

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1569 PRIVATE

A. JOHNSON

10TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

6TH MARCH, 1917

Aleck JOHNSON

Aleck Johnson was born at Christiania, Norway around 1884.

Aleck Johnson was a 30 year old, single, Labourer from (care of) J. Kavenough, 5 Compton Street, Adelaide, South Australia when he enlisted on 25th November, 1914 at Oaklands, South Australia with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1569 & his religion was Protestant. His next of kin was listed as his friend - J. Kavenough, 5 Compton Street, Adelaide, South Australia.

Private Aleck Johnson was posted to 10th Battalion on 25th November, 1914 for recruit training.

Private Aleck Johnson embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Runic* (A54) on 19th February, 1915 with the 10th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements.

A Field General Court Martial was held on 18th May, 1915 at Mustapha, Alexandria where Private Aleck Johnson had committed the following Offences: 1. Drunk in Town about 10.30 pm; 2. Absent from 3 pm on 3rd May, 1915 to 10.40 pm on 11th May, 1915 & 3. Out of Bounds. He pleaded Guilty.

(SGD).R.D. BEITH. LT COL.
President.

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE AGAINST NO. 1569.PRIVATE A. JOHNSON.

Sir,

On the night of the 11th May, 1915, about 10.30.p.m. I was on duty in the Guininiⁿ Quarter where I saw the above named soldier asleep in an old dis-used house, he was drunk, Absent G.O. 520. dated 6/5/15, and out of bounds, G.O. 491, dated 23/4/15, I hired a conveyance and conveyed him to the Main Guard and handed him over to the M.C.O. in charge.

(Sgd). T. Curran. Sgt.
Alexandria. 12/5/15.
M.M. Police.

(Sgd). H.J. Creaney 2/Lt.
Officer taking evidence.

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE AGAINST NO. 1569. PTE A. JOHNSON,
BY CPL L. WILKINSON.

Sir,

On the night of the 11th May 1915, I was about 10.30.p.m. in company with Sgt Curran, M.M.P. in the Guininiⁿ quarter when we visited an old dis-used house where we found 1569 Pte A. Johnson,A.I.F. He was drunk,absent without leave G.O. No. 520. dated 6/5/15. And out of bounds, G.O. 458dated 6/11/15. I assisted to get the accused into a cab and take him to the Main Guard Detention Room and hand him over to the M.C.O. in charge.

(Sgd). J. Wilkinson. Cpl.
M.M.P.

(Sgd). H.J. Creaney. 2/Lt.
Officer taking evidence.

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF CPL WILSHER.G. AGAINST NO. I569
PTE JOHNSON.

I was Commander of the Main Guard on the night of the
11th May, 1915, at 10.35.p.m. the accused was handed over
to me by Cpl Wilkinson, the accused was drunk.

(Sgd). G. Wilsher. Cpl.
M.M.P.

(Sgd). H.J. Creaney. 2/Lt.
Officer taking evidence.

Private Aleck Johnson was found Guilty & sentenced to 112 days Detention. "The Findings on 1st and 3rd charges Confirmed. Sentence was commuted to 14 days F.P. No. 2. 20th May, 1915 by Brigadier General C. McGregor, Commander Base."

Private Aleck Johnson was transferred from Overseas Base at Alexandria on 26th May, 1915 to Abbassia Detention Barracks for 14 days Field Punishment.

Private Aleck Johnson was taken on strength of 10th Battalion from Reinforcements at Gallipoli on 17th June, 1915.

Private Aleck Johnson reported sick at Gallipoli Peninsula on 4th July, 1915. He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Devanha* then admitted to Military Hospital at Imtarfa, Malta on 14th July, 1915 with Dysentery. Private Johnson was transferred to St George's Hospital, Malta on 9th August, 1915 then transferred to St. Patrick's, Malta on 15th August, 1915. He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Galeka* on 25th August, 1915, embarking from Malta for England, due to Diarrhoea & Teeth.

Private Aleck Johnson was admitted to Military Hospital, Forrest, Malta on 12th August, 1915 from Corrodina Civil Prison with Gonorrhoea. (NOTE: This entry was listed on War Gratuity Schedule but not on Casualty Form – Active Service.)

Private Aleck Johnson was admitted to 2nd City of London General Hospital, England on 3rd September, 1915 with Enteritis. He was discharged on 14th October, 1915.

Mr J. Kavanagh, 5 Common Street, Adelaide, South Australia, (listed as next-of-kin – Friend of Private Aleck Johnson) was advised by Secretary of Defence on 2nd August, 1915 that Sergeant A. Johnson was reported sick (slight) & had disembarked at Malta between 14th and 20th July.

Mr J. Kavanagh was advised by Base Records on 13th September, 1915 that No. 1569 Sergeant A. Johnson had been listed on a Nominal Roll of sick & wounded who had landed in Malta on 14th July, 1915 & was suffering from "Diarrhoea and Teeth, slight." Mr Kavanagh was advised by base Records on 17th September, 1915 that Sergeant A. Johnson was in Hospital in London, England.

Private Aleck Johnson was posted to Depot at Abbey Wood, England on 22nd November, 1915. He was written up on 24th November, 1915 – Drunk – no punishment given as it was his first offence but was fined 2/- cab fare. Private Johnson was also reported on 24th November, 1915 for reporting late from furlough. He was awarded 48 hours detention & forfeited 2 days' pay.

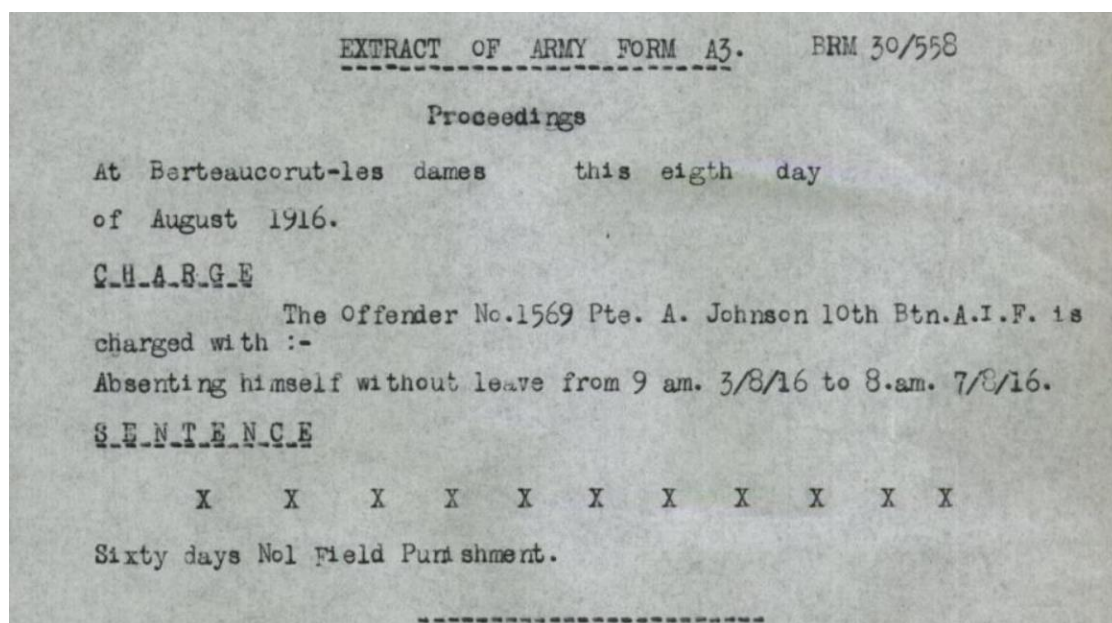
Private Aleck Johnson was written up on 26th November, 1915 for being drunk & using obscene language. He was awarded 48 hours detention.

Private Aleck Johnson was awarded 13 days detention for absence & forfeited 13 days pay on 20th December, 1915. (no other details were recorded)

Private Aleck Johnson proceeded overseas to rejoin B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) in France from Weymouth, England (no date recorded). He was posted to 1st Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France from Weymouth on 29th May, 1916. He was marched out from 1st Divisional Base Depot on 25th June, 1916 & joined Entrenching Battalion.

Mr J. Kavanagh, 5 Common Street, Adelaide, South Australia, (listed as next-of-kin – Friend of Private Aleck Johnson) was advised by Base Records on 12th June, 1916 that No. 1569 Sergt. A. Johnson, 10th Battalion had rejoined his Regiment in France.

Private Aleck Johnson joined 10th Battalion in France on 30th July, 1916 from Reinforcements.



Private Aleck Johnson was awarded 60 days Field Punishment No. 1 on 8th August, 1916 as a result of a Field General Court Martial.

Private Aleck Johnson reported sick on 2nd September, 1916 & was admitted to 1st Australian Field Ambulance on 3rd September, 1916 with Scabies. He was discharged on 21st September, 1916 & rejoined 10th Battalion on 21st September, 1916.

Private Aleck Johnson reported sick on 6th November, 1916. He was admitted to 29th Casualty Clearing Station on 7th November, 1916 with Scabies then was transferred & admitted to No. 6 Convalescent Depot on 28th November, 1916. From there he was transferred to No. 5 Convalescent Depot at Cayneaux on 1st December, 1916 & was discharged to Base Details on 10th January, 1917.

Private Aleck Johnson joined 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 11th January, 1917. He was admitted to Segregation Camp on 25th January, 1917 then transferred & admitted to 26th General Hospital on 7th February, 1917 with Sciatica & N.Y.D. (not yet determined) Chest. Private Johnson embarked for England from Havre, France on 17th February, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Glenart Castle* with Sciatica.

10th Battalion

The 10th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. The battalion was recruited in South Australia, and together with the 9th, 11th and 12th Battalions, formed the 3rd Brigade.

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After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 10th Battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bitter trench warfare. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July. After Pozieres the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders before returning to the Somme for winter.

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(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Aleck Johnson was admitted to Beaufort War Hospital on 20th February, 1917. He was transferred & admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital on 27th February, 1917 with Sciatica. Private Johnson was discharged to furlough on 5th March, 1917 & was then to report to Depot at Weymouth on 20th March, 1917.

Private Aleck Johnson died on 6th March, 1917 from Acute Pneumonia. He was found dead in a Public Lavatory at Lewisham, London, England.

A death for Aleck Johnson, aged 32, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Lewisham, London, England.

Private Aleck Johnson was buried on 13th March, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 178, 910.

From the burial report of Private Aleck Johnson - Coffin was good. Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral., Firing Party comprising members attached to the Administrative Headquarters Staff, A.I.F. London were present. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside by an Australian bugler. Prior to the interment of the deceased soldier's remains a Memorial Service was held in the Chapel at the Brookwood Cemetery. Lieut Gallagher of the A.I.F. represented the Commonwealth Military Authorities. No relatives were present at the funeral.

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Kavanagh, Nelson Place, Adelaide, South Australia (listed as next-of-kin -friend), on 5th April, 1923 stating that the site of No. 1569, Private A. Johnson's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row F Grave 8.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – XI. F. 8. Private Aleck Johnson now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The personal effects of the late No. 1569 Sergeant A. Johnson, 10th Battalion were forwarded to Mr J. Kavanagh who was listed as the next-of-kin – friend. Mr Kavanagh signed for receipt of the parcel on 21st August, 1917.

The 4th Military District, Adelaide, South Australia, advised Base Records on 15th March, 1917 that "*the next-of-kin of the late No. 1569 Sergeant A. Johnson, 10th Battalion, resides at No. 5 Compton St. Adelaide, not Common Street, as stated in your memo.*"

The Public Trustee, Supreme Court House, Adelaide, South Australia, wrote to Base Records on 18th February, 1918 requesting the "official intimation of death" of the late Aleck Johnson as they were administering the estate of the late soldier.

Base Records replied on 25th February, 1918 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 1569 Private Aleck Johnson, 10th Battalion.

Base Records wrote to the Public Trustee, Supreme Court House, Adelaide, South Australia on 17th October, 1918 with the following "*I understand that you are administering the estate of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson, 10th Battalion, and therefore transmit per separate post one package of the personal effects of the abovenamed deceased...*" A parcel containing the personal effects of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson, 10th Battalion were forwarded to the Public Trustee & signed for on 24th October, 1918.

The Public Trustee wrote to Base Records on 16th March, 1920 advising that they were unable to trace the addresses of any relatives of the late Private A. Johnson & were returning under separate cover the effects of the late Private Johnson.

Base Records contacted Mr J. Kavanagh, 5 Compton Street, Adelaide, South Australia, on 17th June, 1920 stating that he was registered as the next of kin of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson & desired to know if there were any blood relatives for example was his father or mother alive so that their records could be brought up to date.

Communications address to Mr Kavanagh at 5 Compton Street, Adelaide were returned unclaimed.

The District Finance Officer, 4th Military District on 29th June, 1920 wrote to base Records stating the address of the next-of-kin of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson was his friend Mr J. Kavanagh, 5 Compton Street, Adelaide, South Australia.

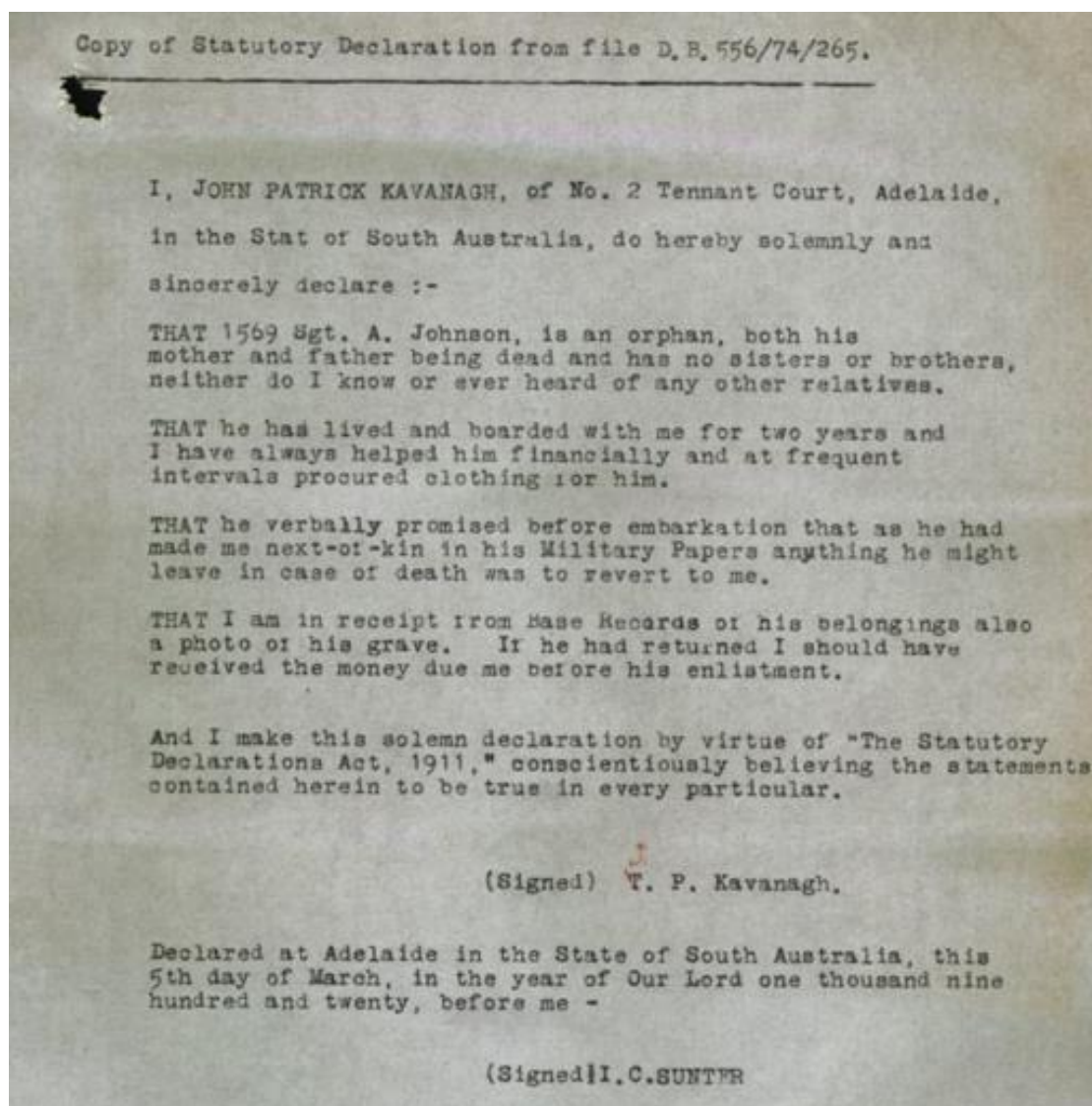
Base Records wrote to District Finance Officer, 4th Military District on 5th January, 1921 requesting the present address of the next-of-kin of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson which was shown as his friend – James Kavanagh, late of 2 Tennant Court, Adelaide, South Australia as communications sent to that address had been returned unclaimed.

A reply was sent by the District Finance Officer on 26th January, 1921 stating that latest address they had for Mr John Kavanagh was "*Nelson Place, Adelaide.*"

Base Records contacted Mr J. Kavanagh, Nelson Place, Adelaide, South Australia, on 1st March, 1923 stating that he was listed at the next of kin, in the capacity of friend of the late No. 1569 Private A. Johnson & desired to know if there were any blood relatives of the late deceased soldier so that the late soldier's War Medals could be disposed of 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.

Mr Kavanagh replied to Base Records in March, 1923 advising "...he told me he had no relations what ever and he never heard of any and that is why he made me next of kin."

A Statutory Declaration was completed by John Patrick Kavanagh regarding Private Aleck Johnson:



Private Aleck Johnson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Private Johnson's next-of-kin, however none were located & his Medals & Memorial Scroll & Plaque were sent to "Untraceables" in January, 1922.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private A. Johnson – service number 1569, of 10th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private A. Johnson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 59.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

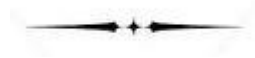
A. Johnson is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

(97 pages of Private Aleck Johnson'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



Newspaper Notices

THE ROLL OF HONOR

84th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

REPORTED IN HOSPITAL

1569, Sergeant A. Johnson, 10th Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements, Adelaide (London; previously reported ill, and disembarked at Malta)

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 1 October, 1915)

179th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Returned to Duty

1569 Sgt. A. JOHNSON, Adelaide, prev. rep. sick

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 24 June, 1916)

THE ROLL OF HONOR

280th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Died of Sickness

1569 Sgt. A. JOHNSON, Adelaide (March 6)

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 20 March, 1917)

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 A. Johnson 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

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)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



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 A. Johnson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy Neil Bright)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

