

**In Memory of
Serjeant JAMES CLEMENTS
10142, D Coy. 6th Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment
Who died, age 30, on 31 July 1917
Son of James and Lucy Mary Ann Clements,
of Faringdon, Berks.
Remembered with honour
Faringdon War Memorial and
BRANDHOEK NEW MILITARY CEMETERY**



The late Sergt. J. CLEMENTS, London Street, Faringdon.—Died of wounds.

Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Brandhoek New Military Cemetery is located 6.5 km west of Ieper town centre.

During the First World War, Brandhoek was within the area comparatively safe from shell fire, which extended beyond Vlamertinghe Church. Field ambulances were posted there continuously.

Until July 1917 burials had been made in the Military Cemetery, but the arrival of the 32nd, 3rd Australian and 44th Casualty Clearing Stations in preparation for the new Allied offensive launched that month made it necessary to open the New Military Cemetery, followed in August by the New Military Cemetery No 3.

Brandhoek New Military Cemetery contains 530 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 28 German war graves. The burials are of July and August 1917; nearby to James's grave is that of Captain Noel Chavasse, VC and Bar, MC, one of only three men who have won the Victoria Cross twice.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield.

James Clements was born in 1887 in Camberwell, London, Son of James and Lucy Mary Ann Clements. The family moved to Faringdon around 1894, living in Southampton St, James was one of seven children. By 1911, aged 23, James was working as a Porter in a Drapery Warehouse. He enlisted into the Army in September 1914 in Islington, Joining the 6th Royal Berkshire Regiment, he was involved in training where he was most likely attached to the Lewis Gun Section, until landing in France on the 25th July 1915. The Battalion would be holding the line in and around Mametz and La Boisselle on the Somme, providing men for many of the mining operations in preparation for the Somme offensive. The First Day of the Somme, July 1st 1916 saw the Battalion on their first major engagement. They were very close to the huge mine that was exploded at Casino Point. Their Division, the 18th, were one of the few to completely attain all their objectives that day and the 6th Battalion advanced over one and a half miles in the day. They would fight later at Delville Wood and then Schwaben Redoubt. The 6th would remain in and out of the line in the Somme area until the 3rd of July 1917 when they were moved North to Ypres in preparation for the upcoming battle.

On the 31st July the Battalion, at 7:15am they advanced in heavy drizzle towards their jump off positions only to come under heavy machine gun fire. Their support of tanks and machine guns never arrived due to being bogged down by conditions (mud), by mid-morning their Lewis Gun sections were under heavy fire whilst trying to support their attack North of the Menin Road at a strong point known as Surbiton Villas, it is most likely here that Serjeant Clements was severely wounded, he was moved back through the Regimental Aid Post, then an Advanced Dressing Station until reaching the 32nd Casualty Clearing Station at Brandhoek, here James succumbed to his wounds and was buried in Brandhoek New Military Cemetery. The personal inscription on his headstone reads 'ever in our thoughts'