

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



7954 SAPPER

J. R. MARKWELL

AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

26TH FEBRUARY, 1919

Too Far Away Your Grave To

See

But Not Too Far To Think Of

Thee

James Robert MARKWELL

James Robert Markwell was born at South Melbourne, Victoria in 1891 to parents James & Mary Markwell (nee Wotherspoon).

James Robert Markwell attended Albert Park State School, Victoria.

The 1914, 1915, 1916 & 1917 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Fawkner, subdivision of Albert Park, Victoria listed James Robert Markwell, Rubber-worker, of 176 Richardson Street.

James Robert Markwell was a 26 year old, single, Labourer (Rubber Worker) from Port Augusta, South Australia when he enlisted on 10th May, 1917 at Port Augusta, South Australia with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. Markwell, 32 Evans Street, Port Melbourne, Victoria. James Robert Markwell stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to a Hernia.

Private James Robert Markwell was posted to "B" Company at Mitcham on 19th May, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to 10th Reinforcements of 48th Battalion on 1st June, 1917 then transferred to 10th Reinforcements of 50th Battalion on 16th July, 1917. Private Markwell was transferred on 16th July, 1917 to Tunnelling Reinforcements then on 16th August, 1917 he was transferred to May Reinforcements of Tunnelling Companies at Seymour with the rank of Sapper. Sapper Markwell was posted to Bendigo from 28th August, 1917 then on 2nd November, 1917 he was transferred back to Seymour. On 20th November, 1917 Sapper Markwell was transferred to Broadmeadows.

Sapper James Robert Markwell, Service number 7954, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Nestor* (A71) on 21st November, 1917 with the Tunnelling Companies – May 1917 Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 15th December, 1917. He was posted to Australian Camp at Suez from 15th December, 1917 then entrained for Alexandria on 4th January, 1918. Sapper Markwell was posted to Australian Camp at "Gubbary," Alexandria on 5th January, 1918. He embarked from Abbasiah on Transport E 620 on 8th January, 1918 & disembarked at Taranto on 12th January, 1918. Sapper Markwell finally disembarked at Southampton, England on 24th January, 1918.

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.

Sapper James Robert Markwell was marched in to No. 3 Camp Details at Parkhouse, Wiltshire from Australia on 24th January, 1918.

Sapper James Robert Markwell proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 2nd March, 1918 from No. 3 Camp Details at Parkhouse, Wiltshire. He was marched in to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depto) at Rouelles, France on 3rd March, 1918. Sapper Markwell was marched out from A.G.B.D. on 8th March, 1918 & joined 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company at Caestre on 13th March, 1918. He was taken on strength of 2nd Tunnelling Company on 15th March, 1918 in the Field.

2nd Tunnelling Company

The 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company was one of the tunnelling companies of the Royal Australian Engineers during World War I. The tunnelling units were occupied in offensive and defensive mining involving the placing and maintaining of mines under enemy lines, as well as other underground work such as the construction of deep dugouts for troop accommodation, the digging of subways, saps (a narrow trench dug to approach enemy trenches), cable trenches and underground chambers for signals and medical services.

(Extract of information from Wikipedia)

Sapper James Robert Markwell was wounded in action (Gas) on 1st June, 1918. He was admitted to 5th Australian Field Ambulance on 1st June, 1918 with G.S.P. (wounded) & was transferred the same day to 20th Casualty Clearing Station. Sapper Markwell was transferred on 3rd June, 1918 & was admitted to 41st Stationary Hospital –

Gassed Shell. He was discharged to his Unit on 30th July, 1918 & rejoined 2nd Tunnelling Company on 1st August, 1918.

War Diary 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company

Medical Officer's Report for the Month – June, 1918:

The health of the Company suffered considerably from the prevailing epidemic of Influenza. As, by Corps Orders, no man liable to be ill for more than two days can be retained in the area, the evacuation of sick was heavy – eighty three sick men being sent to Field Ambulances. In addition to these twenty three men was gassed and six men wounded were evacuated. The establishment of a small camp hospital, equipped by the Red Cross Society has prevented many being sent to Field Ambulances. Sanitation satisfactory.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Base Records advised Mr James Markwell, 32 Evans St, Port Melbourne, Victoria, father of Sapper J. R. Markwell, on 19th June, 1918 that Sapper J. R. Markwell had been gassed – classed as wounded.

Sapper James Robert Markwell was on Leave to UK from 8th February, 1919 & was to return on 24th February, 1919.

Sapper James Robert Markwell was admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford on 21st February, 1919 with Influenza while on Leave. He was reported to be dangerously ill on 25th February, 1919. (Note: Purport form in Sapper Markwell's Service Record file recorded he was "*dangerously & seriously ill on 25.2.19.*")

Sapper James Robert Markwell died at 11.50 pm on 26th February, 1919 at 3rd Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, Kent, England from Influenza. (Time of death as listed on Hospital Admission form, however a Telegram from Hospital at Dartford to "*AdminAust London*" stated the time of death as 23.55 on 26th February as well as Morning State of Sick form.)

A death for James R. Markwell, aged 29, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Dartford, Kent, England.

Sapper James Robert Markwell was buried on 4th March, 1919 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 183134.

From the burial report of Sapper James Robert Markwell - Coffin was oak. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler, Pallbearers and Band being in attendance, in charge of Lt Humphries, from A.I.F. Depots in U.K. Tidworth. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and conveyed to the graveside, surmounted by many wreaths sent from relatives and friends. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside, and the Rev Major Robinson officiated. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.

Names of Relatives or Friends present at the Funeral – Brother – Mr J. Markwell, 178 Westbourne Grove, Bayswater. Uncle – Mr D. Gibbins.

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Markwell, 62 Richardson St, Albert Park, Victoria, on 4th April, 1923 stating that the site of his son's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row K Grave 1.

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – IV. K. 1. Sapper James Robert Markwell now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Sapper James Robert Markwell requested in his Will, dated 13th August, 1917, that in the event of his death the whole of his personal property & Military estate to be given to his father – Mr James Markwell, of 32 Evans Street, Port Melbourne, Victoria, Shipwright.

The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Co. Ltd , Sydney, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 15th April, 1919 requesting *"the usual certificate of death together with identification particulars for the following late member of the A.I.F. who was assured with this Company. J. R. Markwell, No. 7954, Vict, Enlisted in S. Aus."*

Mr J. Markwell advised Base Records in July, 1921 that he had changed his address from 32 Evans St., Port Melbourne to Myora Road, Lang Lang.

Sapper James Robert Markwell was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sapper Markwell's father – Mr J. Markwell, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

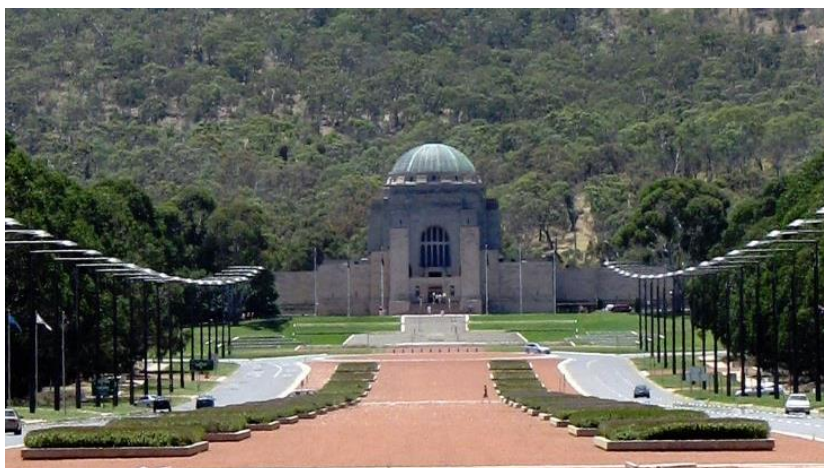
Mr J. Markwell advised Base Records in June, 1923 that he had changed his address from 62 Richardson St, Albert Park, to Trentham, Cook St, West Brunswick.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper James Robert Markwell – service number 7954, of 2nd Coy., Australian Tunnelling Corps. He was the son of James and the late Mary Markwell.

Sapper J. R. Markwell is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 27.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



J. R. Markwell 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.



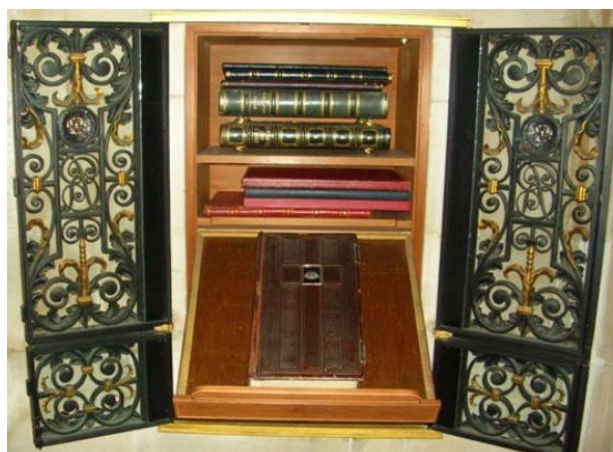
National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

Sapper J. R. Markwell is remembered on the Tunnellers' Roll of Honour, located in The Chapel of All Souls, St Paul's Cathedral, London, England.

From the *Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 23 July, 1921.

ENGINEERS' ROLL OF HONOUR

The Royal Engineer War Memorial Committee are arranging to deposit a roll of honour of all ranks of the Royal Engineers whose names were officially published as killed in action or died of wounds or disease in the war in the chapel of St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Engineer corps of the dominions, colonial, and Indian armies have been invited to deposit similar rolls of honour in St. Paul's, to be attached to that of the Royal Engineers. This invitation has been accepted in Australia. The roll will be inscribed on vellum and enclosed in a casket of Australian timbers to rest on a slab of Australian marble. To defray the cost subscriptions of 1/, restricted to members of the A.I.F. Engineers, A.M.F. Engineer units, and relatives and friends of those members of the A.I.F. Engineer units, including Signals, A.E.M.M. and B Companies, and Tunnelling Corps who fell in the war, are to be received by the president of the committee. Major J. E. Fraser, D.S.O., or Captain E. H. Cottee, R.A.E., Engineer Depot, Park-road, Paddington. The amount to be raised in this State is £70. Competitive designs for the roll and the casket are to be invited and particulars may be obtained from the brigade-major of Engineers, Victoria Barracks.

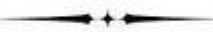


(Photos by Robin Sanderson, Paris with permission of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral)



(54 pages of Sapper James Robert Markwell'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

414th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Wounded

7954 Spr. J. R. MARKWELL, Port Melbourne, Vic., gas

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 6 July, 1918)

462nd CASUALTY LIST

Died Other Causes

7954 Spr. J. R. MARKWELL, Port Melbourne, V., 26/2/19, c.n.s. (p.r.w.)

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 5 April, 1919)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

MARKWELL – Somewhere in France, on the 26th February Jim, comrade and pal of Sapper W. J. Dixon, on active service

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 2 April, 1919)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

MARKWELL – In loving memory of my dear friend, Jim, who died whilst on active service at Dartford, England, on February 26th, 1919. Ever remembered – Inserted by his true friend, Bill Dixon.

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 26 February, 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)

Sapper J. R. Markwell does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Too Far Away Your Grave To See

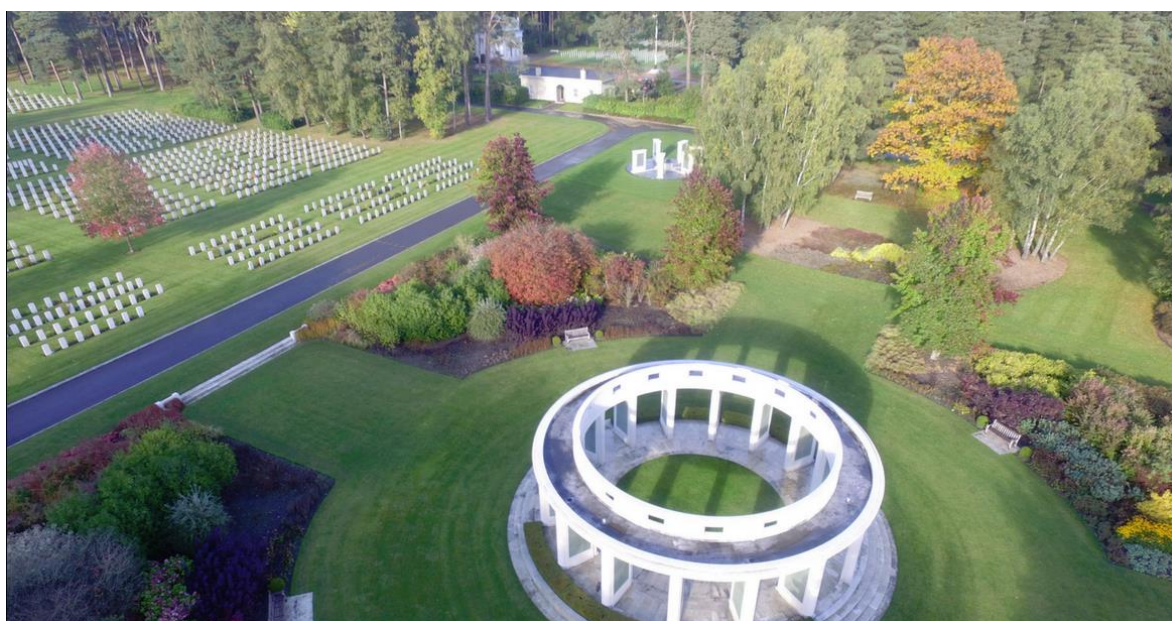
But Not Too Far To Think Of Thee

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



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

