

**St. John the Evangelist Churchyard,
Elkstone, Gloucestershire**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



265647 PRIVATE

W. G. DOWSETT

6TH BN. SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS

28TH AUGUST, 1918

William Gilbert DOWSETT

William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett was born on 2nd September, 1889 at Hallyburton, Coupar Angus, Forfar, Scotland to parents Charles & Frances Lucy Pelling Dowsett (nee Bailey).

The 1891 England Census recorded William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett as a 1 year old living with his parents at 24 Elvaston Mews, Kensington Town, London, England. His parents were listed as Charles Dowsett (Coachman, aged 40, born Camberwell, London) & Frances Lucy Pelling Dowsett (aged 41, born Holloway, London).

Gilbert Dowsett attended St. Augustine's School, Westminster, London, England from 16th September, 1901. The family lived at 39 Lithos Road. Gilbert Dowsett's last day at St. Augustine's School was 13th June, 1904.

The 1901 England Census recorded Gilbert Dowsett as an 11 year old Scholar, living with his family at 39 Lithos Road, Hampstead, London, England. His parents were listed as Charles Dowsett (Cab Proprietor, aged 52) & Frances Dowsett (aged 51). Gilbert Dowsett was one of three children listed on this Census - Roland Dowsett (Metal Merchant's Clerk, aged 21, born Scotland) then Gilbert & Lucy Dowsett (Scholar, aged 9, born South Kensington, London).

Frances Lucy Pelling Dowsett, of 39 Lithos Road, Hampstead, Middlesex, mother of William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett, died on 22nd May, 1907. Probate was granted in London on 10th October, 1907 to Charles Dowsett, Cab Proprietor, Effects £225.

The 1911 England Census recorded Gilbert Dowsett as a 21 year old Cabinet Maker Salesman living at 39 Lithos Road, Hampstead in a 4 roomed dwelling with his father - Charles Dowsett (Widower, Lodging House Keeper, aged 62) & his sister Lucy Dowsett (Assisting at home, aged 19).

William Gilbert Dowsett enlisted on 15th September, 1914 with Seaforth Highlanders & was given a service number of 2129. He was posted to 6th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders & his service number was later renumbered to 265647. His next-of-kin was listed as his father – Mr Charles Dowsett of 39 Lithos Road, Hampstead, London.

Private William Gilbert Dowsett embarked for the Expeditionary Force on 1st May, 1915.

Private William Gilbert Dowsett was sent sick to Hospital on 11th November, 1915. He was admitted to Field Ambulance at Willencourt, France with Laryngitis. Pte Dowsett was transferred to Casualty Clearing Station on 12th November, 1915 with Pharyngitis. He was transferred & admitted to 8th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 15th November, 1915 with Laryngitis. Pte Dowsett was transferred to England on 29th November, 1915.

Private William Gilbert Dowsett was recorded as being on Home Service from 29th November, 1915. He was admitted to Racecourse Hospital, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire on 30th November, 1915 with Laryngitis. His condition was described as "*has complete aphonia – Tubercular ulceration healed, vocal cords thickened & rigid.*"

A Medical Report was completed on Private William Gilbert Dowsett on 2nd February, 1917 at Race Course Hospital, Cheltenham. His disability was listed as "*Tuberculosis of Larynx & Lungs*" which had originated in the middle of October, 1915 at Thiepval after violent shelling around chalk mines. The Medical Board found that Pte Dowsett should be discharged as permanently unfit for service of any kind.

Private William Gilbert Dowsett was discharged from Hospital on 12th February, 1917 after 441 days in Racecourse Hospital.

1/6th (Morayshire) Battalion Territorial Force (& 1/5th (The Sutherland & Caithness Highland) Battalion Territorial Force

The 6th (Morayshire) Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders was a unit of the Territorial Force, with their HQ at Garmouth, at the outbreak of war they were part of the Seaforth and Cameron Brigade, Highland Division and had their HQ at Elgin. G Coy's Drill Hall was in Lhanbryde (now The St Andrews Hotel) When war broke out in August 1914, they had just departed for annual camp and were at once recalled to home base, they mobilised for full time war service

on the 5th of August 1914 and the Division concentrated at Bedford. They proceeded to France on the 2nd of May 1915.

Timeline:

4th August, 1914 - The 1/5th stationed at Golspie, Scotland and the 1/6th stationed at Elgin, Scotland. Both part of the Seaforth & Cameron Brigade of the Highland Division and then moved to Bedford.

2nd May, 1915 - Mobilised for war and landed in France where the formation became the 152nd Brigade of the 51st Division which engaged in various actions including;

During 1915 - The Battle of Festubert, The Second Action of Givenchy

During 1916 - The attacks on High Wood, The Battle of the Ancre.

During 1917 - The First and Second Battles of the Scarpe, The capture and defence of Roeux, The Battle of Pilkem Ridge, The Battle of Menin Road Ridge.

During 1918 - The Battle of St Quentin, The Battle of Bapaume, The Battle of Estaires, The Battle of Hazebrouck, Battles of the Marne, Second Battles of Arras, The pursuit to the Selle, The Battle of the Selle, a phase of the Final Advance in Picardy.

11th November, 1918 - Ended the war in France, Iwuy N.E. of Cambrai.

Private William Gilbert Dowsett was discharged at Elgin from the 1/6th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders on 10th March, 1917 "*being no longer physically fit for War Service K. Rs. Para 392 (xvi)*". His discharge papers record that his intended place of residence was 39 Lithos Road, Hampstead, London & his trade was listed as Designer. Pte Dowsett's military character was described as very good – "*During his period of service this man's character has been very good. He is sober, reliable, intelligent and is cordially recommended for suitable employment.*" Private William Gilbert Dowsett had served with Expeditionary Force for 212 days.

The 1918 England Electoral Register for the division of Hampstead and Holborn, Borough of Camden recorded William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett, of 39 Lithos Road.

William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett died on 28th August, 1918.

A death for William G. B. Dowsett, aged 28, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

William Gilbert Bailey Dowsett was buried on 1st September, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Elkstone, Gloucestershire, England – (north of Church) and has a Private Headstone. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Medal Index Card for Private William G. Dowsett shows he was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. The WW1 Service Medal and Award Rolls for the 1914/15 Star show that Private William Gilbert Dowsett was also entitled to the 1914/15 Star as he had disembarked on 1st May, 1915 for the Theatre of War – Code 1 – Western Europe - France and Flanders.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private W. G. Dowsett – service number 265647, of 6th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders. He was the son of Tom Dowsett, of Sydney, Australia. (Note: Charles Dowsett was the father of William Gilbert Dowsett).

Private W. G. Dowsett is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour. *(Note: It appears that Private Dowsett's name on the Commemorative Roll was based on the information that his next-of-kin's address was listed as Australia & therefore the soldier concerned it was assumed would be Australian.)*



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial *(Capital Photographer)*

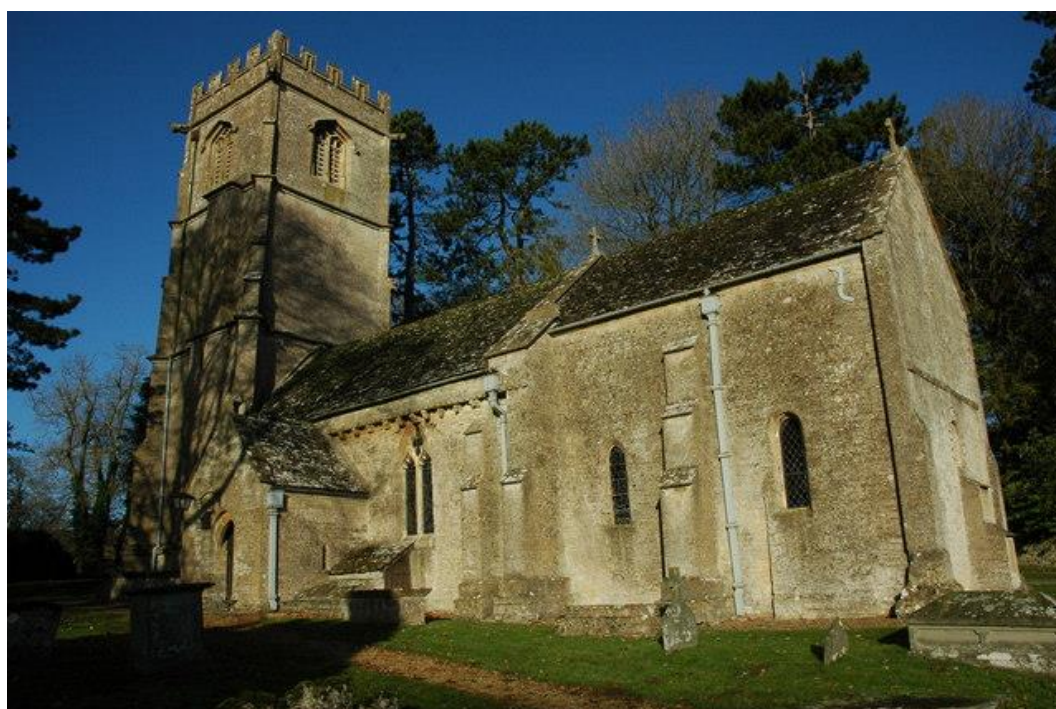
(Pte William Gilbert Dowsett's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Find My Past website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Elkstone, Gloucestershire, England

St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Elkstone contains 2 Commonwealth War Graves – both from World War 1.



St. John the Evangelist Church, Elkstone *(Photo by Philip Halling)*

Photo of Private W. G. Dowsett's Private Headstone in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Elkstone, Gloucestershire, England.



(Photos courtesy of Sylvie Pierce)



In Loving Memory Of
WILLIAM GILBERT B. DOWSETT
Of The 6TH Seaforth Highlanders
Born At Hallyburton, Coupar Angus
Forfar N. . September 2ND 1889
Gassed At Ypres
Died In This Parish August 28TH, 1916



St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Elkstone showing Pte Dowsett's Headstone (marked with arrow)
(Photo from CWGC)