

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



7232 PRIVATE

W. B. FILL

15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

4TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 22

William Boyden FILL

William Boyden Fill was born at Clermont, Queensland on 2nd July, 1894 to parents James Boyden Fill and Margaret Fill (nee Howes). (Note the Queensland Births, Deaths & Marriages has recorded the name as William Norman Fill on their online search)

William Boyden Fill attended school at Clermont, Queensland.

William Boyden Fill was a 21 year old, single, Bore Driller from Rockhampton, Queensland when he enlisted at Longreach, Queensland on 10th November, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 7232 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. B. Fill, of Campbell Street, Rockhampton, Queensland.

Private William Boyden Fill was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 17th November, 1916 for recruit training. He was posted to 24th Reinforcements of 15th Battalion on 22nd December, 1916.

Private William Boyden Fill embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Ayrshire* (A33) on 24th January, 1917 with the 15th Infantry Battalion, 24th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 12th April, 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 William Boyden Fill was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire, England from Australia on 12th April, 1917.

Private William Boyden Fill was written up for a Crime while posted at Codford - A.W.L (Absent without leave) from midnight on 24th May, 1917 until 1 pm on 25th May, 1917. He was awarded 2 days Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited 3 days' pay 15/-.

Private William Boyden Fill was written up for a Crime while posted at Codford – A.W.L. (absent without leave) from 2 pm Parade. He was awarded 2 days C.C. (confined to Camp).

Private William Boyden Fill proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 9th July, 1917 from 4th Training Battalion at Codford.

Private William Boyden Fill was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 21st July, 1917 from England.

Private William Boyden Fill was written up for a Crime – out of bounds without a pass on 23rd July, 1917. He forfeited 2 days' pay.

Private William Boyden Fill was marched out from 4th A.D.B.D on 25th July, 1917 & joined 15th Battalion in the Field on 27th July, 1917.

Private William Boyden Fill was sent sick to Hospital on 9th August, 1917. He was admitted to 4th Australian Field Ambulance on 9th August, 1917 with P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin) then transferred to 13th Australian Field Ambulance the same day with Trench Fever. Private Fill was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 18th August, 1917. From there he was transferred & admitted to 8th Red Cross Hospital at Le Touquet on 19th August, 1917 with Trench Fever. Private Fill was transferred to England on 26th August, 1917.

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.

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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)

Private William Boyden Fill was admitted to No. 16 General Ontario Hospital at Orpington, Kent, England on 26th August, 1917. The Hospital Admissions form recorded the following: *“Pain in legs, back and back of head... Sept 28 – Contracted severe pains in left shoulder and over lower left region of chest...Sept 30 – pain more severe requiring sedative, later pneumonia developed in lower left lung and confirmed developing also in right lung.....”*

Mr James Fill, Campbell Street, Rockhampton, Queensland, father of Private William Boyden Fill, was advised by Base Records on 4th September, 1917 that Private William Fill was sick. He was advised again on 4th September, 1917 that Private William Fill had been admitted to Ontario Military Hospital, Orpington, England on 26th August with Trench Fever.

Private William Boyden Fill died at 7 pm on 4th October, 1917 at 16th Canadian General Ontario Hospital, Orpington, Kent, England from Pneumonia & Trench Fever.

A death for William B. Fill, aged 25, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Bromley, Kent, England.

Private William Boyden Fill was buried at 1 pm on 9th October, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Plot number XI.C.8 (Plot 11, Row c, Grave 8) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private William Boyden Fill - *Coffin was good -polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral A Firing Party of 100 men and N.C.O.'s in charge of an Officer, four buglers and a band were supplied by the 1st (Reserve) London Regiment, and bearers were supplied by the Australian Imperial Force, Administrative Headquarters, London. Chaplain R. H. Richard officiated. The “Last Post” was sounded at the graveside. A beautiful wreath from deceased’s Mother was placed on the grave.*

Private William Boyden Fill requested in his Will dated 14th July, 1917 that all of his personal estate be bequeathed to his mother – Maggie Fill, c/o Mrs Wills, Harcourt Street off James Street, Brisbane, Australia.

A War Pension was granted to Margaret Fill, Harcourt St, Teneriffe, mother of the late Private William Boyden Fill, in the sum of £1 per fortnight from 8th December, 1917.

Mrs J. Fill, of Gordon Street, Newstead, Brisbane, Queensland wrote to Base Records on 10th October, 1921 stating she had *“noticed in the daily newspaper in the next of kin list wanted, that you are enquiring for the next of kin for Private William Boyden Fill No 7232 15 Batt died in hospital on 4th of October, 1917...I am the mother of the deceased and if there is anything you require, if you write to the above address...”* Base Records replied on 24th October, 1921 stating *“that the advertisement which appeared in the Press was the result of a communication forwarded to your address at Harcourt Street, off James Street, New Farm, Brisbane, Queensland, being returned to the office unclaimed. Deceased’s British War Medal will shortly be forwarded to the Base Commandant, Victoria Barracks, Brisbane, for transmission to you and the Victory Medal, and any other items will follow as they become available.”*

Private William Boyden Fill was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Fill’s mother – Mrs J. Fill, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent September, 1922).

(Queensland Births, Deaths & Marriages (online) shows a death for James Royden Fill on 16th July, 1918).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Boyden Fill – service number 7232, aged 22, of 15th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of James and Margaret Fill.

Private W. B. Fill 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

The Rockhampton War Memorial, located in the Botanic Gardens, 100 Spencer Street, Rockhampton, Queensland does not list individual names.



Rockhampton War Memorial (Photo from AWM –Places of Pride)

(53 pages of Private William Boyden Fill'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



(The Queenslander Pictorial – 10 March 1917)

Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL NOTES

The Mayor of Rockhampton (Alderman Kingel) has received the information that Sergeant E. Handley, of the Royal Flying Corps, died on August 20, as the result of an aeroplane accident at Brooklands. He has also been informed that Private Reginald Essex.....that Private W. B. Fill, son of Mr J. Fill, has died from pneumonic trench fever.

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 22 October, 1917) & (The Queenslander, Brisbane, Queensland – 27 October, 1917)

WITH THE COLOURS

During the past week the Mayor has been awarded that the following Rockhampton men have made the supreme sacrifice on the battlefields of France:- William Boyden Fill, Campbell-street;

(The Daily Mail, Brisbane, Queensland – 23 October, 1917)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

Australian casualty list No. 355 was issued to-night. It contains the names of the following Queenslanders:-

Died of Illness

Private W. B. Fill (Rockhampton)

(The Capricornian, Rockhampton, Queensland – 24 November, 1917)

NEXT OF KIN WANTED

The military authorities desire the next of kin of the following deceased soldiers to communicate with the Officer in Charge, Base Records, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, at the earliest possible moment:.....7232, William Boyden Fill, 15th Battalion.....

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 8 October, 1921)

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 W. B. Fill 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.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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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 (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





Australian War Graves (Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)

Photo of Private W. B. Fill's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo by wertypop – Find a Grave)

