

Grangeegorman Military Cemetery, County Dublin, Republic of Ireland

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2872 PRIVATE

J. GRATTON

AUS. MACHINE GUN CORPS

10TH OCTOBER, 1918 Age 28

Sleep, Beloved Sleep

Until The Day Dawn

And The Shadows Flee Away

Joseph GRATTON

Joseph Gratton was born at Rome Street, Newtown, Toowoomba, Queensland on 16th November, 1889 to parents John Richard & Elizabeth Gratton (nee Booth).

The 1912, 1913 & 1916 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Darling Downs, subdivision of Toowoomba listed Joseph Gratton, Plumber, of Carrington Road, Toowoomba, Queensland. His parents were list as John Richard Gratton, Carpenter & Elizabeth Gratton, Home Duties, also of Carrington Road, Toowoomba, Queensland.

Joseph Gratton was a 26 year old, single, Plumber from Carrington Road, Glenvale, Toowoomba, Queensland when he enlisted on 10th May, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2872 & his religion was Baptist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Elizabeth Gratton, Carrington Road, Glenvale, Toowoomba, Queensland. Joseph Gratton was 5ft 8 in with brown hair, blue eyes & a medium complexion.

Private Joseph Gratton was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 24th May, 1916 for recruit training. Pte Joseph Gratton of D Company, No. 11 Depot Battalion, Fraser's Hill Camp was passed dentally fit on 31st May, 1916. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 4th Pioneers on 10th July, 1916.

Private Joseph Gratton embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Boonah* (A36) on 21st October, 1916 with the 4th Pioneer Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 10th 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 Joseph Gratton was detached to 7th Training Battalion for duty with D.O.R.E. at Rollestone, Wiltshire on 26th June, 1917 from 4th Div. Pioneers.

Private Joseph Gratton was taken off strength from 4th Pioneers at Fovant, Wiltshire & was transferred to 42nd Battalion (11th Training Battalion at Durrington, Wiltshire) on 11th July, 1917.

Private Joseph Gratton was transferred to Machine Gun Corps Details at Gratham from 42nd Battalion on 20th July, 1917.

Private Joseph Gratton proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 11th October, 1917 from Machine Gun Training Depot.

Private Joseph Gratton was marched in to M.G.C.B.D. (Machine Gun Corps Base Depot) at Camiers, France on 12th October, 1917. He was marched out on 15th October, 1917 to join 24th Machine Gun Company. Pte Gatton was taken on strength of 4th Machine Gun Company on 17th October, 1917. Designation changed to 4th Machine Gun Battalion – A.I.F. Order 1151

Private Joseph Gratton was on leave to Paris from 11th March, 1918 & returned from leave on 20th March, 1918.

Private Joseph Gratton was granted leave to UK from 4th Machine Gun Company from 19th September, 1918.

Private Joseph Gratton was sent sick to Hospital on 22nd September, 1918 while on leave in UK. He was admitted to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, England on 22nd September, 1918 with I.C.T. face (inflammation of face & connective tissue). He was discharged on 25th September, 1918 & granted the balance of his leave to proceed Overseas from 9th October, 1918.

Private Joseph Gratton drowned on 10th October, 1918 as a result of enemy action on the R.M.S. *Leinster* which was torpedoed by German submarine *UB-123* while at Sea off the coast of Ireland on 10th October, 1918. His body was located & taken to King George V Hospital, Dublin, Ireland for identification.



R.M.S. Leinster

RMS Leinster was a vessel operated by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, served as the Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire)- Holyhead mail boat.

Just before 10 a.m. on 10th October, 1918 as the Leinster was sailing east of the Kish Bank in a heavy swell, passengers saw a torpedo approach from the port side and pass in front of the bow. A second torpedo followed shortly afterwards, and it struck the ship forward on the port side in the vicinity of the mail room. Captain Birch ordered the ship to make a U-turn in an attempt to return to Kingstown as the ship began to settle slowly by the bow; however, the ship sank rapidly after a third torpedo struck the Leinster, causing a huge explosion.

Despite the heavy seas, the crew managed to launch several lifeboats and some passengers clung to life-rafts. The survivors were rescued by HMS Lively, HMS Mallard and HMS Seal. The first member of the Women's Royal Naval Service to die on active duty, Josephine Carr, was among those killed. Captain Birch was also among those lost in the sinking. Wounded in the initial attack, he was drowned when his lifeboat became swamped in heavy seas and capsized while trying to transfer survivors to HMS Lively. Several of the military personnel who died are buried in Grangegorman Military Cemetery.

Survivors were brought to Kingstown harbour. The ship's log states that she carried 77 crew and 694 passengers on her final voyage under the command of Captain William Birch. The ship had previously been attacked in the Irish Sea but the torpedoes missed their target. Those on board included more than one hundred British civilians, 22 postal sorters (working in the mail room) and almost 500 military personnel from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force. Also aboard were nurses from Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States.

(Extract of information on RMS Leinster from Wikipedia)

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Joseph Gratton contains various handwritten notes & typed letters. The most relevant to Pte Gratton & the sinking are listed below:

- *Drowned at Sea. S.S. Leinster 10-10-18*

718 Sgt F. T. Coleman, 3rd Aust. Div. Headquarters wrote to Miss D. Smith, 15 Glenant Avenue, Blackrock, CO. Dublin (V.A.D. Linden Auxiliary Hospital, Blackrock) asking her to put him in touch with the Scottish Officer who told him that "An Australian was hanging to his boat but let go his hold and was lost." Miss Smith states this officer to have been a 2.Lieut. in the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, but so far, has been unable to trace him. She has however, forwarded a further report from Capt. Parker, Ship's Adjutant, of R.M.S. Leinster which reads as follows, but we have been unable to ascertain to whom it definitely refers:-

I enclose herewith a report anent an Australian whom I saw in the sea after the sinking of the "Leinster". I regret my inability to give a fuller description of this brave man. I was personally clinging to a raft for about two hours and on another raft about 10 yards distant, I particularly noticed an Australian soldier hanging on with one hand – his head and shoulders being out of the water. Our rafts kept in close proximity for about one hour during that time. I spoke words of encouragement to him, but it was obvious his strength was failing fast. Every time I spoke to him, he smiled but never answered. The seas kept breaking over us and this combined with the cold and exposure, undoubtedly caused his death. Ultimately he let go his hold and sank

smiling to the last. In all my experience (which includes several) I have never seen a braver death. He was clean shaven, dark hair, strong chin, fine profile, well tanned skin, and I would describe him as a typical good looking Colonial. He had his colonial hat on all the time, with the chin strap under his chin, but I am unaware of his particular corps or regiment.

Letter from:- H. L. Parker, Capt. 3rd Cameron Highlanders

In a previous report of 23-12-18 Sgt Coleman gives the following description of a 4th M.G. man seen by him, but unfortunately we do not know to whom it should be attached. "This man appeared to me to be about 28 years, light hair, and rather long features. He was constantly being drenched with water and I could not get a good look at him, for my attention was taken up keeping the raft away from the boat.

- A Statement from W/O S. E. Yeoman, representing Australian Headquarters wrote: "On arrival at Dublin I went to King George V Hospital and saw the bodies of 3 Australian soldiers lying in the Mortuary. They were drowned as a result of the R.M.S. "Leinster" disaster. Identification was established by means of papers etc found on their person. After identifications were completed I saw only three bodies labelled unknown. I made enquiries in Dublin for any Australian soldiers who were survivors and was successful in locating 3 whose names appear in the summary attached. They accompanied me to the Mortuary where one Pte Meigan, 19th Battalion, A.I.F. identified one of the bodies as being that of No. 4538* (*In pencil - We understand that the correct No. of Pte M. Smith is 4530; 4538 is a clerical error from Headquarters) Pte Smith, Michael, 19th Battalion, A.I.F. The deceased was personally known to him. Therefore the features are well known, also a gold ring was recognised. This was the only case of identification. I reported this matter to the Hospital Authorities who subsequently made their report to the War Office. Later I discovered another survivor in the person of No. 649 Pte Moore, J. H. 1st M.G. Coy lying in King George V. Hpl suffering from Influenza. Statements from the four survivors attached. Funeral arrangements and burials were duly carried out under my supervision. Burials with Military Honours. Inquests on all Military bodies were dispensed with by the City Coroner of Dublin. Applications should be made to the President Effects Branch, General Headquarters, Ireland for the personal effects of these soldiers.

Coleman's Statement: Vessel left punctually 9 am. Ship very crowded. Morning dull. Roughness at sea out of harbour. Life belts were around but left to individual discretion of putting on. Majority availed themselves. Good headway. 10 to 10 o'clock saw a torpedo. Struck bow on port side. No undue panic- lowering of boats satisfactory. 2nd torpedo 10 mins after. Struck straight amid ships practically severed vessel and smashed 2 life boats. Boilers blown up. Then every man for himself. Raft till picked up by H.M.S. "Lively". Washed off several times. Sea running high – many drowned while hanging on to the raft. Taken to King George Hospital – given food and clothing – and to North Dublin Rest Camp, and medically treated. I saw an Australian, who by the colour patches was 4th M.G. Battalion- could not get into a life boat and was drowned through exhaustion let go.

- Extracts from statement made at A.H.Q. B. Records 15-10-18

"In water nearly an hour before being picked up by a lifeboat."

"We never knew the names of any of the Australians who embarked on the Leinster on 10th October but remember having seen men, whose regimental colours lead us to judge them to belong to the Units mentioned.

Two men of the 19th Battalion

One man from the 3rd M.T. Company

" " " " 1st Div. Train

" " " " 3rd Div Hqrs.

" machine gunner of the 3rd Div Hqrs

Cert: by A.I.F. Hqrs 17-1-19

Private Joseph Gratton was buried on 14th October, 1918 in Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin, Ireland – Plot number Aust. CE.1 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Joseph Gratton - Coffin was good, polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing

Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack and surmounted by beautiful flowers sent from: - Miss May Bamberry. The Last Post was sounded at the graveside, and the Rev. Peacock conducted the burial service. A procession of about half a mile, followed the remains to the graveside. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.

Names of Relatives or Friends present at the Funeral – Cousin – Miss M. Bamberry, Kerwis House, Rutland Sq., Dublin & Friends – Miss O. Doherty and others.

Private Joseph Gratton requested in his Will dated 19th October, 1917 that the whole of his property and effects be given to his mother – Mrs Elizabeth Gratton, Carrington Road, Glenvale, Toowoomba, Queensland.

Base Records contacted Mrs E. Gratton, mother of the late Pte Joseph Gratton, in April, 1921, stating that she was listed on the registered records as the next-of-kin of the late Pte J. Gratton & asked if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself, for instance, is his father 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. Mrs E. Gratton replied that both parents of the late Pte Joseph Gratton were living & living together.

Private Joseph Gratton was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Gratton's father - Mr J. R. Gratton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Joseph Gratton – service number 2872, aged 28, of 4th Battalion, Australian Machine Gun Corps. He was the son of John Richard and Elizabeth Gratton, of Carrington Rd., Glenvale, Toowoomba, Queensland.

Private J. Gratton is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 176.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Joseph Gratton is remembered on the Glenvale State School War Memorial, located at Glenvale State School, Brightview Road, Glenvale, Queensland.



Glenvale State School War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – John Huth)



J. Gratton is remembered on the Mothers Memorial located in East Creek Park, Margaret Street, East Toowoomba, Queensland.



Mothers Memorial, Toowoomba

(Photo above from Monument Australia & below from Queensland War Memorial Register)

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|----------|
| ANDREWS | A.C. | CHAMBERS | J.A. | EVANS | T.R. |
| ANTHONY | N.J. | CHAPMAN | P.D. | FARQUHARSON | C.A. |
| ASCHE | F.H. | CLUTTERBUCK | T. | FARQUHARSON | S. |
| ASHBY | G. | COCLIN | A.J. | FELGENHAUER | A.A. |
| BAILEY | H. | COLEMAN | A.J. | FIELD | H.C. |
| BALL | A.D. | CONWAY | R.G. | FISHER | J.S. |
| BAKER | T.J. | CONCANNON | G.L.B. | FLEGLER | P.H. |
| BARLOW | S.W. | COOMBES | G.A. | FLYNN | W. |
| BARLOW | R.W. | CORCORAN | P. | FOSTER | T.E. |
| BAUER | W.A. | COUSENS | S.C. | FOSTER | J.H. |
| BEASANT | S.H. | COUSENS | S.L. | FOWLER | W.L. |
| BEASANT | S.W. | CRANE | J.T. | FOX | J. |
| BEAUMONT | B.L. | CREIGHTON | A.V. | FOX | J.T. |
| BEASLEY | C. | CUBBIN | R. | FULJAMES | F.C. |
| BENTLEY | G.W. | CULLY | C. | GAMBLE | T.A. |
| BERNAYS | R.M. | CUMMINGS | J. | GANDER | C.R. |
| BERRY | W. | CUMMING | A.D. | GARRY | J.R. |
| BERWICK | L. | CUNNINGTON | A.E. | GARRETT | R.S. |
| BEVERICK | T. | DALTON | W.S. | GARRETT | C.C. |
| BIDDLE | D.P. | DALY | J.T. | GORMAN | F.R. |
| BIDDLE | W.J. | DANIELS | S.E. | GILBRIDE | J. |
| BLACK | C.M. | DAVIES | H.E.T. | GISLER | C. |
| BOARD | G. | DAVIES | W.H. | GILLIES | F.W. |
| BOURNE | A.M. | DAVIES | E.C. | GLASSEY | W. |
| BONGERS | F. | DAVIES | G. | GLEESON | R.J. |
| BONHAM | J. | DAVIS | E. | GODDARD | L.O. |
| BRIDGEMAM | F.H. | DEAZELEY | J.F. | GORRING | S. |
| BROWN | G. | DENNE | A. | GRATTON | J. |
| BROWN | F.G. | DEVINE | P.E. | GRAHAM | D.M.L. |
| BROWN | W.R.G. | DEVINE | W.M. | GREEN | P.F. |
| BROWN | P.G. | DIXON | C.C. | GREENAN | J. |
| BROWN | H.J. | DOLAN | T. | GREENBURY | L.S.B. |
| BROWN | W.J.L. | DONALD | H.J.K. | GREENBURY | S. |
| BREWSTER | E.V. | DOUGLAS | A.S. | GRIFFITH | W.A. |
| BRYCE | W.R. | DOYLE | E.D. | GROOM | L.C. |
| BUCHANAN | L. | DOYLE | T.F. | GROOM | C. |
| BURMAN | A.E. | DRAPER | F.W. | GROVE | L.D.E.L. |
| BURMAN | M.W. | DRANEY | H. | GUERIN | J.T.F. |
| BUGEL | E.W. | DUNSDON | G.E. | GULLETT | H. |
| BURY | W. | EBERET | W.H. | HADDOCK | J.W. |
| BURTON | J.L. | ECCLESTON | A.A. | HALTER | W. |

J. Gratton is remembered on the Beaconsfield Lodge No. 15 & 9 Honour Roll, located in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, 549 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba, Queensland.



Beaconsfield Lodge No. 15 & 9 Honour Roll (Photo from Monument Australia – John Huth)

J. Gratton would also probably be remembered on the Toowoomba Roll of Honour located in Toowoomba R.S.L. Club, 549 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba, Queensland.



Toowoomba Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – John Huth)

The anchor of R.M.S. *Leinster* is part of a memorial to those who lost their lives following the sinking of the R.M.S. *Leinster* on 10th October, 1918. It is located at Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire, adjacent to the National Maritime Museum.



R.M.S. *Leinster* Memorial

*In memory of the
501 passengers, crew and
postal workers
who lost their lives
following the sinking
of the RMS *Leinster*
on 10 October 1918*

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

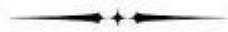
Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives





Private Joseph Gratton

(The Telegraph, Brisbane, Queensland - 28 Dec 1918)



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL NOTES

A cablegram has been received from the military authorities, conveying the sad news of the death of Private Joseph Gratton, 4th Machine Gun Company, who was a passenger on the steamer Leinster. Private Gratton was a son of Mr and Mrs J. R. Gratton, Carrington road, Toowoomba. He left Brisbane in October, 1916, with the 6th Reinforcements, 4th Pioneer Battalion. It is surmised that he had been visiting friends in Ireland, and was returning to take up his duties in the firing line.

(The Telegraph, Brisbane, Queensland – 22 October, 1918)

PERSONAL

A cablegram has been received stating that Pte Joseph Gratton, son of Mr and Mrs J. R. Gratton, Carrington-road, Toowoomba, died at sea on October 10 as a result of enemy action in sinking the steamer Leinster. The body was recovered and buried at Dublin. It is surmised that Pte Gratton had been visiting friends in Ireland, whilst on furlough. He left Australia in October, 1916, and was 28 years of age.

(The Daily Mail, Brisbane, Queensland – 23 October, 1918)

HONOURING THE BRAVE

REMARKS BY THE MAYOR

POSSIBILITY OF AN EARLY PEACE

Prior to the commencement of business at the City Council meeting yesterday the Mayor (Dr T. A. Price) said he would like to say how rejoiced they all were at the news received that morning of the capitulation of Austria. It would be a relief, particularly to those women and children whose husbands and fathers were at the front. He thought, as they hoped, that peace would be proclaimed before the next meeting, that it would be fitting if he read out the list of names of those who had laid down their lives since the last list was read.

Aldermen the rose while the Mayor read the following list:-

.....

2872, Joseph Gratton, drowned "S.S Leinster" 10th October, 1918

....

The Mayor said they offered their sympathy to the relations of those brave men and trusted that their work for peace would soon be consummated and they would be able to rejoice in a satisfactory peace.

(Darling Downs Gazette, Queensland – 5 November, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

CASUALTY LIST No. 444

DIED OTHER CAUSES

Joseph Gratton Glenvale, 10/10/18 (drowned)

(The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 23 November, 1918)

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. Gratton does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Sleep, Beloved Sleep

Until The Day Dawn

And The Shadows Flee Away

Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin, Ireland

Grangegorman Military Cemetery was opened in 1876 and was used for the burial of British service personnel and their near relatives. It contains war graves from both world wars. Some of the graves were re-located to this site at a later date (nine from King George V Hospital grounds, two from Trinity College grounds, three from Portobello (Barracks) Cemetery, two from Drogheda (Little Calvary) Cemetery and one from Oranmore Old Graveyard).

The "Leinster" graves are in several trenches in the different denominational plots.

A Screen Wall Memorial of a simple design standing nearly two metres high and fifteen metres long has been built of Irish limestone to commemorate the names of those war casualties whose graves lie elsewhere in Ireland and can no longer be maintained. Arranged before this memorial are the headstones of the war dead buried in Cork Military Cemetery but now commemorated here.

There are now 613 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war, 2 of which are unidentified, and 12 of the 1939-1945 war, 1 of which is unidentified, commemorated here.

There are 7 Australian War Graves from World War 1 & 1 New Zealand War Grave.

4 Australian Soldiers & a New Zealand Soldier who were drowned on the *Leinster* were buried in Grangegorman Military Cemetery - Private Joseph Thomas Barnes, 6784, 48th Battalion, A.I.F.; Private Edwin Johnson Carter, 2880, 29th Battalion, A.I.F.; Private Joseph Gratton, 2872, 4th Machine Gun Battalion, A.I.F.; Private Michael Ernest Smith, 4530, 19th Battalion, A.I.F. & Lance Corporal Peter Freitas, 14/191A, New Zealand Army Corps (born in Australia).

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Grangegorman Military Cemetery



3 Australian Graves from the Leinster – (left to right) Barnes/Carter/Gratton

(Photos from Magicfingers)



Photo of Private J. Gratton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin, Ireland.



(Photo courtesy of Richard J. Edgar)



Grangegorman Military Cemetery