

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



1588 PRIVATE

T. W. CHILTON

53RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

30TH MARCH, 1918 Age 29

HE DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE

EVER REMEMBERED

BY HIS LOVING UNCLE,

AUNT AND COUSINS

Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte T. W. Chilton is located in Main Third Row (Right Hand Side) Grave Plot # 52 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)

(CWGC Reference - Grave # 95)

Thomas William Chilton was born near the town of Darlington, Durham, England**. He was a 28 year old, single farm labourer from Coolamon, NSW when he enlisted in Sydney on 9th October, 1916 with the Light Trench Mortar Battery, 4th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 1588 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his Uncle – W. Anton, Langley Moor, Durham, England. From the information supplied for the Roll of Honour, by his Uncle – William Auton, Thomas had arrived in Australia when he was 22 years old.

From the Attestation Papers, Thomas William Chilton had previously served with the 1st Battalion of Australian Infantry Forces for 1 year & 317 days with a service number of 1529. He had been discharged on account of wounds. His old Attestation papers show that Thomas William Chilton had enlisted on 18th September, 1914 at the age of 26. He had joined the 1st Battalion in early May, 1915 at the Gallipoli Peninsula. He was wounded in action at Gallipoli on 19th May, 1915 & admitted to Hospital in Alexandria with a compound fracture to Jaw & was transferred to England per H.S. "Wandilla" on 20th July, 1915. He was then admitted to Hospital at Wandsworth, London on 31st July, 1915. Pte Chilton then sailed from Portland, England to Australia per "Ascanius" on 17th March, 1916. A report into Pte Chilton's injury reads: *He was struck on the chin just below the mouth by a bullet. It emerged just behind the right ear. It fractured the lower jaw and injured the tongue. Fragments of bone were removed from the lower jaw and an operation was performed in the area of the exit wound for draining.*

A report dated 13th March, 1916 stated that since the injury, Pte Chilton received severe headaches in occipital region that were almost constantly present & he was unable to chew solid food.

Pte Chilton was discharged on 30th July, 1916 due to medical unfitness. He was medically marked as Fit for Home Service in Australia, light duty. Pte Chilton was eligible for a War Pension, due to his injuries, of £3 per fortnight from 31st July, 1916, but this was cancelled when he re-enlisted.

Pte Thomas William Chilton embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Benalla* (A24) on 9th November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 9th January, 1917.

Pte William Chilton was marched into No. 6 & 7 Camp at Perham Downs on 10th January, 1917. He was then transferred to 53rd Battalion on 6th February, 1917. He proceeded to France from 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, via Folkestone on 25th April, 1917 & was then taken on strength at Etaples, France on 30th April, 1917.

Pte Chilton was wounded in action in the field on 12th May, 1917 & on 18th May, 1917 he was invalided back to England via 22nd General Hospital Carriers with Gunshot wounds to his feet side & face. Another entry dated 19th May, 1917 shows Pte Chilton was admitted to 3rd General Hospital with a gunshot wounds to chest & back. Pte Chilton was transferred to several hospitals back in England from 19th May, 1917 until he was given furlough from 10th August – 24th August, 1917.

Pte Chilton was absent without leave for 25 hours from 24th August, 1917 until 25th August, 1917 & was forfeited 2 days pay.

Pte Chilton was reclassified mid September, 1917 & admitted back to Hospital at Sutton Veny mid-late November, 1917 with gastritis. From there he was discharged to No.1 Command Depot on 9th December, 1917 & then transferred to Overseas Training Brigade on 6th January, 1918 at Longbridge Deverill.

On 23rd January, 1918 Pte Chilton was marched into 3rd Training Brigade at Codford, where he was attached to 14th Training Battalion for course of Instruction in Signalling.

On 19th March, 1918 Pte Chilton was admitted sick to Group Clearing Hospital at Codford. He was transferred on 22nd March, 1918 to 3rd New Zealand General Hospital at Codford.

Pte Thomas William Chilton died at 8.20 p.m. on 30th March, 1918 at the 3rd New Zealand Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire. A Post Mortem examination was performed on 31st March, 1918 & the cause of death was determined to be Purulent bronchitis, with septicaemia and pleurisy. Hospital records mark Pte Chilton as having died from Lobar Pneumonia.

A death for Thomas W. Chilton, aged 30, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

From the burial report of Pte Thomas William Chilton, he was buried at Codford St. Mary's Cemetery, Grave no. 95 on 3rd April, 1918. *The condition of the coffin was first class and of polished oak. The deceased soldier's brother was in attendance. All personal property in the possession of the deceased at the time of his death was forwarded to A.I.F. Kit Store, Greyhound Road, London.*

A letter in the Red Cross Missing and Wounded files for Pte Chilton reads:

Died 30-3-18 T. Chilton 1588

Re the deceased of the above named, I have to inform you that the burial took place on 3-4-18, and was attended with full military honours. Pte Chilton now lies on the Australian Portion of the Soldier's Cemetery, Codford, St Mary.

Pte Chilton was admitted to this Hospital on March 17th suffering from a bad cough and on the 25th it was found necessary to notify Australian Headquarters that he was seriously ill. His condition became worse and on the 29th March he was placed on the list of patients Dangerously Ill, and Australian Hqrs were informed accordingly. On the day following the Patient died from Heart Failure resulting Pneumonia.

Letter from :- O.C. No. 3 N.Z. General Hospital

Pte Thomas W. Chilton stated on 24th April, 1917, that his Will was lodged with Mr Edwin Auton of 5 Raby Terrace, Darlington, Durham, England. A copy of his Will was included in his Service Record & he appointed Pte Ewden Auton as his Executor. Pte Chilton left £100 to Mrs Sarah Ellen Auton of Gilling Grange Cottage, Richmond, Yorkshire, England. *(CWGC information shows this is*

Pte Chilton's mother) & £100 & what money had been paid into his Bank account to Pte Ewden Auton of 5 Raby Terrace, Darlington, Durham, England.

Private T. W. Chilton is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 156.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

Pte T. Chilton is also remembered on the Coolamon War Memorial in NSW.



(Photo by Robert from Wagga Wagga)

Pte Thomas William Chilton was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte T. W. Chilton's mother – Mrs Sarah Eellen Auton in England in October 1922.

(101 pages of Pte Thomas William Chilton'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives

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**From the information supplied for the Roll of Honour, by his Uncle – William Auton, he lists Thomas William Chilton's place of birth as Ripon, Yorkshire, England, yet the Attestation papers state that Thomas was born near the town of Darlington, Durham, England.

** The second last paper in Pte Thomas William Chilton's Service Record file is stamped "More than One Period of Service" & lists his details as:

- A. 1529. Pte, Chilton, Thomas William 1st Battn
- B. 1588. Pte Chilton, T.W. 53rd Battn

Above this, written in red is "Stated to be AUTON, John William"

There is nothing else in Pte Chilton's records that indicate the name John William Auton other than this one piece of paper.

* A search for births under the name of Thomas William Chilton between 1887 & 1889 comes up with no matches. A search for births under the name of John William Auton between 1887 & 1889 comes up with a result – Birth registered in March quarter of 1888 at Ripon.

Newspaper Reports

398th CASUALTY LIST

New South Wales

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte. Thos. Wm. Chilton, England, 30/3/'18

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW, Tuesday 16th April, 1918)

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES, -Probate Jurisdiction – In the Estate of THOMAS WILLIAM CHILTON, late of Coolamon, in the State of New South Wales, and of the Australian Imperial Forces on active service, deceased. – Application will be made after fourteen days from the publication hereof, that administration with the Will annexed of the Estate of the abovenamed deceased may be granted to the PUBLIC TRUSTEE; and all persons having claims against the said Estate must render same in detail to the Public Trustee, on or before the 28th day of November, 1918. T. W. GARRETT, Public Trustee, Culwulla –chambers, Castlereagh – street, Sydney.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW, Saturday 26th October, 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 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)

Pte T. W. Chilton does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte T. W. Chilton's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)