

**St. Mary's New Churchyard,
Codford, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



7026 PRIVATE

J. C. P. McGRATH

15TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND MARCH, 1917 Age 21

FOR KING & COUNTRY

HE GAVE HIS BEST

THY WILL BE DONE

James Charles Patrick McGRATH

James Charles Patrick McGrath was born at Marlborough, near Rockhampton, Queensland on 3rd June, 1895 to parents Patrick & Margaret McGrath (nee Robinson).

Patrick McGrath, father of James Charles Patrick McGrath, died on 20th April, 1912 at Hughenden, Queensland.

James McGrath was a 21 year old, single, Station Hand from Hughenden, Queensland when he enlisted on 30th August, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Maggie McGrath of St. Lawrence via Rockhampton, Queensland.

Private James Charles Patrick McGrath was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 8th September, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 23rd Reinforcements of 15th Battalion on 17th October, 1916.

Private James Charles Patrick McGrath, Service number 7026, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 25th November, 1916 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 15th Infantry Battalion, 23rd Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. These were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private James McGrath was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 30th January, 1917 from Australia.

Private James McGrath was admitted sick to Group Hospital at Codford, with Influenza, on 17th February, 1917. From the Medical Case Sheet for Private McGrath – *“complains of pain in right side on coughing – last week. Cough ever since leaving Australia over three months ago.”*

Private James Charles Patrick McGrath died at 7.20 p.m. on 2nd March, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand Military Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire, England from Broncho pneumonia.

A death for James C. P. McGrath, aged 21, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private James Charles Patrick McGrath was buried on 7th March, 1917 in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England - Grave No. 84. From the burial report - *Polished Elm Coffin – He was buried with full Military Honours and the officers & Men of his Company (23rd/15th Bn) followed his remains to the grave. His grave will be attended to.*

Private McGrath's mother – Margaret McGrath of St. Lawrence was awarded a War Pension in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 7/5/1917.

Mrs McGrath, mother of the late Private James Charles Patrick McGrath, wrote several letters requesting her son's personal belongings, namely a silver watch & chain, & letters & also for his uniform. Base Records replied that it was not the practice to return the uniform to the deceased's family & that they had not received any personal belongings to date – April, 1919. Further enquires were made on behalf of Mrs McGrath's requests at it was ascertained that Private McGrath's personal items were collected on 6th March, 1917 & signed for by a Lance-Corporal W. Patterson on behalf of the Officer Commanding of the 4th Training Battalion A.I.F. Codford. Apparently Lance-Corporal Patterson had returned to Australia on 8th November, 1918. A Statutory Declaration made by William Walter Patterson, dated 14th April, 1919, stated that the personal effects of Private McGrath were received by him & that he saw Capt. Snartt afterwards sorting out the personal effects from the military effects. Capt Snartt then gave Sergt Major some instructions regarding the items but William Patterson could not say exactly what the instructions were. Cecil Edwin Snartt also signed a Statutory Declaration stating he had no recollection of the personal effects of

Private McGrath & that 2nd Lieut. Day was Adjutant at the time & he dealt with all the articles of personal effects of deceased soldiers. Further investigations were made & Essington Day was located. He provided a letter which stated that he could not remember the particular case of Private McGrath's personal effects & the procedure was the items "were brought into the Orderly Room of the 4th Training Battalion & either the Commanding Officer, the Orderly Room Sergeant or himself, as Adjutant would have dealt with the items".

A letter to Mrs McGrath from Base Records dated June, 1919 states that "although exhaustive enquiries have been made no trace of the late soldier's property can be found." A further letter states that "The A.I.F. is morally responsible for the loss and in the circumstances the value of the articles of a private nature might be paid as an act of grace."

Private James Charles Patrick McGrath was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private McGrath's mother – Margaret McGrath (April, 1923 & May, 1922)

Private J. C. P. McGrath is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 76.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

[*3 Soldiers (Above)- J.C.P. McGrath, D.E. McGregor & G. McIlroy were all from 15th Battalion & were all buried in Anzac Cemetery at Codford St. Mary, Codford, Wiltshire, England.]



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(77 pages of Private James Charles Patrick McGrath's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



(The Queenslander 16 December, 1916)

Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES – LIST No. 280

DIED OF ILLNESS – QUEENSLAND

J. C. P. McGrath

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria, Tuesday 20th 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 at Codford War Graves Cemetery. 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. C. P. McGrath does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

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St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England

The New Zealand Command Depot was established at Codford in June 1916 and the No 3 New Zealand General Hospital followed in July. The New Churchyard was established by deed of gift as the "Military Burial Ground," with a small part reserved for future burials from the parish. The war graves plot contains 98 burials, mostly of New Zealand and Australian forces. There is only one burial of the Second World War in the New Churchyard.

(*Information from CWGC*)

There are 31 WW1 Australian War Graves & 66 WW1 New Zealand War Graves located here. There is one WW1 British Royal Army Medical Corp Grave & one WW2 Welsh Guards grave located in this Churchyard.



St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford (*Photos courtesy of Romy Wyeth*)





(Photos by Romy Wyeth 2013)



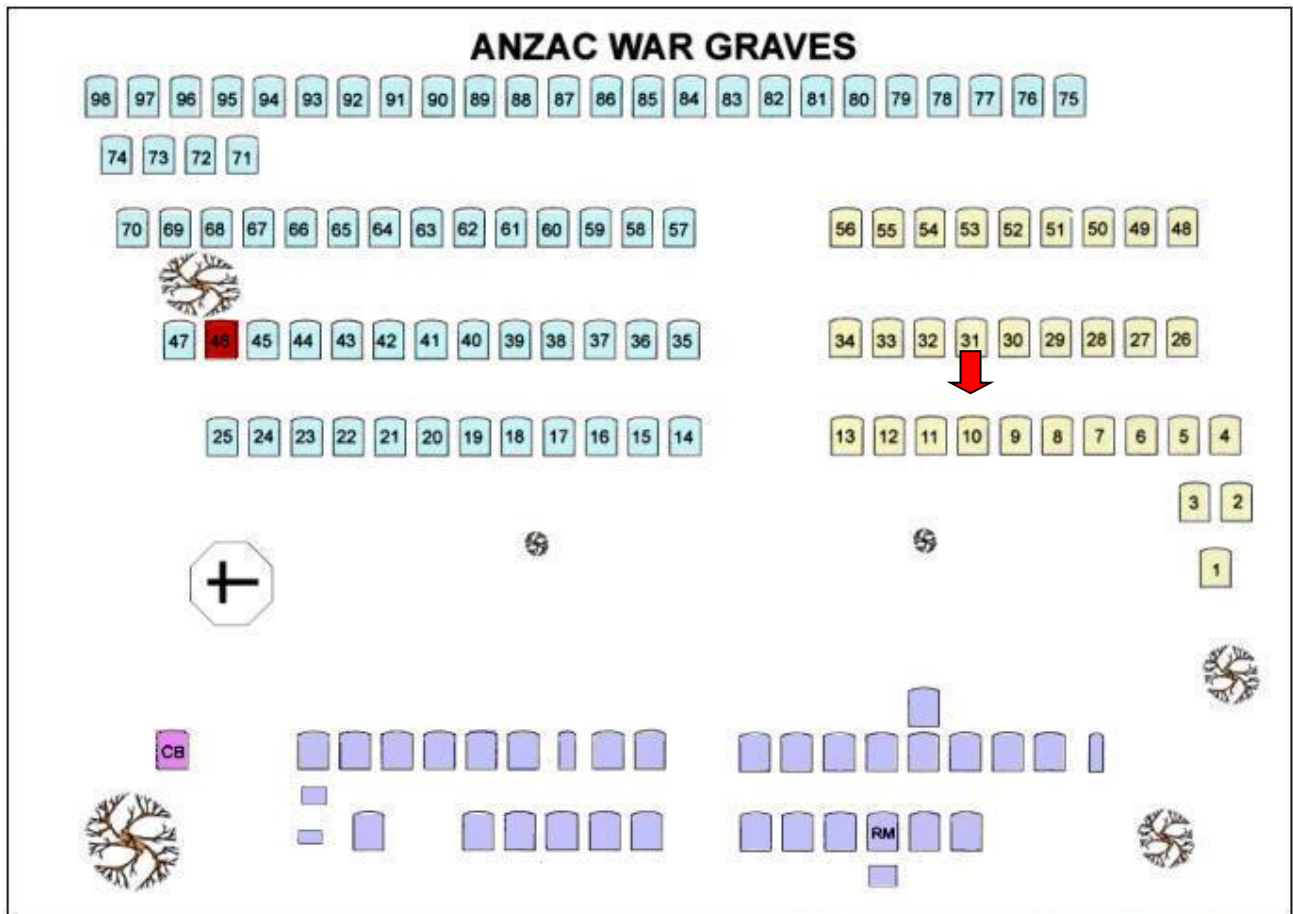
New Zealand Section of Codford Anzac War Graves Cemetery

Photo of Private J. C. P. McGrath's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary's New Churchyard, Codford, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Lady Linda 2020)

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Private J. C. P. McGrath is located in Main Front Row (Right hand side) Grave Plot # 10 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (CWGC Reference - Grave # 84)



- Australian Soldiers
- New Zealand Soldiers
- UK Soldier
- Welsh Soldier
- Local Burials

Codford War Graves map adapted from Brian Marshall courtesy of Romy Wyeth