the late Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke, wrote to Base Records on 29th June, 1918 requesting a death certificate for her son. The certificate was required for presentation to Lodge.

Base Records replied to Mrs B. T. Clarke on 8th August, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of the death of her son the late No. 144 Private N. W. Clarke, 41st Battalion.

The Resident Secretary, of The Australian Metropolitan Life Assurance Company List, Brisbane, wrote to The Secretary, Defence Department on 19th June, 1918, with regards to No. 144 Signaller Nicholas Wilson Clarke, requesting *"certified extracts from the Official Dispatches of the General Officer Commanding, and from the Unit Orders, which have reference to the death of the abovenamed, and thus facilitate the completion of the papers in connection with a claim which has arisen under a policy issued by this Company."*

Base Records replied to The Resident Secretary on 8th August, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of the death of the late No. 144 Private N. W. Clarke, 41st Battalion.

Base Records contacted Mrs B. T. Clarke, Hargreave Road, West End, Brisbane, Queensland, on 16th January, 1922 stating she was registered as the next-of-kin of the late No. 144 Private N. W. Clarke, 41st Battalion, but were enquiring if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & in particular asked if his father was still alive 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.

Base Records wrote to District Finance Officer, 1st Military District on 13th November, 1922 asking "*I shall be much obliged if you will let me know to whom the War Gratuity of the late No. 144 Private N. W. Clarke, 41st Battalion, was paid, and also whether your records disclose a good and sufficient reason as to why the claims of the father, if he still survives, should be ignored in the disposal of the War Medals, etc.*"

A reply was received stating "*The War Gratuity was paid to the mother, Mrs Bridget Teresa Clarke, of Hardgrave Rd, West End, Brisbane, with the consent of the Father. There appears to be no reason why the claims of the father should be ignored in the disposal of the medals.*"

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Clarke's father – Mr Clarke, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent January, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke – service number 144, aged 25, of 41st Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Nicholas Wilson Clarke & Bridget Teresa Clarke, of Hardgrave Rd., West End, South Brisbane.

Private N. W. Clarke is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 133.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

N. W. Clarke is remembered on the Honour Board located inside the entrance to Kurilpa Library, Brisbane, Queensland.



Kurilpa Library & War Memorial Clock (Photos from Queensland War Memorial Register)

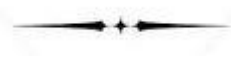


(65 pages of Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



(Queenslander Pictorial – 5 August, 1916)



Newspaper Notices

Personal Notes

Mrs N. W. Clarke, Hardgrave road, West End, has just received news that her son, Signaller N. W. Clarke, died at Edmonton Hospital, England, on the 7th June, 1918.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 13 June, 1918) & (*The Week*, Brisbane, Queensland – 21 June, 1918) &

PERSONAL NOTES

Mrs N. W. Clarke, Hardgrave-road, West End, has received news that her son, Signaller N. W. Clarke, died at Edmonton Hospital, England, on June 7.

(*The Brisbane Courier*, Queensland – 13 June, 1918) & (*Cairns Post*, Queensland – 19 June, 1918) &

(*The Queenslander*, Brisbane, Queensland – 22 June, 1918)

Mrs N. W. Clarke, Hardgrave-road, West End, has just received news that her son, Signaller N. W. Clarke, died at Edmonton Hospital, England, on June 7, 1918.

(*Daily Standard*, Brisbane, Queensland – 13 June, 1918)



SOME QUEENSLANDERS "ON THE OTHER SIDE."

Front row : B. Wallace (Brisbane), J. Labett (Warwick), G. Maybe (Townsville), C. H. Holbeck (Brisbane), C. Carr (Mackay).
Second row : A. Woodruff (Brisbane), G. Walters (Brisbane), E. Giddens (Yachra).
Back row : J. Broom (Brisbane), N. W. Clarke (Brisbane).

(*The Queenslander*, Brisbane, Queensland – 6 July, 1918)

LIST No. 413

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

Nicholas Wilson Clarke, West End, 7/6/18 (illness, result of wounds, prev, rep. died, cause not stated)

(*The Queenslander*, Brisbane, Queensland – 6 July, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

CLARKE – In loving Memory of Signaller Nicholas Wilson (Willie) Clarke, A. Comp., 41st Battalion, gassed at Villers-Bretonneux, died at Edmonton V.A.D. Hospital, England, on 7th June, 1918.

Immaculate heart of Mary,

Thy mercy we extol,

May the sacred heart of Jesus

Have mercy on his soul.

Inserted by his mother, father, brothers and sister.

(*Daily Standard*, Brisbane, Queensland – 7 June, 1919)

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(*The Brisbane Courier*, Queensland – 7 June, 1919) & (*The Daily Mail*, Brisbane, Queensland – 7 June, 1919)

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Immaculate heart of Mary, thy mercy we extol,

May the sacred heart of Jesus have mercy on his soul.

Inserted by his mother, father, brothers and sister.

CLARKE – In loving remembrance of our dear friend, Signaller N. W. Clarke, 41st Battalion, who died, 7th June, 1918.

His duty nobly done.

Never forgotten by his loving friends, F. and N. Honey.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 7 June, 1919) & (*The Week*, Brisbane, Queensland – 13 June, 1919)

**Notices were also placed in 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932 & 1933

Nicholas Wilson Clarke is remembered on his parents' headstone on South Brisbane (Dutton Park) Cemetery, Annerley Road, Brisbane, Queensland.



South Brisbane (Dutton Park) Cemetery (Photo from Billion Graves)



(Headstone photos in South Brisbane (Dutton Park) Cemetery from Billion Graves)





Also Their Sons

JOHN SYDNEY LESLIE (SID)

Died 28th Oct 1933. Aged 36 Years

& NICHOLAS WILSON (WILLIE)

Killed In Action 7th June 1918 – Aged 25 Years

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Willie

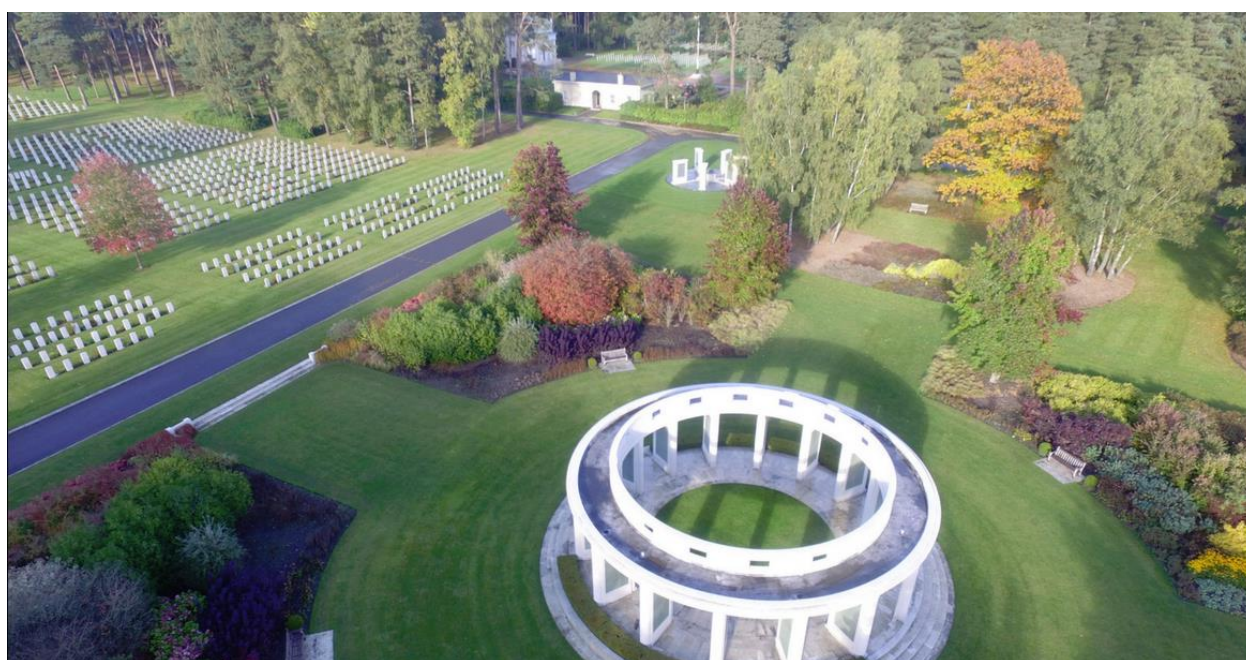
Beloved Son Of N. W. And B. T. Clarke

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



Brookwood Military Cemetery *(Photo from CWGC)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private Nicholas Wilson Clarke's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

