

**Hatfield Road Cemetery,  
St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**4442 PRIVATE**

**W. M. GILLIN**

**22ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**22ND AUGUST, 1916**

## William Martin GILLIN

William Martin Gillin was born at Malmsbury, Victoria in 1897 to parents James Joseph & Mary Gillin (nee Williams).

Mary Gillin, mother of William Martin Gillin, died on 24th August, 1914 in Victoria.

William Martin Gillin was a 21 year old, single, Labourer from 35 Smith Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne, Victoria when he enlisted on 2nd February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Roman Catholic & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr James Gillin, Queanbeyan, New South Wales.

Recruit William Martin Gillin was posted to "B" Company, 10th Battalion on 1st February, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred on 23rd March, 1916 to Broadmeadows & posted to 22nd Battalion, 11th Reinforcements as Private.

Private William Martin Gillin, Service number 4442, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on RMS *Orontes* on 29th March, 1916 (date as per Embarkation Roll, however the Casualty Form – Active Service has date he embarked from Melbourne as 7th March, 1916) with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 22nd Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 10th April, 1916.

Private William Martin Gillin proceeded from Alexandria on 30th May, 1916 on H.M.T. *Tunisian* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 5th June, 1916. Private Gillin joined 22nd Battalion in France on 31st July, 1916 from Reinforcements.

Private William Martin Gillin was admitted to 44th Casualty Clearing Station on 6th August, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wounds) – multiple. He was transferred to No. 13 General Hospital on 7th August, 1916 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Jan Breydel* from Boulogne, France on 9th August, 1916 with G.S.W Leg.

### 22nd Battalion

The 22nd Battalion AIF was formed on 26 March 1915 at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria. The battalion became part of the 6th Brigade of the 2nd Division.

Most of the battalion embarked for Egypt on 8 May 1915. The battalion deployed to Gallipoli in the first week of September 1915 allowing elements of the 2nd Brigade to be rested from their positions in the front line at ANZAC. The battalion served on the peninsula until the final evacuation in December 1915, and were then withdrawn to Egypt and brought back to strength with reinforcements.

While most of the battalion was serving on Gallipoli the transport drivers, along with the other drivers from the 6th Brigade, were sent to the Salonika front to support the Serbs. They did not rejoin the battalion until after the evacuation of ANZAC.

In March 1916, the battalion embarked for France and experienced their first service on the Western Front in reserve breastwork trenches near Fleurbaix at the end of the first week of April 1916. The battalion's first major action was at Pozieres, part of the massive British offensive on the Somme. In September/October they were moved to the Ypres sector then back to the Somme for the winter.....

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

#### From the War Diary of 22nd Battalion:

The 22nd Battalion were located at Sausage Valley on 4th August, 1916. *"During the afternoon orders received from 6th Bde to attack, objective being 91, 60, 12, 77. Orders communicated verbally to all Officers...."*

The 22nd Battalion were located at Pozieres Ridge on 5th August, 1916. *"The position was consolidated and the trenches were defensible by dawn. When it was seen that the 24th Coy would not be required they were ordered to withdraw to relieve the congestion of the trenches. This was completed 4 am....."*

*Casualties during operations 27/7/16 to 5/8/16:*

	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Other Ranks</i>
<i>Killed</i>	5	79
<i>Died of Wounds</i>	2	5
<i>Missing</i>	1	146
<i>Wounded</i>	18	395
<i>Total</i>	26	625

(Information from War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private William Martin Gillin was admitted to Middlesex War Hospital, Napsbury, England on 10th August, 1916 (date as per Casualty Form – Active Service, however the Hospital Admissions form has the date of admission to Hospital as 9th August, 1916) with fractured left Femur – wounded severe.

Private William Martin Gillin died on 22nd August, 1916 at Middlesex War Hospital, Napsbury, St. Albans, England from wounds received in action in France - G.S.W. Left Thigh, compound fracture of Femur, Secondary Haemorrhage, amputation of thigh & Shock. The Hospital Admissions form recorded “*Secondary haemorrhage, taken to Theatre, amputation thigh upper third. Death from Shock.*”

A death for William M. Gillin, aged 21, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England.

Private William Martin Gillin was buried on 28th August, 1916 in Hatfield Road Cemetery, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England – Soldiers Corner.

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Gillin, Martin’s Boarding House, Wonthaggi, Victoria on 26th April, 1920: “*With reference to my communication of 6th March, 1917, regarding the regrettable loss of your son, the late No. 4442 Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from former site, and re-interred in Grave No, K 4, Soldiers Corner, St. Albans Cemetery, St. Albans, Herts. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain. The utmost care and attention is being devoted to the graves of our fallen soldiers, and photographs are being taken as soon as possible for transmission to next-of-kin.*”

This is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number Mil. L. I. and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Mr J. Gillin, 29 Blenheim Street, Bacalava, Victoria, wrote to Base Records on 19th March, 1917 advising : “*In regard to my telephone enquiry for certificate of death of my son Pte W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion No. 4442. I now wish to inform you that my address has been changed from Rocky Camp, Buchan, Vic. to the address given above.*”

Base Records replied to Mr J. Gillin, 29 Blenheim Street, Balaclava, Victoria on 20th March, 1917 enclosing “*... certificate of report of death of your son, the late No. 4442, Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion. Your change of address has been noted.*”

The Postmaster, Queanbeyan, New South Wales, wrote to Base Records on 21st August, 1918. Asking for fuller details of No. 4442 Private William Martin Gillin 22 Battalion as the Post Office held a letter containing a photo of the soldier's grave. The Post Office were requesting the soldier's relative's address & the date the soldier enlisted etc.

Base Records replied on 27th August, 1918 advising that the late No. 4442 Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion, had enlisted at Melbourne on 20th January, 1916. His next-of-kin is shown on the records as: James Gillin (Father), 29 Blenheim Street, Balaclava, Victoria.

Communications addressed to Mr James Gillin, 29 Blenheim Street, Balaclava, Victoria, in January, 1920 from Base Records were returned "Not Known".

A notice was prepared for the Press for 4th February, 1920: *"Mr James Gillin, formerly of 29 Blenheim Street, Balaclava, Victoria, next-of-kin to the late No. 4442, Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion, is requested to communicate with the Officer in Charge, Base Records, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, Victoria, as soon as possible."*

Mr J. Gillin, Martin's Boarding, Wonthaggi, wrote to Base Records on 10th February, 1920 with the following letter: *"I see by the Paper you required my address I being the father of the late W. M. Gillin."*

Base Records replied to Mr J. Gillin on 17th February, 1920: *"Forwarded herewith are two photographs of the locality of the grave of your son the late No. 4442 Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion, which, I trust, will come safely to hand. These were previously forwarded to you on 12/1/20, but were returned unclaimed, hence the advertisement in the Press. Your change of address, as notified in your letter of the 10th February, is now noted on the records."*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private William Martin Gillin contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relatives to obtain all available particulars of the circumstances surrounding his death and place of burial.

- The Matron of the County of Middlesex War Hospital, Napsbury, St. Albans wrote the following letter: *"...At the time of Private Gillin's death the Sister in charge of the ward wrote to this soldier's people giving all the little intimate details. Private Gillin was buried on the St. Albans Cemetery, in the part reserved for Soldiers only."*
- The Medical Officer of the County of Middlesex War Hospital, Napsbury, St. Albans wrote the following letter: *"...I beg to inform you that on admission Pte Gillin had a compound fracture of upper third of left thigh. Secondary hemorrhage occurred, and an attempt was made to stay the hemorrhage, which failed. Amputation was found necessary, and the patient died from shock and hemorrhage. A military funeral was accorded, and he was buried in St. Albans Cemetery on August 28th, 1916."*

Private William Martin Gillin was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Gillin's father – Mr J. Gillin, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent May, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Martin Gillin – service number 4442, of 22nd Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private W. M. Gillin is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 96.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

William Martin Gillin is remembered by the Herts at War Great War Commemoration website.

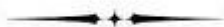


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(62 pages of Private William Martin Gillin's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **210TH LIST**

Died of Wounds

Pte W. M. GILLIN, Queanbeyan (New South Wales)

*(The Bendigo Independent, Victoria – 12 September, 1916)*

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### **DEATHS**

#### **On Active Service**

GILLIN – Died of wounds in France 22nd August Private William Gillin, youngest son of James Gillin, late Kangaroo Grounds, and loved brother of James (on Active service), Thomas and Joseph, R.I.P.

GILLIN – Died of wounds in France 22nd August Private William Gillin, aged 18 years, youngest brother of Mrs Walter Simondson, Abbotsford, R.I.P.

*(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 September, 1916)*

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### **IN MEMORIAM**

#### **On Active Service**

GILLIN – In loving memory of my dear brother, Will, who died of wounds received at Pozieres on 22nd August.

No mother was there to soothe his brow,

No brother to say good-bye;

No sister to take him by the hand

When death was drawing night.

Far away in an Englis graveyard,

Beneath the lonely sod,

Lies our hero of the 22nd Battalion,

Resting in peace with God.

-Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Tress and Wally.

GILLIN – In loving memory of my dear brother Will, and also my cousin, Tom, both died of wounds received at Pozieres on 22nd and 28th August, 1916.

They were only soldiers, but they heard the call,

They did their duty, they gave their all;

Two of earth's brightest and best,

Like many a hero, they are laid at rest.

-Inserted by their loving brother and cousin, Joe.

*(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 August, 1917)*

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

GILLIN – In loving memory of my only son, Tom, and nephew, Willie, both died of wounds received at Pozieres on 28th and 22nd August, 1916.

They sleep not in their native land,  
But under foreign skies;  
Far from those who loved them  
In heroes' graves they lie.

Inserted by their loving father and uncle, T. M. Gillin.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 August, 1917)

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## IN MEMORIAM

### On Active Service

GILLIN – In loving memory of our dear brother, Pte W. M. Gillin, died of wounds received at Pozieres on 22nd August, 1916.

Calm and peacefully he is sleeping,  
Laid by his comrades true;  
And when the roll is called in heaven,  
Our dear Will will answer too,

-Inserted by Tress, Wally and Joe.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 August, 1918)

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### 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. 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)*

A letter was sent from Base Records, dated 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1921, to Mr J. Gillin, Martin's Boarding House, Wonthaggi, Victoria, advising that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late No. 4442 Private W. M. Gillin, 22nd Battalion, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Mr J. Gillin replied on 24th July, 1921 with "*For inscriptions on the War Graves this is the first notice I have had but I am sorry to say I am not in a position to do anything in the matter. I am broke down in health and not able to work. I would like very much to do \_\_\_ it on but it is impossible in my state of health.*"

Private W. M. Gillin does not have an inscription on his Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

## Hatfield Road Cemetery, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England

During the First World War, the County of Middlesex War Hospital was established in, what was then called, the Middlesex Mental Hospital at Napsbury, near St. Albans, and from 1914 to March 1915 the city of St. Albans was the Headquarters of the 47th London Division.

The Second World War saw the Hill End Hospital, St. Albans, taken over by the Military authorities, and service war burials were carried out from this hospital.

There are 147 First World War burials in Hatfield Road Cemetery, 93 of them forming a war graves plot. Some of the 79 Second World War graves form a separate plot. The rest of the graves are scattered throughout the cemetery.

*(Information from CWGC)*



**Entrance to Hatfield Road Cemetery, St. Albans** *(Photo from Find a Grave - julia&keld)*



**Cross of Sacrifice** *(Photo from CWGC)*





**War Graves in Hatfield Road Cemetery, St. Albans** *(Photos from CWGC)*



Photo of Private W. M. Gillin's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Hatfield Road Cemetery, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England.

*(Note: The year of death on the CWGC headstone is incorrect. CWGC were advised at time of researching of the error – August, 2023)*



*(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)*