

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6955 PRIVATE

J. CLINCH

15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

15TH JULY, 1919 Age 37

James CLINCH

James Joseph Clinch was born at Enniscorthy, County Wexford, Ireland in 1882 to parents Patrick & Anastasia Clinch (nee Handrick)

James Clinch attended National School, Ireland.

The 1901 Ireland Census recorded James Clinch as a 19 year old Farmer's Son living with his family at Ballusk Rossard, Wexford, Ireland. His parents were listed as Patrick Clinch (Farmer, aged 68, born Co. Wexford) & Annastasia Clinch (aged 57, born Co. Wexford). James was one of four children listed on this Census (all born Co. Wexford) – Christopher Clinch (Farmer's Son, aged 28), Catherine Clinch (Farmer's daughter, aged 21) then James & Myles Clinch (Farmer's son, aged 14).

Patrick & Anastasia Clinch, parents of James Clinch, both died in 1907 at Wexford, Ireland.

The 1911 Ireland Census recorded James J. Clinch as a 28 year old Stone Mason, living with his brother at 3 Ballylusk, Rossard, Wexford, Ireland. His brother was Christopher Clinch (Farmer, aged 38) who had been married for 2 years to Bridget C. Clinch (aged 33) & their daughter Anastasia Clinch (aged 1). Also listed – Mary Waters (Servant, aged 24) & Johanna Hanely (Boarded out child, aged 13).

According to information provided for the Roll of Honour by his brother – James came to Australia when he was 30 years old.

James Clinch joined Queensland Government Railways on 24th February, 1913. His date of birth was recorded by Queensland Railways as 24th February, 1883.

The 1915, 1917 & 1919 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Lilley, subdivision of Woodford, Queensland recorded James Clinch, Lengthsman, from Kilcoy.

James Clinch was a 34 year old, single, Labourer (with Railways) from Stanley Hotel, Kilcoy, Queensland when he enlisted on 30th September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 6955 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his brother – Mr J. Clinch, 619 Main Street, Kangaroo Point, Queensland.

Private James Clinch was posted to 11th Depot Battalion for recruit training on 30th October, 1916. He was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements of 15th Battalion on 21st November, 1916.

Private James Clinch embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 25th November, 1916 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 15th Infantry Battalion, 23rd Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 1917.

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 James Clinch was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire, England from Australia on 30th January, 1917.

Private James Clinch proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 4th June, 1917 from 4th Training Battalion. He was posted to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) in France on 9th June, 1917. He was marched out from 4th A.D.B.D. on 20th June, 1917 & was taken on strength of 15th Battalion on 23rd June, 1917 from 23rd Reinforcements.

Private James Clinch reported sick on 1st October, 1917. He was admitted to 4th Australian Field Ambulance on 2nd October, 1917 with P.U.O. (pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin) then transferred to 2nd Casualty Clearing Station on the same day. Private Clinch was transferred on 3rd October, 1917 & admitted to 2nd Canadian General Hospital (some forms have 3rd Canadian General Hospital) on 4th October, 1917. He was transferred to England on 18th October, 1917.

Private James Clinch was admitted to War Hospital, Bath, England on 20th October, 1917 with Trench Fever.

Mr John Clinch, 619 Main Street, Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, Queensland, brother of Private James Clinch, was advised by Base Records on 17th November, 1917 that Private J. Clinch had been admitted to Bath War Hospital, England on 20th October, 1917 with Trench Fever.

Private James Clinch was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 5th December, 1917. He was discharged to furlo on 17th December, 1917 & was to report to Hurdcott on 31st December, 1917 from Furlo.

Private James Clinch was marched out from No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 19th January, 1918 & marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire. He proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 14th February, 1918. Private Clinch was marched in to A.I.B. Dep (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 15th February, 1918. He was marched out to his Unit on 17th February, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion on 21st February, 1918.

Private James Clinch was wounded in action on 26th February, 1918. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 27th February then transferred the same day to 2nd Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wound/s to right leg. Private Clinch was transferred on 28th February, 1918 & admitted to 55th General Hospital at Boulogne, France. He embarked for England on 5th March, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Pieter de Conick*.

15th Battalion

The 15th Battalion AIF was raised from late September 1914, six weeks after the outbreak of the First World War. Three-quarters of the battalion were recruited as volunteers from Queensland, and the rest from Tasmania. With the 13th, 14th and 16th Battalions it formed the 4th Brigade, commanded by Colonel John Monash.....

In June 1916 they sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in August 1916. Along with most of the 4th Brigade, the battalion suffered heavy losses at Bullecourt in April 1917 when the brigade attacked strong German positions without the promised tank support. It spent much of the remainder of 1917 in Belgium, advancing to the Hindenburg Line.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 15th Battalion

Hollebeke Area – 26th February, 1918:

Artillery & M.G. fire normal. D. Coy. were relieved by A. Coy, in outpost line and moved into Reserve Line. Relief passed off quietly.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private James Clinch was admitted to Frensham Hill Military Hospital, England on 5th March, 1918 with Shrapnel wound/s to leg. He was transferred to 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford, Kent, England on 25th April, 1918 & discharged to No. 3 Command Depot on 29th April, 1918. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Wounds healed. Can walk with stick, fair power in calf muscles, oedema of ankle. Requires regulated exercise.*"

Mr John Clinch, 619 Main Street, Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, Queensland, brother of Private James Clinch, was advised by Base Records on 9th April, 1918 that Private J. Clinch had been admitted to Frensham Hill Military Hospital, England on 5th March, 1918 suffering from gunshot would leg.

Private James Clinch was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 29th April, 1918 from 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Wound not quite healed. Leg wasted, Limps a good deal.*" As a result he was medically classified as B1B (Unfit for service for over 3 months by less than 6 months). Private Clinch was medically classified as B1 A2 (Unfit for service for 2 or 3 weeks) on 22nd May, 1918 & again on 7th

June, 1918 with the comment "*Fair, improving.*" He was medically classified as B1 A2 on 11th June, 1918 "*Good deal pain in leg on walking. Massage*" & again on 17th June, 1918 "*Still pain.*"

Private James Clinch was transferred to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 25th June, 1918. He was medically classified as B1 A3 (*unfit for service for 1 or 2 weeks*) on 2nd July, 1918

Private Clinch was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 26th August, 1918 from No. 4 Command Depot.

Private James Clinch proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 17th October, 1918 from Overseas Training Brigade. He was marched in to A.I.B (Australian Infantry Base) Depot at Havre, France on 18th October, 1918. & marched out to join his Unit on 19th October, 1918. Private Clinch rejoined 15th Battalion in France on 20th October, 1918.

Private James Clinch was listed for transfer to UK for NME (non-military employment) on 20th March, 1919. He was marched out from Havre, France on 1st April, 1919 & disembarked at Southampton on 2nd April, 1919. Private Clinch reported to No. 1 Training Brigade at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on the same day.

Private James Clinch was approved for Leave for Non-Military Employment from 9th April, 1919 to 9th July, 1919. Reason – Mixed Farming with C. Clinch, Templeshambo, Ferns, Co. Wexford, Ireland. He was issued pay of 6/ per day with Railway Warrants valuing £3.11.2 & was issued with a suit.

Private James Clinch was marched out from 1st Training Brigade at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 8th April, 1919 & was taken on strength of A.I.F. Headquarters, London, England on 9th April, 1919.

Private James Clinch was brought in dead to Endell Street Military Hospital, London, England at 10.40 pm on 15th July, 1919.

A Court of Enquiry found that Private James Clinch had committed suicide whilst temporarily insane. (Note: this is the only reference in the Service Record file of the Court of Enquiry – no other particulars were listed)

Newspaper Item – *Daily Mirror*, London, England – 19th July, 1919:

STRUGGLE ON ROOF

Inquest Story of Insane Man's Dive Into Arena.

After attempting to drown himself in Trafalgar-square, James Clinch, a private in the Australian Imperial Forces, was taken to a military hospital at Warwick-square, S.W.

Though watched, he jumped out of bed, rushed past the sentry and got on the roof of the next house, which forms part of the hospital. Here he was seized by Corporal Wilson and an exciting struggle followed. Ultimately Clinch broke away and dived into the area below. When picked up he was found to be injured about the head and unconscious. He died the same day.

At the inquest yesterday a verdict of Suicide whilst of unsound mind was recorded.

[Note: a similar article appeared in the *Daily Herald*, London on 19th July, 1919 with the following detail included: "*At the inquest yesterday it was stated that Clinch died from a fractured skull. Verdict: "Suicide whilst of unsound mind."*"]

A death for James Clinch, aged 37, was registered in the September quarter, 1919 in the district of St. George Hanover Square, London, England.

Private James Clinch was buried on 22nd July, 1919 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Roman Catholic Section D Grave No. 229.

From the burial report of Private James Clinch - *The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, firing party and bugler from A.I.F. Headquarters being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag. The "Last*

Post” was sounded at the graveside, and the burial service conducted by Major Father Murphy, Australia Military Headquarters, London (Roman Catholic). The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London, who were represented at the funeral.

A slip of paper located in the Service Record file of Private James Clinch shows the following details for the Grave reference - Plot 4 Row K Grave 20. Normally this would have been included in a letter to the next-of-kin to advise that the Cemetery had officially registered the grave location for Private J. Clinch.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. K. 20. Private J. Clinch now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Public Curator’s Office, Brisbane, Queensland, wrote to Base Records on 5th January, 1920 requesting a Certificate of Death for No. 6955 Private James Clinch, 15th Battalion, A.I.F.

Base Records replied to The Public Curator’s Office, Brisbane on 15th January, 1920 enclosing a Certificate of report of death of the late No. 6955 Private J. Clinch, 15th Battalion.

Base Records contacted Mr J. Clinch, 619 Main St., Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, Queensland, on 12th May, 1921 stating he was registered on the records of the late No. 6995 Private J. Clinch, 15th Battalion, but wanted to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than himself & specifically asked if his father and mother were living & did he have any brothers older 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 Headquarters, 1st District Base on 10th August, 1922 which reads: “*When may a reply be expected please to my communication of the 21st April last, which reads:- “On the 12th May last a communication was forwarded to Mr J, Clinch of 619 Main Street, Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, Q’ld, requesting him to advise me if the parents of the late No. 6955 Private James Clinch, 15th Battalion, are still living, if so, to furnish their present address or if they are already deceased the name and address if the eldest surviving brother. As no reply has so far been received I shall be obliged if you will endeavour to obtain the information required and advise me as soon as possible as it is desired to dispose of the War Medals, etc., issuable on account of the abovementioned late soldier’s service. It is suggested that the War Gratuity Section of the D.F.O.’s Office may be able to assist in the matter.”*

The 1st District Base replied to Base Records on 23rd October, 1922 advising that “*the address of the eldest surviving brother, I have to advise that same is as follows:- Mr Christopher Clinch, Bally Busk, Templeshindo Ferris, Co. Wexford, Ireland.”*

Private James Clinch was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Clinch’s eldest brother – Christopher Clinch, Bally Busk, Templeshindo Ferris, County Wexford, Ireland, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque issued in London in January, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private James Clinch – service number 6955, aged 37, of 15th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Patrick & Anastasia Clinch.

Private J. Clinch is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 75.





Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

J. Clinch is remembered on the Kilcoy Honour Roll, located at Kilcoy RSL, Macauley Street, Kilcoy, Queensland.



Kilcoy Honour Roll (left) & Kilcoy War Memorial (right)

(Photos from Monument Australia)

(61 pages of Private James Clinch'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



"J. Chuch" – believed to be "J. Clinch"



(The Queenslander Pictorial, supplement to The Queenslander – 16 Dec 1916)

Newspaper Notices

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

CASUALTY LIST NO. 470

DIED OTHER CAUSES

6955, Pte James Clinch, Kangaroo Point, 15/7/19 (prev. rep. miss), 15th Btn

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 13 August, 1919)

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)

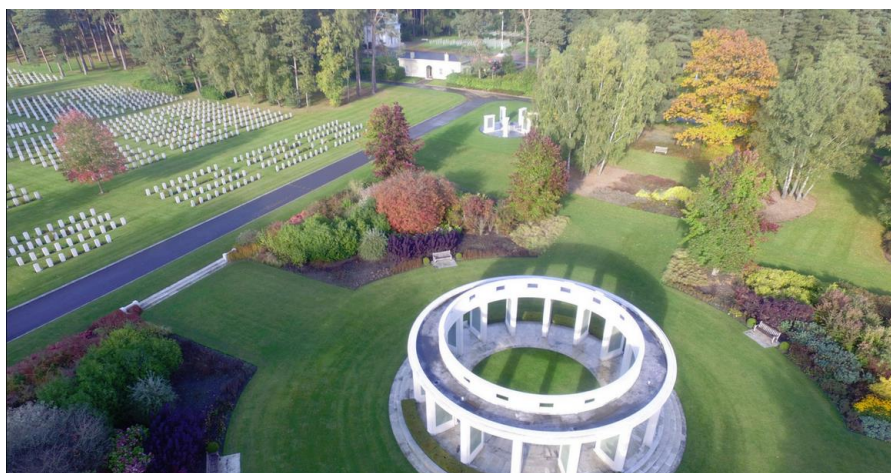
Private J. Clinch does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

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 J. Clinch's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

