

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



5404 PRIVATE

A. W. J. MILLER

54TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

28TH MAY, 1917 Age 25

*He Did Not For a Moment
Pause
But Gave His Life in Honor's
Cause*

Arthur William John MILLER

Arthur William John Miller was born at Cootamundra, New South Wales, Australia in 1891 to parents John Bernard Oscar & Abigail Elizabeth Miller (nee McKay).

Arthur William John Miller attended Public School at Cootamundra, New South Wales.

Arthur William John Miller was a 24 year old, single, Groom (& Jockey) from Cootamundra, NSW when he enlisted at Cootamundra, NSW on 5th January, 1916 (as per Embarkation Roll, however some Attestation Papers are dated 5th December, 1915. Also the Medical History form recorded he enlisted at Liverpool, NSW on 5th January, 1916) with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5404 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs E. Elyard, of Cootamundra, NSW.

Private Arthur William John Miller was posted to 17th Reinforcements of 2nd Battalion. (no date recorded).

Private Arthur William John Miller embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 14th April, 1916 with the 2nd Infantry Battalion, 17th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 16th May, 1916.

2nd Battalion

The 2nd Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 1st, 3rd and 4th Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these battalions, formed the 1st Brigade.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Arthur William John Miller was transferred to 54th Battalion on 24th May, 1916.

54th Battalion

The 54th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 16 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 2nd Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 2nd, the 54th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Arthur William John Miller embarked from Alexandria via Marseilles on HMT *Arcadian* on 29th July, 1916 & arrived at Southampton, England on 9th August, 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 Arthur William John Miller was admitted to Military Hospital, Fargo on 16th August, 1916 – cause N.Y.D. (not yet determined).

Private Arthur William John Miller was marched in to 4th Training Battalion at Larkhill, Wiltshire from Rollestone, Wiltshire, England on 22nd August, 1916.

Private Arthur William John Miller was reported for being A.W.L. (absent without leave) from 8.30 pm on 9th September, 1916 to 3.30 pm on 14th September, 1916 – 6 days, while posted at Larkhill, Wiltshire, He was reprimanded by Captain Gorst.

Private Arthur William John Miller had been transferred to England under Authority 11747 dated 23rd September, 1916.

Private Arthur William John Miller proceeded overseas to France on 14th October, 1916 from 14th Training Battalion. He was marched in to 5th Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 16th October, 1916. Private Miller was marched out from 5th Divisional Base Depot to join his Unit on 30th October, 1916.

Private Arthur William John Miller joined 54th Battalion in France on 2nd November, 1916. He was taken on strength of 54th Battalion on 2nd November, 1916 from 5th Divisional Base Depot from Reinforcements to 54th Battalion (originally Reinforcements to 2nd Battalion)

Private Arthur William John Miller was wounded in action on 15th May, 1917. He was admitted to 8th Field Ambulance on 15th May, 1917 with Shrapnel wounds to right leg & ankle. Private Miller was transferred to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station on 15th May, 1917 then transferred to 29th Casualty Clearing Station on the same day. He was transferred to No. 28 Ambulance Train on 16th May, 1917 & admitted to 14th General Hospital at Wimereux, France on 17th May, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wounds) to leg & thigh. Private Miller was transferred to Boulogne & embarked for England on 18th May, 1917 on Hospital Ship *St. Andrew*.

War Diary – 54th Battalion

Front Line – 15th May, 1917

During the early morning our front line and support trenches were subjected to a heavy bombardment from enemy artillery, also their minenwerfer and pineapple bombs. "C" Company, at that time commanded by Captain A. G. Morris, came in for a severe grueling, being in a part of the HINDENBURG LINE where the trenches were very badly knocked about. "B" Company, who were in supports with two platoons on the sunken road in rear, fared even worse, and our casualties were unfortunately heavy.....

At 3.30 am, the following message was received:- To BUCKET "Please send up as many stretcher bearers as can be spared. They are urgently needed. Casualties are very heavy. (Sgd) AXLE.

Headquarters, 14th Infantry Brigade, at the request of the Commanding Officer, despatched 30 men of the 55th Battalion to assist with the removal of the wounded. This party did most excellent work throughout the day and far into the night.

.....

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Arthur William John Miller was admitted to Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, England on 20th May, 1917 with G.S.W to both legs & was reported as seriously ill.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

C01087

The Royal Herbert Hospital, an army hospital near Abbey Wood Camp c 1916



Private Arthur William John Miller died on 28th May, 1917 at Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, England from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wounds to both legs.

A death for Arthur W. J. Miller, aged 26, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Woolwich, London, England.

Private Arthur William John Miller was buried on 2nd June, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 179,351.

From the burial report of Private Miller - Coffin was good. Polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Firing Party of Australians were in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Australian Flag, and surmounted by a wreath sent by Patients of the Ward. The "Last Post" was sounded at the Graveside. Service was held in the Church of England Chapel prior to interment by Archdeacon Richards, A.I.F. Headquarters. No relatives were present at the funeral. Memorial to be erected by Commonwealth Military Authorities.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. Elyard, Flat Lands, Clandulla, Mudgee Line, NSW on 4th April, 1923 stating that the site of the late No. 5404 Private A. W. J. Miller's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row E Grave 7. This is now recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Grave Reference - XI. E. 7. Private Arthur William John Miller has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Mr J. Elyard, Railway Station, Goulburn, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 9th September, 1918 to thank them for the photograph regarding the late No. 5404 Private A. W. J. Miller, 54th Battalion "..... and for which on behalf of his mother Mrs E. Elyard I thank you most sincerely. I am also instructed to ask you by his mother if she is justified in wearing the rising sun the last and only memento giver to her by her boy before his departure for the front. It having been rumoured to her that she can be prevented from wearing same. Trusting to hear from your office a satisfactory report concerning the above matter. Once again thanking you most sincerely on the mothers behalf for photograph received."

Base Records replied on 12th September, 1918 "... and to state with reference to the badge mentioned therein, the restriction regarding same was recently removed, and same may now be worn. It is understood that next-of-kin (Mother), has also changed her address, if so, it will be necessary for her to notify this office accordingly."

Mrs E. Elyard advised Base Records on 23rd September, 1918 that *"I have now removed my residence from Orange to Goulburn for the present. Any communications from your department please address as under for the present as I may not be staying in this district for long."* She gave her address as Railway Station, Goulburn.

Mrs E. Elyard advised Base Records on 9th June, 1919 that her address had changed from Goulburn & her new address would be Post Office, Kandos, Mudgee Line, NSW.

Base Records contacted Mrs E. Elyard, Post Office, Kandos, Mudgee Line, NSW, on 8th December, 1921 stating it was noted that she was registered as the next-of-kin of the late Private A. W. J. Miller & asked if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself - specifically asking if his father was still alive due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Mrs Elyard replied to Base Records on 14th December, 1921 stating *"that his father is not living. I am therefore the nearest blood relation."*

Mrs E. Elyard advised Base Records on 5th October, 1922 that her address had changed to Flat Lands, Clandulla, Mudgee Line.

Private Arthur William John Miller was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Miller's remarried mother - Mrs E. Elyard, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent January, 1922. Mrs Elyard made her mark "X" as other correspondence to Base Records had stated she could not read or write).

The Public Trust Office, 19 O'Connell Street, Sydney, NSW wrote to Central Army Records Office, Melbourne, Victoria on 24th April, 1959 requesting a death certificate for *"Arthur William John Miller who died in an English Hospital on the 28th May, 1917 whilst a member of the A.I.F."* The request was made regarding the Estate of William Christopher McKay, deceased.

The Public Trust Office wrote to Central Army Records Office, Melbourne, Victoria on 18th June, 1959 stating they had received the death certificate of Arthur William John Miller but now requested the date & place of birth & the marital status as shown in the records. The Central Army Records Office replied on 1st July, 1959 stating that *"Arthur William John Miller stated his age to be 24 years and 2 months and place of birth as Cootamundra, NSW."*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Arthur William John Miller – service number 5404, aged 25, of 54th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of John Bernard Oscar Miller and Elizabeth (his wife), of Kandos, Mudgee. Native of Cootamundra, New South Wales.

Private A. W. J. Miller is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 159.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. Miller is remembered on the Cootamundra RSL Roll of Honour, located at the entrance to the Cootamundra RSL Club, Parker Street, Cootamundra, NSW.



(Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)



Cootamundra RSL Roll of Honour

(57 pages of Private Arthur William John Miller'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



Newspaper Notices

DIED OF WOUNDS

The Anglican rector of Cootamundra has been advised of the death from wounds of Private Arthur William John Miller, son of Mrs J. Elyard, of Cootamundra. Deceased, who was 25 years of age, was a well known horseman. He commenced in Mr E. C. Bartley's stable, and later was in the employ of Mr Jim Laffan. Prior to enlisting he was employed by Mr Jim Brett, of the Family Hotel.

(Young Witness, NSW – 8 June, 1917)

FALLEN HEROES

310TH LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte ARTHUR WILLIAM JOHN MILLER, Cootamundra

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 14 June, 1917)

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 A. W. J. Miller does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*He Did Not For A Moment Pause
But Gave His Life In Honor's Cause*

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

Identified:

Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Private A. W. J. Miller's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo by Neil Bright - 2020)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

