

**Netley Military Cemetery,
Hampshire, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3438 SERJEANT

M. E. WILLIAMS

5TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

14TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 21

One Of Australia's Heroes

Morris Eivion WILLIAMS

Morris Eivion Williams was born in February, 1896 at Stawell, Victoria to parents Morris John and Ellen Williams (nee Williams).

Morris Eivion Williams attended Stawell School, Victoria.

Ellen Williams, mother of Morris Eivion Williams, died on 25th April, 1911 at Stawell, Victoria.

Morris Eivion Williams was a 19 year old, single, Grocer from Stawell, Victoria when he enlisted on 4th August, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3438 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr M. J. Williams, Cemetery Road, Stawell, Victoria. Morris Williams stated on his Attestation papers that he had served for 4 years with Senior Cadets, Citizen Forces. As Morris Williams was under the age of 21 years, his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist In the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. Mr M. J. Williams, father of Morris Eivion Williams signed his consent. Morris William's mother was listed as dead.

Private Morris Eivion Williams was posted to Depot on 17th August, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 11th Reinforcements of 5th Battalion on 11th September, 1915.

Private Morris Eivion Williams embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Nestor* (A71) on 11th October, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements.

Private Morris Eivion Williams was taken on strength of 5th Battalion at Serapeum on 22nd February, 1916 & reverted to the rank of Private (as per records).

Private Morris Eivion Williams was promoted to Lance Corporal on 28th February, 1916.

Lance Corporal Morris Eivion Williams embarked from Alexandria on 25th March, 1916 on Troopship *Briton* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30th March, 1916.

Lance Corporal Morris Eivion Williams was written up for an offence while in France on 26th April, 1916 "when on Active Service conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline." He was punished by reverting to the rank of Private on 28th April, 1916.

Private Morris Eivion Williams was promoted to Lance Corporal on 1st August. 1916.

Lance Corporal Morris Eivion Williams was wounded in action in France on 20th August, 1916. He was admitted to A.R.S. with Abdominal Colic & discharged to duty on 25th August, 1916. Lance Corporal Williams rejoined his Unit in France on 27th August, 1916.

War Diary – 5th Battalion:

August 20th, 1916 – Forward Trenches Pozieres

"A" & "B" Coys relieved 6th Bn Coys in left forward line of Bde Sector. "D" Coy in close support.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Morris Eivion Williams was promoted to Corporal on 28th August, 1916.

Corporal Morris Eivion Williams was promoted to the rank of Sergeant on 14th November, 1916.

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was sent to Hospital sick on 11th June, 1917. He was admitted to 1st Field Ambulance in France on 11th June, 1917 with V.D.G. then transferred to 56th Casualty Clearing Station. Sergeant Williams was transferred to Ambulance Train No. 3 on 12th June, 1917 & admitted to 39th General Hospital at Havre, France on 14th June, 1917 – cause – N.Y.D. (Not yet determined). Sergeant Williams was discharged to Base Depot on 17th August, 1917.

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was marched I to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France from Hospital on 17th August, 1917. He rejoined his Unit in the Field on 29th September, 1917.

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was wounded in action in Belgium* on 4th October, 1917. He was admitted to 5th General Hospital at Rouen on 6th October, 1917 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St. George* on 8th October, 1917 with gunshot wounds multiple.

5th Battalion

The 5th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion was heavily involved in operations against the German Army. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders then returning to the Somme for winter.

In 1917, the battalion participated in the operations that followed-up the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line, and then returned to Belgium to join the great offensive launched to the east of Ypres.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 5th Battalion:

France 4th October, 1917*

The 6th, 7th & 8th Bns A.I.F. moved to position of assembly which was just in rear of our line. Zero hour was 06.00. At 05.30 the enemy put down a barrage on our lines with the object, as was afterwards learnt from captured documents, of making an attack. At 06.00 our troops in spite of the hostile barrage moved forward in good formation. The 8th Bn captured the first objective and the 6th & 7th Bns the second on time. Our casualties were 6 Officers wounded (Captains C. McE. Lillie, D.S.O., A. J. Phillips, Lieuts. F. Corlett, E. LL. Wilcock, H. Sinclair, C. C. Hanson) & 50 Other ranks.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

(*Note – The Casualty Form – Active Service in the Service record file for Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams records he was wounded in action in Belgium on 4th October, 1917 however the War Diary for the 5th Battalion records they were in France on 4th October, 1917.)

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was admitted to the University War Hospital, Southampton, Hampshire, England on 9th October, 1917 dangerously ill with gunshot wounds to left and right buttocks.



University War Hospital, Southampton

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams died on morning of 14th October, 1917 at University War Hospital, Southampton, England from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wound to right Buttock.

A death for Morris Williams, aged 21, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Southampton, Hampshire, England.

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was buried at 3.30 pm on 16th October, 1917 in Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England – Plot number N. 396 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams - *Coffin was polished 1 inch Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral, the Gun Carriage, Firing Party, Bearers and Bugler being supplied by the Army Services Corps attached to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. No relatives were present at the funeral. An oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F.*

Morris Eivion Williams requested in his Will that all his real and personal estate be bequeathed to his father – Mr M. J. Williams, of Cemetery Road, Stawell, Victoria.

Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sergeant William's father – Mr M. J. Williams, as the closest next-of-kin.

Base Records advised Defence Department that they had received information that the late Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams had left behind him an ex-nuptial son on whose behalf a pension was being paid by the Government. The guardian of the child requested that some of the deceased's war mementoes be left to the late soldier's son – as a result the Victory Medal & Memorial Plaque were to be sent to Mr T. P. Henderson (guardian), 11 Eveline Street, Brunswick, Victoria to be held in trust for Master Jack Kenneth Guy – ex-nuptial son. Mr T. P. Henderson (guardian), signed a Statutory Declaration on 5th October, 1922, stating that he would "*preserve with due care, in trust for Master Jack Kenneth Guy, any war medals or other items given*" into his custody on account of the services rendered by the late Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams.

Note – Memorial Scroll was signed for by M. J. Williams on 8th October, 1921. The Victory Medal was signed for by T. P. Henderson on 20th January, 1923 & Memorial Plaque, according to Stamped details, was sent to Mr M. J. Williams in October, 1922.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams – service number 3438, aged 21, of 5th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Morris John and Ellen Williams, of Griffith St., Stawell, Victoria, Australia.

Sergeant M. E. Williams is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 45.

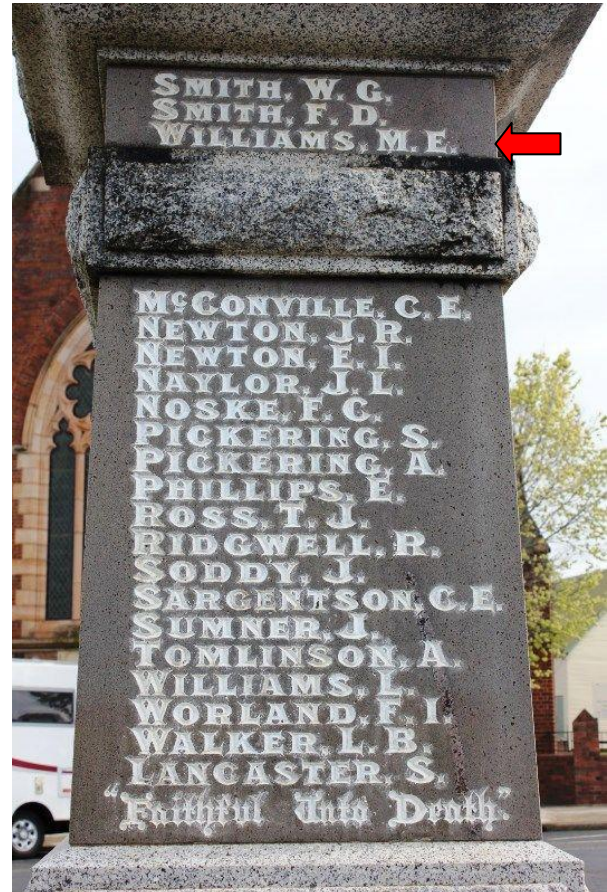


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

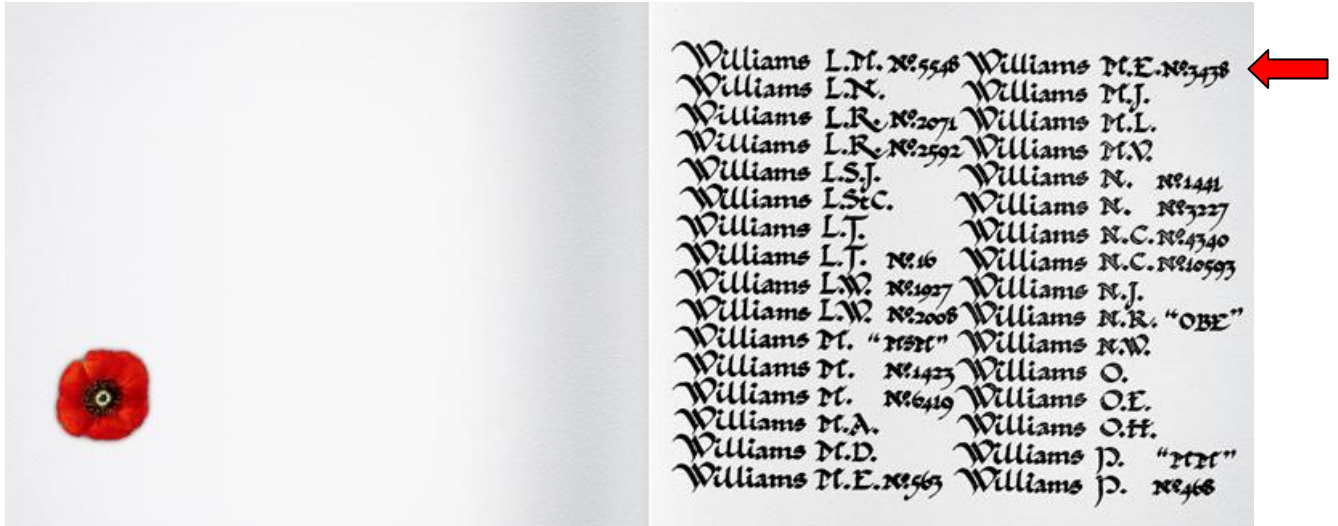
M. E. Williams is remembered on the Stawell War Memorial, located in Main & Victoria Streets, Stawell, Victoria.



Stawell War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)

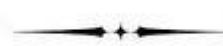


M. E. Williams is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.



(55 pages of Sergeant Morris Eivion Williams' 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

CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

L. Corporal M. E. Williams, Stawell

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 4 October, 1916)

WAR CASUALTIES

Killed in Action

SERGT. M. E. WILLIAMS

Last evening the Rev. H. C. Matthew, M.A., was called upon to inform Mr M. J. Williams, Cemetery road of the sad news that his son, Sergt. Morris E. Williams, had died on the 14th October of gunshot wound in the right buttock in the University War Hospital. Sergt. Williams was 21 years of age in February last, and before enlistment was employed with his father at his store. He was a native of Stawell, and was a prime favourite with all with whom he associated. He sailed with the 11th Reinforcements of the 54th Battalion on the 11th October, 1915, and had been in France since the first Australian contingents went there, having taken part in most of the heavy fighting. His death is sincerely deplored, and the utmost sympathy is extended to the bereaved father and the members of his family in the irreparable loss of such a noble son and brother. Sergt. Williams was a member of the Haste to the Rescue Tent, I.O.R.

(Stawell News and Pleasant Creek Chronicle, Victoria – 20 October, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAMS – A tribute to the memory of Sergt. M. E. Williams (Morrie), who died of wounds somewhere in France, beloved pat of Pte T.Y Smith (Tee), A.I.F., France.

In peace, a friend

In war, a hero

At all times a man.

(Stawell News and Pleasant Creek Chronicle, Victoria – 27 October, 1917)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

349th LIST

Died of Wounds

Sgt. M. E. Williams, Stawell

(The Bendigo Independent, Victoria – 3 November, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAMS – A tribute of love to the memory of Sergt. M. E. Williams (ave) second son of M. J. Williams and the late Mrs Williams, who died of wounds on the 14th Oct. 1917.

Our King and Country called him,

The call was not in vain;

On Australia's roll of honour

Your will find our dear Ave's name.

© Cathy Sedgwick 2018

Our brave hero re-united with mother.

-Inserted by his sorrowing, but proud father, brother and sisters.

(Stawell News and Pleasant Creek Chronicle, Victoria – 3 November, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

WILLIAMS – In honour of our beloved son and brother, Sgt. Morris E. Williams, who died of wounds at the University War Hospital, South Hampton, England, on October 14th, 1917.

He died that we might live hail and fare well,

All honour giver to him who nobly striving, nobly fell

That we might have.

“A hero and a man.”

-Inserted by his loving father, sisters and brother.

WILLIAMS – In loving memory of my dearest friend, Sergeant M. E. Williams, who died of wounds on the 14th Oct, 1917.

I miss you for I loved you,

As memories I recall,

The parting from you dear Morris

Was the saddest day of all.

To have, to love, then to part

Is the saddest story of a human heart.

The hardest part is yet to come

When the other boys come home,

For I'll miss you among the happy throng

Dear Morris, who will never return.

-Inserted by his loving friend, Jessie Guy.

WILLIAMS – In loving remembrance of our dear brother, Sergeant M. E. Williams, who died of wounds Oct. 14th, 1917.

In the bloom of life God called him,

In the prime of his manhood days,

None know him, but to trust him

None spoke his name but to praise,

There came a day when the roll was called

That he did not answer “Here.”

He slept with comrades his last long sleep,

And he died without fear.

-Inserted by his loving brother, sister-in-law and little Dave.

(Stawell News and Pleasant Creek Chronicle, Victoria – 12 October, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

WILLIAMS – In loving memory of our dear friend, Sgt. M. E. Williams, died of wounds on Oct. 14th, 1917, loving comrade of Cpl. T. Y. Smith (O.A.S.)

One of the best, a faithful pal,

A comrade true and kind.

His actions speak, though his voice is still

A better pal I'll never find.

Just for a grip of a hand that's still,

For the sound of voice we knew;

But you will live in our memories Morrie, old pal

For mates like you are few.

-Inserted by Mr and Mrs W. C. Smith and family.

(Stawell News and Pleasant Creek Chronicle, Victoria – 16 October, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

WILLIAMS – A tribute of love to the memory of my dear old pal, Sergeant M. E. Williams (Morrie), who died of wounds, October 14, 1917.

Lest we forget.

-(Inserted by T. Y. Smith, "Greenhills", Minhamite).

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria- 29 October, 1921)

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)

Sergeant M. E. Williams does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

One Of Australia's Heroes

Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England

Netley Military Cemetery is a permanent military cemetery, the property of the Ministry of Defence. The cemetery was at the back of the Royal Victoria Military Hospital and was used during both wars for burials from the hospital. The cemetery contains 637 First World War burials but only 35 from the Second World War. In addition to the Commonwealth graves, there are a number of war graves of other nationalities including 69 German graves dating from the First World War.

(Information & photos from CWGC)



Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire





NETLEY MILITARY CEMETERY

This cemetery was used for many years for military burials from the Royal Victoria Hospital. The graves include those of 721 casualties from the First World War and 36 of the Second World War, comprising servicemen and women from the following countries:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----------------|----|
| United Kingdom | 558 | Undivided India | 5 |
| Australia | 49 | Belgium | 15 |
| Canada | 42 | Poland | 1 |
| New Zealand | 12 | Austria | 1 |
| South Africa | 6 | Germany | 68 |

The Cross of Sacrifice alongside this plot was erected after the First World War.

THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE
OF THESE GRAVES

Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire (Photo above - Andrea Charlesworth; below - darealjolo)



Photo of Sergeant M. E. Williams' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Netley Military Cemetery, Hampshire, England.





Original Cross markers – Netley Military Cemetery