

**Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery,
East Sussex, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2337 PRIVATE

J. M. GRAY

46TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

13TH APRIL, 1918

John Milne GRAY

John Milne Gray was born at Arbroath, Scotland on 27th December, 1885 to parents George Alexander Hutton Gray & Jane Elizabeth Gray (nee Milne).

John Milne Gray married Florence Annie Millett in 1915 in Victoria.

A birth was registered in 1915 in Surrey Hills, Victoria for Stanley George Milne Gray, son of John & Florence Gray.

John Milne Gray was a 30 year old, married, Labourer when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 5th October, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2337 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Florence Millet Gray, "Godalmine," Croydon Road, Surrey Hills, Victoria.

Private John Milne Gray was posted to 23rd Depot Battalion at Royal Park on 29th November, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 19th Depot Battalion at Geelong on 3rd December, 1915 then on 13th January, 1916 he was transferred to 4th Reinforcements of 29th Battalion.

Private John Milne Gray embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Anchises (A68)* on 14th March, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements.

Private John Milne Gray was transferred from 29th Battalion to 46th Battalion on 20th April, 1916. He was taken on strength of 46th Battalion at Serapeum on 20th April, 1916.

Private John Milne Gray proceeded to join B .E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on Troopship *Kinfauns Castle* on 2nd June, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 8th June, 1916.

Private John Milne Gray was sent sick to Hospital on 29th April, 1917. He rejoined his Unit the same day.

Private John Milne Gray was sent sick to Hospital on 4th May, 1917 & rejoined his Unit the same day.

Private John Milne Gray was sent sick to Hospital on 11th June, 1917. He was admitted to 10th Australian Field Ambulance on 16th June, 1917 "R.T.L. Syno: left ankle". He was returned to duty on 23rd June, 1917 & rejoined his Unit on 24th June, 1917.

Private John Milne Gray was written up for an Offence - while on active service on 19th December, 1917 – Drunkenness. As a result he relinquished his appointment as Acting Corporal.

Mrs F. M. Gray, the next-of-kin for Private John Milne Gray, advised Base Records that her new address would be Vine Cottage, Kingston Road, Surry Hills, Victoria. This was noted on the soldier's records in January, 1918.

Private John Milne Gray was wounded in action on 5th April, 1918. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 5th April, 1918 with Shrapnel wounds to left thigh & shoulder. Private Gray was transferred to Casualty Clearing Station then transferred & admitted to 22nd General Hospital at Camiers, France on 11th April, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to left thigh. He embarked for England.

46th Battalion

The 46th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 24 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its new recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 14th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 14th, the new battalion was composed mostly of men from Victoria, although some of the reinforcements hailed from New South Wales and Western Australia.

As part of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division, the 46th Battalion arrived in France on 8 June 1916, destined for the Western Front. It participated in its first major battle at Pozieres. Initially, the battalion provided carrying parties for supplies and ammunition during the 2nd Division's attack on 4 August, and then, with its own division, defended the ground that had been captured. The 46th endured two stints in the heavily contested trenches of Pozieres, as well as a period in reserve.

After Pozieres, the battalion spent the period up until March 1917 alternating between duty in the trenches and training and rest behind the lines. On 11 April it took part in the attack mounted against the heavily defended village of Bullecourt - part of the formidable Hindenburg Line to which the Germans had retreated during February and March. Devoid of surprise, and dependent upon the support of unreliable tanks, the attack had little chance of success; after managing to fight through to its objectives, the 46th was forced to withdraw with heavy casualties. Later in the year, the focus of the AIF's operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium where the 46th took part in the battles of Messines and Passchendaele.

The 46th rotated in and out of the front line throughout the winter of 1917-18. In the spring of 1918, it played a role in turning the great German offensive by defeating attacks around Dernancourt in the first days of April.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 46th Battalion

5th April

At 6.30 am the Battalion was on the move to reserve trenches near LAVIEVILLE. Battalion H.Q. was at D.4.c central (Sheet 62d). 2 companies were in D.4.d.8.4: and one company at D.4.d.4.5.

We had barely arrived at our destination before the enemy barrage came down. It was well directed on to batteries, roads and trench systems in the vicinity. It is still a marvel that heavy casualties did not occur. Captain Milne, "C" Company was badly wounded and about 25 other casualties occurred. By 7.50 pm we were on the move again and relieved the remainder of the Brigade in the front line. During the day the enemy had taken possession of the railway line, so our front line now ran from E.2 central to E.8 central – E.8.c.30.00 – E.13.b.7.4.

The relief was rendered strenuous on account of the mud which made progress slow, but it was completed by 12-5 am. The 49th Battalion was on our right and joined up and on our left was a regiment of the 12th Division. The 45th, 47th and 48th formed supports and reserves.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private John Milne Gray was admitted to 2nd Eastern General Hospital, Brighton, Sussex, England on 12th April, 1918.

Private John Milne Gray died on 13th April, 1918 at 2nd Eastern General Hospital, Brighton, Sussex, England from wounds received in action – G.S.W. left thigh (Gas Gangrene).

A death for John M. Gray, aged 32, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Brighton, Sussex, England.

Private John Milne Gray was buried at 3 pm on 17th April, 1918 in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England – Plot number ZIF. 95. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private John Milne Gray - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag. Firing Party and Trumpeter were supplied by the Royal Field Artillery stationed at Preston Barracks, Brighton. Pallbearers were supplied by the R.A.M.C. Staff of St. Marks Hospital. The grave will be turfed immediately and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F Hqrs., London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Private John Milne Gray requested in his Will, located in his Paybook & dated 14th June, 1916, that in the event of his death the whole of his effects & property be given to his wife – Florence Millett Gray, Clifton, Laundry, Union Road, Surrey Hills, Melbourne, Victoria. A later Will, dated 4th June, 1917 still bequeathed all his real & personal estate to his wife – Florence Millett Gray, of 28 Fermang Road, Camberwell, Victoria.

Private John Milne Gray was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Gray's remarried widow – Mrs F. M. Everett, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1923).

Base Records wrote to Department of Repatriation in July, 1923 asking if Mrs F. M. Gray, widow of the late No. 2337 Private J. M. Gray, was receiving a Pension & if so her present address as communications sent to 41 St John's Avenue, Camberwell had been returned to their Office unclaimed. A reply was sent stating that the widow of the late Private John M. Gray had remarried, her name now being Florence E. Everest. They had the same address but stated that the pension payable to her as trustee for her son was collected at Camberwell Post Office.

Base Records wrote to The Postmaster at Camberwell Post Office, Victoria in July, 1923 stating that Mrs F. E. Everest was drawing a pension at the Camberwell Post office on behalf of the son of the late No. 2337 Private J. M. Gray but communications sent to 41 St John's Avenue, Camberwell had been returned to their Office unclaimed. They requested when she calls to collect her pension to communicate with Base Records so that they can transmit certain mementoes on account of the late soldier's service. The Postmaster replied in August, 1923 stating that Mrs Everest had been advised of the enquiry by Base Records & would contact them during the week. Her address was 40 St John's Avenue, Camberwell.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private J. M. Gray – service number 2337, of 46th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

J. M. Gray is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.

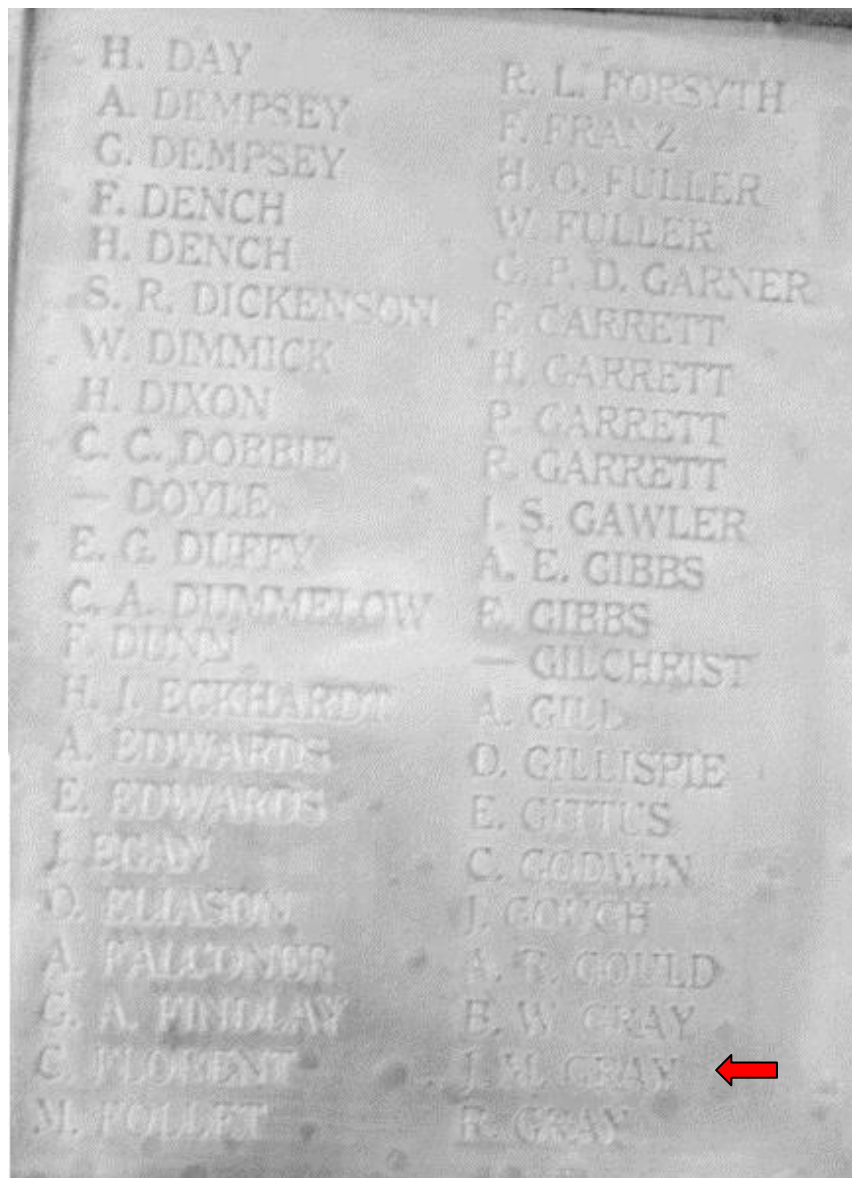
Gray J.C.	Gray J. McC. "M M"
Gray J.E. No 2199	Gray J.R. No 6010
Gray J.E. No 7493	Gray J.R. No 30009
Gray J.G. No 888	Gray J.T. "M C"
Gray J.G. No 8858	Gray J.W. No 3669
Gray J.G. No 27811	Gray J.W. No 4792
"M M"	Gray L. No 2800
Gray J.H. No 1544	Gray L. No 5028
Gray J.H. No 4539	Gray L.A.
Gray J.H. No 5701	Gray L.D.
Gray J.J. No 3113	Gray L.E.
Gray J.J. No 6602	Gray L.E. No 14088
Gray J.L. No 54906	Gray L.E. No 18159
Gray J.M. No 2337	Gray L.G.
Gray J.M. No 2799	Gray M.
Gray J.M. No 3765	Gray M. No 2261



J. M. Gray is remembered on the Surrey Hills Shrine, located in Surrey Gardens, Union Road, Surrey Hills, Victoria.



Surrey Hills Shrine (Photo below from VHD)



John Milne Gray is remembered in the Roll of Honour books held in the Hall of Honour inside The Scottish National War Memorial. The north side of the Hall of Honour is divided by columns into bays, each dedicated to a different regiment and enhanced with battle honours and consecrated colours. On the broad shelf in front of each of the bays, the names of the dead are listed in leather-bound books.



The Scottish National War Memorial & the Hall of Honour & the Roll of Honour books.

(Photos from The Scottish National War Memorial)



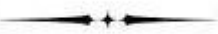
Private J. M. Gray is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 141.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(78 pages of Private John Milne Gray'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

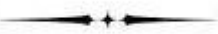


Connected to Private John Milne Gray:

Brother – George Alexander Hutton Gray – Private – 1545, 6th Battalion. Enlisted 14th December, 1914 as a 29 year old, single Decorator from Victoria. Next-of-kin – father – Mr G. Gray, 42 Fergus Street, Arbroath, Scotland. Embarked with 3rd Reinforcements of 6th Battalion on 19th February, 1915. Killed in Action 29th May, 1915 at Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey. Buried Shrapnel Valley Cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey.



Private George Alexander Hutton Gray



Newspaper Notices

ROLL OF HONOR

VICTORIAN LIST

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte J. M. GRAY, Surrey Hills, 13/4/18

(*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, Victoria – 11 May, 1918)



Pte. John M. Gray
(Surrey Hills) D. of W.

L.-Cpl. L. G. Hopper
(Maryborough) D. of W.

Pte. L. O. Bladen
(St. Kilda) D. of W.

Pte. M. F. Lloyd
(Warracknabeal) D. of W.

Gnr. Ronald C. Bryant
(Melbourne) K.

Gnr. A. T. Crawford
(Northcote) K.

Pte. W. J. Marian
(Melbourne) K.

ROLL OF HONOR: VICTORIANS WHO HAVE MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE



Pte. John M. Gray
(Surrey Hills) D. of W.

(*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, Victoria – 18 May, 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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 13th July, 1921, to Mrs F. M. Gray, 41 St John's Avenue, Camberwell, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her husband, the late Private J. M. Gray, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

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

Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England

The cemetery is on the Lewes road. It was opened in 1857, and now covers 44 acres. It climbs the hill Eastward, crossing a public road. A War Cross stands in the cemetery.

There are 275 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and a further 102 of the 1939-1945 war commemorated in this site. The 1939-45 commemorations include 3 unidentified Merchant seamen and 1 unidentified British soldier. There are also 40 Foreign National war burials here and 4 non-war service burials.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photos by julia&keld – Find a Grave)



(Photos from CWGC)

Photo of Private J. M. Gray's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England.



(Photo by Terry Denham)



(Photo from CWGC)