

**St. Lawrence Churchyard,
Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



6946 PRIVATE

W. S. THORSBY

20TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

24TH FEBRUARY, 1918 Age 45

*Father Of
Melba, Edna, Willie,
Doris & Olive Thorsby
Of Tamworth, N.S.W.*

William Samuel THORSBY

William Samuel Thorsby was born at Murrurundi, New South Wales in 1872 to parents William Samuel and Elizabeth Thorsby (nee Wright).

William Samuel Thorsby attended school at Tamworth, NSW.

William Samuel Thorsby married Charlotte Newman in the district of Tamworth, NSW in 1902.

William & Charlotte Newman had the following children (their births were registered in the district of Tamworth, NSW): Florence A. Thorsby (born 1902; died 1903); Melba Elizabeth Patricia Thorsby (born 1904); Edna Nellie Thorsby (born 1905); William Samuel Thorsby (born 1907); Doris E. Thorsby (born 1909); Olive Maude "Ol" Thorsby (born 1910) & Mary R. Thorsby (born 1913; died 1914).

William Samuel Thorsby was a 44 year old, married, Cook & Baker from West Tamworth, NSW when he enlisted at Tamworth, NSW on 9th May, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 6946 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Charlotte Thorsby, Church Street, West Tamworth, NSW.

Private William Samuel Thorsby was posted to R.A.S.G. (Royal Agricultural Show Ground) at Sydney, NSW on 12th May, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to "E" Company, 1st Depot Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 28th June, 1917.

Private William Samuel Thorsby embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Port Melbourne (A16)* on 16th July, 1917 with the 20th Infantry Battalion, 20th Reinforcements & disembarked at Liverpool, NSW on 16th September, 1917.

20th Battalion

The 20th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. A sprinkling of the 20th's original recruits had already served with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) in the operations to capture German New Guinea in 1914.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

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 William Samuel Thorsby was marched in to 5th Training Battalion at Rollestone, Wiltshire, England from Australia on 16th September, 1917.

Private William Samuel Thorsby was sent sick to Salisbury Isolation Hospital on 18th January, 1918 & admitted to Salisbury Isolation Hospital on 21st January, 1918 with Cerebro Spinal Fever.

Private William Samuel Thorsby died at 2.30 pm on 24th February, 1918 at Isolation Hospital, Salisbury, Wiltshire, England from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis.

A death for William S. Thorsby, aged 45, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Salisbury, Wiltshire, England.

Private William Samuel Thorsby was buried on 27th February, 1918 in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England – Plot number 133 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private William Samuel Thorsby – *Military Funeral. Officiating Clergyman – Capt. J. F. G. Huthnance, 5th Training Battalion, Fovant, Wiltshire.*

Private William Samuel Thorsby requested in his Will dated 28th June, 1917 that the whole of his property & effects be given to his wife – Charlotte Thorsby, Church Street, West Tamworth, NSW.

A War Pension was granted to Charlotte Thorsby, of Church Street, West Tamworth, widow of the late Private William Samuel Thorsby in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 27th April, 1918. Pensions was also granted from 27th April, 1918 to the following children of Charlotte & the late Private Thorsby – Melba Elizabeth Patricia Thorsby (£1 per fortnight); Edna Nellie Thorsby (15/- per fortnight); William Samuel Thorsby (10/- per fortnight); Doris Evelyn Thorsby (10/- per fortnight) & Olive Maud Thorsby (10/- per fortnight).

Private William Samuel Thorsby was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Thorsby's widow - Mrs C. Thorsby, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent June, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Samuel Thorsby – service number 6946, aged 45, of 20th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of William Samuel and Elizabeth Thorsby.

W. S. Thorsby is remembered on the ANZAC Park Memorial Gates, 139A Brisbane Street, Tamworth, NSW.



ANZAC Park Memorial Gates, Tamworth (Photos from VWMA)



Private W. S. Thorsby is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 92.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(55 pages of Private William Samuel Thorsby'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

TAMWORTH DISTRICT ENLISTMENTS

The following recruits enlisted and passed the medical test at Tamworth during the week ended May 12, 1917:-
.....W. S. Thorsby (Tamworth),

(Daily Observer, Tamworth, NSW – 15 May, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOR

THORSBY – Died of meningitis while on active service in England, 24th February, 1918, Private W. S. Thorsby (aged 45), husband of Mrs W. S. Thorsby, West Tamworth.

(Daily Observer, Tamworth, NSW – 2 March, 1918)

385th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte WM. SAMUEL THORSBY, W. Tamworth, 24/2/18

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 11 March, 1918)

RETURN THANKS

MRS W. S. THORSBY, Junr, and FAMILY, and MR and MRS W. S. THORSBY, Senr, and FAMILY, return sincere thanks to all friends for expressions of sympathy, at the death of Private W. S. Thorsby, on active service.

(Daily Observer, Tamworth, NSW – 6 April, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOR

THORSBY – In loving memory of Private W. S. Thorsby, who died in England, on 24th February, 1918. Aged 45. Beloved husband of Charlotte Thorsby, and father of Melba, Edna, Willie, Doris and Olive.

(Daily Observer, Tamworth, NSW – 24 February, 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 W. S. Thorsby does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Father Of Melba, Edna, Willie, Doris & Olive Thorsby

Of Tamworth, N.S.W.

St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, 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. Most of the 47 First World War burials in Stratford-sub-Castle (St Lawrence) Churchyard were made from the local hospital and more than half of them are of Australian servicemen who were based at the many Australian depots and training camps in the area. There are also two burials of the Second World War in the cemetery. *(Information from CWGC)*



St. Lawrence Church, Stratford-sub-Castle



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



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Original Grave Markers – Private Thorsby marked with red arrow



Photo of Private W. S. Thorsby's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St Lawrence's Churchyard, Stratford-sub-Castle, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)



Churchyard of St. Lawrence, Stratford-sub-Castle with CWGC Cross of Sacrifice

Stratford-sub-Castle War Graves

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	RAF	British Army			NZ	NZ ↓	Rogers 3 AIF		Robson Nurse	NZ	
B			Nicol AFC	Mason 5 Aus Pioneer	Dundas 29 AIF	Thorsby 20 AIF	Walpole (Wilson) 3 AIF	O'Grady 10 AIF	Kubank 40 AIF	NZ	
C	NZ	Jacob 31 AIF	Wood 9 AIF	Smith 55 AIF	British Army	British Army	Smith Aus ASC	O'Donnell 16 AIF	Knight 52 AIF	Lawrence 54 AIF	Edmonds 48 AIF
D		Lewis 30 AIF	British Army	Whitchurch 51 AIF	British Army	Dee 52 AIF	Greenslade 17 AIF	British Army	Thorburn 13 AIF	Knight 13 AIF	Hannabry 16 AIF
E					Adams 13 AIF	Crow Aus FA	British Army	Bolton 40 AIF	British Army	British Army	
F		British Army		British Army	British Army	British Army		Canada		British Army	

(Information for layout of graves – courtesy of The Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum – 2020)