John Bernard Clarke

John Bernard Clarke was born in early 1892 at Charlton, Victoria, the eldest son of John and Mary Isabella Clarke (nee Hales). John worked for the Railways and his family had lived in Charlton, Geelong and then Kilmore East.

John junior was educated at the Kilmore East State School, and he worked as a clerk in Melbourne. He married Chrisley Agnes Mills in 1912 and they had two children, John William in 1912 and Chrisley Hales in 1914.

John enlisted in Melbourne on July 16, 1915, and gave his wife as next of kin, living at 56 Hoddle Street, Melbourne. He was allocated to the Army Medical Corps as a private, number 15569. Then he trained and worked at the 5th Australian General Hospital in St Kilda Road, Melbourne.

John embarked in Melbourne on HMAT Port Lincoln on October 20, 1916. After arriving in Devonport, England, via South Africa, in late December, John was stationed briefly at the Australian Army Medical Corps Training Depot at Parkhouse, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Private Clarke transferred to France on January 4, 1917 and was based at the Australian General Depot at Etaples. He would have first performed medic related duties on the Western Front, and then he was transferred to the 4th Australia Division Signal Company as a sapper in July.

In late September 1917, John was shot in action in his right elbow, and was transferred in October, to hospital in Birmingham. After further training and taking leave, John returned France in late March 1918.

John was probably delivering messages at the front when he was again wounded in action on September 18, 1918 and then invalided to hospital in Stourbridge,

England. After being discharged from hospital on December 28, John took leave, then worked at No 2 Command Depot in London. John may have caught up with his brother Allan in London, while his brother Percy was still in France till May 1919.

John embarked on March 23, 1919, on HMT Czar, for return to Melbourne. It would seem his official discharge was overlooked as John was not discharged until May 30, 1921.

John was awarded the British War Medal, Victory Medal and 1914/15 Star. His name is recorded on the Kilmore Shire Honour Roll at the Memorial Hall. He died on August 24, 1964 and was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery.