

# Codford War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I

4/535 LANCE CPL.

**V. J. BYRNE**

N.Z. ENGINEERS

19TH OCTOBER, 1918 Age 27



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Lance Cpl. V. J. Byrne is located in Last Row (Left Hand Side) Grave Plot # 89 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

*(CWGC Reference - Grave # 124)*

Vincent John Byrne was born 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1891 (according to Birth Registration – the year was 1891, however his Attestation Paper states 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1893) at Kumara, Westland, New Zealand, the son of Thomas Vincent & Francis Amelia Morris Byrne (nee Ward). He was a 23 year old, single, Jeweller from Wellington, New Zealand when he enlisted on 13<sup>th</sup> August, 1914 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 4/535 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs F. A. Byrne of 59 Ellice St, Wellington, New Zealand.

Sapper Vincent John Byrne & his younger brother Charles Alfred Byrne both embarked with Field Engineers from Wellington, New Zealand on HMNZT (3) *Maunganui* on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1914, destination Suez, Egypt. They disembarked at Egypt on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1914.

Sapper Byrne was admitted to Hospital at Dardanelles on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 with Periotitis & was transferred to Port Said with anaemia. He was transferred to duty on 13<sup>th</sup> September, 1915. He rejoined his unit at Somalia on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 1916 with the rank of Lance Corporal. Date of appointment is unknown. He was relieved of his appointment as Lance Cpl. on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1916.

Sapper Byrne embarked from Alexandria for France on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1916.

Sapper Byrne was admitted to Hospital- sick in the Field on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 & transferred to several hospitals with Scabies & Impetigo during March, 1917.

On 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 Sapper Byrne was transferred back to England & admitted to 2<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand General Hospital at Walton. He was discharged on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1917.

Sapper Byrne was on leave from 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1917 to 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1917.

On 4<sup>th</sup> July, Sapper Byrne was admitted to Military Hospital & discharged from Stevenage on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1917.

Sapper Byrne was transferred to NZ Reserve Signal Company on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1917.

Sapper Vincent John Byrne was appointed to Lance Corporal as from 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1918.

Lance Cpl. Byrne was admitted to Hospital on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1918 until 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1918 with Tonsillitis. He was transferred to 3<sup>rd</sup> New Zealand General Hospital on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1918.

Lance Corporal Vincent John Byrne died on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1918 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> New Zealand General Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire of Encephalitis.

A death for Vincent J. Byrne, aged 23, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, Codford on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1918.

Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne left in his Will in favour of his mother – Frances Amelia Byrne.

Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne, 4/535 was last attached to Divisional Signal Company, New Zealand Engineers. He had served in Egypt – 1914, 1915 & 1916, Balkans – Gallipoli 1915 & Western Europe – 1916 & 1917.

Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne was entitled to 1914-15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Cpl. Byrne's mother – Mrs F. A. M. Byrne at Mt. Roskill, Auckland (May, 1921 & January, 1922)

(21 pages of Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

*Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission & PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand.*

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Two of Lance Cpl. Vincent John Byrne's brothers were also killed in WW1:

- Temporary 2<sup>nd</sup> Corporal James Francis Byrne (10/3210) of New Zealand Engineers was killed in action at Belgium on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 1917, aged 27. He is buried in Strand Military Cemetery, Hainaut, Belgium VI. B. 7.
- Corporal Charles Alfred Byrne (4/536) of New Zealand Engineers, died of wounds (gassed) on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1917 in Belgium, aged 24. He is buried in Wimereux Communal Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France VI. E. 30A.

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## Newspaper Reports

### ROLL OF HONOUR

#### DIED OF SICKNESS

Byrne, V. J., 4/535, L. Cpl., N.Z.E. (Mrs F.A. Byrne, Ellice street, Wellington), 19<sup>th</sup> October

(*Evening Post*, Volume XCVI, Issue 101, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1918)

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## NEW ZEALAND'S ROLL OF HONOUR

### IN MEMORIUM

BYRNE – In loving Memory of 4/535 Lance Corporal Vincent J. Byrne (Main Body), who died in England on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1918.

To memory ever dear

Inserted by Nimie Kiernan

*(Evening Post, Volume XCVIII, Issue 94, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1919)*

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Lance Cpl. V. J. Byrne has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Lance Cpl. V. J. Byrne's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery (below)



*(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)*