

**Gloucester Old Cemetery,
Gloucestershire, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2286 PRIVATE

P. H. HILDER

50TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

10TH OCTOBER, 1918 Age 39

Percy Howard HILDER

Percy Howard Hilder was born at St. Pancras, London, England in 1879 to parents Alfred and Elizabeth Hilder.

The 1881 England Census recorded Percy Hilder as a 1 year old, living with his family at 144 Derby Buildings, Grays Inn Lane, St. Pancras, London, England. His parents were listed as Alfred Hilder (Brewer's Labourer, aged 36, born Pimlico, Middlesex) & Eliza Hilder (aged 36, born Ireland). Percy was one of six children listed on this Census – Alfred Hilder (aged 13, born Westminster, Middlesex), Oliver Hilder (aged 12, born Battersea, Middlesex), Walter Hilder (aged 10, born St. Pancras, Middlesex), Winnie Hilder (aged 7, born St. Pancras, Middlesex), Ida Hilder (aged 4, born St. Pancras, Middlesex) then Percy.

Percy Hilder, aged 6, & his family arrived in Queensland, Australia on the *Dorunda* on 2nd June, 1886.

Percy Howard Hilder attended Mount Morgan School.

Percy Howard Hilder married Marion Pugh in Queensland in 1905.

Births were registered in Queensland, with parents Percy & Marion Hilder, for Oliver Carlyle Hilder in 1905 & for Edward Victor Hilder in 1907.

The 1909 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kennedy, subdivision of Charters Towers, Queensland recorded Percy Howard Hilder, Miner, & his wife Marion Hilder, Home Duties, of Marion Street.

The 1913, 1916, 1917 & 1919 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Kennedy, subdivision of Charters Towers, Queensland recorded Percy Howard Hilder, Miner, & his wife Marion Hilder, Home Duties, of Duke Street, Welcome Ridge.

Percy Howard Hilder was a 36 year old, married, Miner from Charters Towers, Queensland when he enlisted on 6th March, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2286 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Marion Hilder, of P.O. Charters Towers, Queensland.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 10th March, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 19th Reinforcements of 12th Battalion on 12th April, 1916 then transferred to Reserve Company on 16th April, 1916. Private Hilder was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 52nd Battalion on 12th June, 1916 then transferred to 4th Reinforcements of 52nd Battalion on 11th August, 1916.

Private Percy Howard Hilder embarked from Brisbane, Queensland on HMAT *Boorara (A42)* on 16th August, 1916 with the 52nd Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 13th October, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot on 14th October, 1916.

Private Percy Howard Hilder proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on SS *Arundel* on 12th December, 1916. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) from England on 16th December, 1916 & marched out to join his Unit on 17th December, 1916. Private Hilder was taken on strength with 52nd Battalion on 19th December, 1916.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was wounded in action in France on 7th June, 1917. He was admitted to 11th Casualty Clearing Station on 8th June, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to hands then transferred to 120 Ambulance Train. Private Hilder was admitted to 58th Scottish General Hospital at St. Omer on 8th June, 1917. He was discharged to No. 7 Convalescent Depot on 17th July, 1917 then transferred to No. 3 Rest Camp at Boulogne, France on 22nd July, 1917.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 25th July, 1917. He proceeded to join his Unit on 1st September, 1917 & rejoined his Unit in the Field on 7th September, 1917.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was on leave to UK from 29th December, 1917 & rejoined his Unit from leave on 18th January, 1918.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was transferred to 50th Battalion from 52nd Battalion on 16th May, 1918.

52nd Battalion

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and attacked at Noreuil on 2 April. Later that year, the focus of AIF operations moved to the Ypres sector in Belgium. There the battalion was involved in the battle of Messines between 7 and 12 June and the battle of Polygon Wood on 26 September. Another winter of trench routine followed.

Utilising troops freed by the collapse of Russia in October 1917, the German Army launched a major offensive on the Western Front at the end of March 1918. The 4th Division was deployed to defend positions south of the River Ancre in France. At Dernancourt, on 5 April, the 52nd Battalion assisted in the repulse of the largest German attack mounted against Australian troops during the war. The German threat persisted through April, and on ANZAC Day 1918 the 52nd participated in the now-legendary attack to dislodge the enemy from Villers-Bretonneux.

The defeat of the German offensive had come at a cost though. Due to heavy casualties and a lack of reinforcements from Australia, three brigades were directed to disband one of their battalions to reinforce the other three. The 13th Brigade was one of these, and on 16 May 1918 the 52nd Battalion was disbanded.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Percy Howard Hilder was wounded in action in France (2nd occasion) on 13th September, 1918. He was admitted to 12th Australian Field Ambulance on 13th September, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to foot. Private Hilder was transferred & admitted to 5th Casualty Clearing Station on 14th September. He was admitted to 6th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 25th September, 1918. Private Hilder embarked for England on 1st October, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Guildford Castle*.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was admitted to V.A.M. Hospital, Cheltenham (affiliated with 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol) on 2nd October, 1918 with gunshot wounds to left foot, amputated.

Private Percy Howard Hilder died at 4.50 pm on 10th October, 1918 at Red Cross Hospital, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England from Wounds (GSW left leg – amputation) was the official cause of death, however The Hospital Admission Sheet records “DIED – *Acute Pneumonia - Admitted with G.S.W. R. Leg, Amputation of foot. Oct. 5th developed pneumonia and died Oct. 10, 1918. Stump was healthy, but was in a low condition ...*” Private Hilder’s wife’s cousin was present.

A death for Percy H. Hilder, aged 40, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England.

Private Percy Howard Hilder was buried on 14th October, 1918 in Gloucester Old Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England – Plot number NG. 2696 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Percy Howard Hilder - *Coffin was Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the “Union Jack”, and conveyed to the graveside, where the Rev. F. W. Bidwell conducted the burial service. Many beautiful flowers were sent by:- Staff of Kitchen War, Red Cross Hospital, Boy of Kitchen War, Red Cross Hospital & Mrs Lee-Williams. The grave will be turfed and an oak cross erected by the A.I.F. London. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. Names of Relatives or Friends present at the funeral – Mrs Lee-Williams & others.*

Mrs Marion Hilder, widow of the late Private Percy Howard Hilder, wrote to Base Records in March, 1920 stating that she had received a photo of the grave of her late husband but she “*would very much like to go to see it. And should I*

go would you kindly let me know all particulars. And should I be allowed any concession for myself and two sons one twelve and the other 13 & 6 months....” Base Records replied that *“it has not been found practicable for the Government to provide assisted passages from this country for those prosing to visit the graves overseas, but consideration is being given to the feasibility of securing the provision by some patriotic organisation of the necessary hostels for the accommodation of visitors at a reasonable price....”*

Private Percy Howard Hilder was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Hilder’s widow - Mrs Marion Hilder, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Percy Howard Hilder – service number 2286, aged 39, of 50th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Alfred and Elizabeth Hilder.

Private P. H. Hilder is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 150.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Charters Towers War Memorial, located in Gill Street, Charters Towers, Queensland does not list individual names.



Charters Towers War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

H. Hilder is remembered on the Charters Towers World War 1 Wall of Remembrance, located in Prior Street, Richmond Hill, Queensland.



Charters Towers World War 1 Wall of Remembrance (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Arthur Garland)

P. H. Hilder should be included on the Charters Towers & District Roll of Honour, last located at the Charters Towers RSL Club, 8 Prior Street, Charters Towers, Queensland. (Note: the Charters Towers RSL closed in March 2013).



Charters Towers & District Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Kent Watson)

(59 pages of Private Percy Howard Hilder'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) & National Archives



Pte P. H. Hilder (Photo from the *Queenslander Pictorial* 2 September, 1916)

Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

Wounded

Private P. H. Hilder (Charters Towers)

(*The Capricornian*, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia – 14 July, 1917)

DEATHS

HILDER – October 10th, at the Red Cross Hospital, Great Western-road, Gloucester, Percy Hilder, aged 40 years.

(*Gloucester Journal*, Gloucestershire, England – 12 October, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER'S FUNERAL

The funeral took place at the Cemetery on Monday afternoon of Pte Hilder, Australian forces, who died at the Great Western V.A.D. Hospital in Thursday last. The funeral was attended by Mrs C. Lee-Williams (commandant), several nurses, and a number of wounded Australian soldiers. A firing party from the V.T.C., under Sergt. J. E. Mott, fired the customary three volleys over the grave.

(*Gloucester Journal*, Gloucestershire, England – 16 October, 1918)

DEATH OF PTE P. H. HILDER

Official advice was received yesterday that Pte Percy Howard Hilder had died of wounds on October 10th. The Mayor (Ald. W. T. Mitchell), accompanied by Rev. Cannon Saxon, conveyed the distressing news to the wife of the deceased soldier. Prior to enlisting, Mr Hilder followed the occupation of miner, usually doing tributing work. He enlisted here on 16th February, 1916, and so had seen a good stretch of active service.

(*The Evening Telegraph*, Charters Towers, Queensland, Australia – 19 October, 1918)

THE WAR

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS No 439

Wounded

Private P. H. Hilder (Charters Towers)

(*Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia – 5 November, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS Nos 445 AND 446

Died of Wounds

Private P. H. Hilder (Charters Towers)

(Morning Bulletin, Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia – 27 November, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

HILDER – In sad and loving memory of my dear husband, Private P. H. Hilder (Ted.), who died of wounds on 10th October, 1918, in a Red Cross Hospital, Gloucester.

Lost are the shouts of the joyous crowd,
Vainly the watch fires burn,
For that lone wife who stands apart
With an aching void in her wounded heart.

Her soldier will not return.

No hero comes to her empty arms,

For her no banners wave.

She heed them not, the ringing cheers

And only see through a mist of tears

Her soldier's far-off grave.

(Inserted by his loving wife, Marion Hilder).

(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Queensland, Australia – 10 October, 1919)

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)

Private P. H. Hilder does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Gloucester Old Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Gloucester Old Cemetery, which is in two distinct parts, contains burials of both wars. All but a few of the 158 First World War graves are in the original ground, 81 of them in a war graves plot. Of the 94 Second World War burials, 60 form a separate war graves plot known as 'B' ground. There are also 10 non World War service burials and 7 Foreign National burials here.

There are 4 Australian War Graves in this Cemetery – three from World War 1 & one from World War 2.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Gloucester Old Cemetery, Gloucestershire



Photo of Private P. H. Hilder's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Gloucester Old Cemetery, Gloucestershire, England.

