

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



726 PRIVATE

T. H. J. WILLIAMS

17TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH MARCH, 1917 Age 29

*To Have, To Love & The To
Part
Is The Saddest Story Of A
Human Heart*

Thomas Herbert Joseph (Tommy) WILLIAMS

Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams was born at Bondi, Sydney, New South Wales on 2nd December, 1887 to parents Joseph and Emily Williams. His birth was registered in the district of Waverley, NSW in 1888.

Thomas H. J. Williams married Eva M. Lloyd in 1908 in the registration district of Petersham, NSW.

[Note: The Attestation Papers for this soldier have been completed with his initials only – “T. H. J. Williams”. This has then been filled in as “Thomas Henry James” Williams but he has only signed his name as “T. H. J. Williams”.]

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 726
Name *Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams*
Unit B Co 17th Batti
Joined on 18/2/15

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? *WILLIAMS, Thomas Henry James*

Description of *J. H. J. Williams* on Enlistment.

Age .. 27 .. years .. 2 .. months	DISTINCTIVE MARKS.
Height .. 5 .. feet .. 9 .. inches.	
Weight .. 131 .. lbs.	
Chest Measurement .. 32 3/4 .. inches.	
Complexion .. Ruddy ..	
Eyes .. Blue ..	
Hair .. Brown ..	
Religious Denomination .. C of E ..	

T. H. G. Williams (as listed on Australian Imperial Force Nominal Roll/ Embarkation Roll) was a 27 year old, married, Lineman from 15 National Street, Rozelle when he enlisted at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 20th February, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 726 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs J. H. Williams, (later crossed out & recorded as Mrs Eva M. Williams), 15 National Street, Rozelle, Sydney, NSW. He stated on his Attestation Papers that he had been apprenticed for 4 ½ years Painting with Warman & Ridley.

Private T. H. G. Williams was posted to Reinforcements of 17th Battalion for recruit training (no date recorded).

Private T. H. G. Williams (as listed on Australian Imperial Force Nominal Roll/ Embarkation Roll) embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Themistocles* (A32) on 12th May, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Brigade, 17th Infantry Battalion, “B” Company.

Private T. H. J. Williams was wounded at Gallipoli Peninsula on 10th November, 1915. He was returned to duty on 18th November, 1915. The 3rd Echelon Records Office Alexandria certified that Williams, J. H. 726 of 17 A.I.F. returned to duty on 18th November, 1915.

A Court of Inquiry was assembled at Wellington Gully, Gallipoli on 10th November, 1915 for the purpose of inquiring into a wound received by No. 726 Private T. H. J. Williams:

* N.B.—The Form being applicable to any Board of Officers, or Committee, or Court of Inquiry, this blank to be filled in accordingly.

The proceedings should be signed by each Officer composing the Board, &c.

PROCEEDINGS of a* _____ Court of Inquiry, _____
assembled at _____ Wellington Gully, Gallipoli, _____
on the _____ 10th November, 1915, _____
by order of _____ Lieut-Colonel H.A.Goddard, _____
_____ Commanding 17th Battalion, A.I.F., _____
for the purpose of _____ inquiring into wound received by
No. 726, Pte. Williams T.H.J. _____

PRESIDENT
Captain Murphy F.J.P.

MEMBERS
Captain Lucas C.R.
Lieut. Barnett F.G.

IN ATTENDANCE

The _____ Court _____ having assembled pursuant to order, proceed to
take evidence.

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1st Witness. No. 726, Pte. Williams T.H.J., states:-

Last night I came down from Q.M.S. Hartles' dug-out and went up to the latrines just above the cook-house on the side of the hill. After coming down from there I did not go through the sap, I came straight down the road. I had got nearly to the bottom of the road when I felt something hit me in the leg and I fell.

Q. Did you know that that was a forbidden thoroughfare?

A. I did not know; I thought the notice had been taken down. I thought the road was safe.

Q. Is the notice there now?

A. I have not noticed it.

Q. How long have you been in the Quarter Master's Store?

A. Ever since we came down from Bope's, about two months.

Q. You did know at one time that this road was forbidden?

A. Oh yes, but I thought they had cleared them off that ridge at the top and I thought the road was alright. I did not notice any notice board at the top of the road. I thought it was safe.

Q. Were you in the habit of coming down that road?

A. I had been along there several times, often I had to go down to the Q.M. and I would go that way. I worked just on the corner near that little cook-house there.

Q. Describe the spot where you were wounded?

A. It was just outside Dougherty's dug-out, if anything a little further up towards the latrines where I fell.

(Sgd) T.H.J. Williams.

2nd Witness. No. 796, R.Q.M.S. Tims C.V., states:-

Q. Has the road from Q.M. store to Quinn's been used by fatigue parties and others?

A. Yes, men have been frequently warned against using the road.

Q. What about the men in your own store?

A. They must have heard me warning others. They don't as a rule go that way.

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Q. In your opinion is the road dangerous at all times?

A. Yes, very dangerous, but more so at night time than in day time. The danger comes from snipers on the ridge just beyond Quinn's.

Q. Is there a notice board at each end of the road?

A. Yes, they are now in their positions, they have always been in.

Q. Has there been any barbed wire across the road?

A. Yes. At the upper end of the road near the water cart the wire used to be right across the road. That is at the place where the wire can now be seen on the side of the road. At the lower end there was a piece of barbed wire cutting off the road just at the entrance to the old sap.

Q. How long ago was that wire removed?

A. The lower piece about a fortnight ago when they dug the new sap and the upper piece near the water cart about three weeks ago.

Q. Do you know by whom?

A. I do not know.

(Sgd) C.Tims, R.Q.M.S.

3rd Witness.

No. 365, Sgt. Millar J.A., states:-

I am acting Regimental Sergeant-Major of 17th Battn.

Q. Do you know by whose orders the wire which was across the road was removed?

A. No. About a month ago the timber was removed and taken up the steps towards Quinn's Post and the wire thrown back on the side of the road. That was the wire which was across near the water cart. The wire at the lower end of the road was not fastened and used to be sometimes across the road and sometimes on the side of the road. The mules are taken along that road every second night.

The Notice Boards are in the positions they have always been in.

(Sgd) Jas A.Millar.

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4th Witness.

Major Phipps J.H., states:-

Pte. Williams has a bullet wound through the calf of his leg. Bar complications he should be fit for light duty in about a fortnight.

(Sgd) J.H.Phipps, Major.

O.C., "B" Section, 5th F.Amb.
Pope's Post.

There being no further evidence, the Proceedings of the Court are closed.

(Sgd) F.J.P.Murphy, Captain.
President.

C.R.Lucas, Captain,
T.G.Barnett, Lieut.
Members.

Wellington Gully,

10th November, 1915

To C.O.,

17th Battalion.

10/11/15.

Headquarters,
5th Infantry Brigade.

Injury to Pte. Williams T.H.J.

Herewith Proceedings Court of Inquiry re
above. I find that:-

1. Pte. Williams was on duty at time of receiving injury.
2. That he must have been aware that it was dangerous to use the road and that the danger was avoidable by use of sap.

3. That it is almost impossible he could have been unaware that the road was closed and prohibited to ordinary traffic.

(Sgd) H.A. Goddard, Lieut. Col.
O.C., 17th Battalion.

I am of opinion that the wounding was the result of the use of a road by Williams which he had been warned against as dangerous, that there was a lack of ordinary care and that he was, therefore, to blame.

(Sgd) William Holmes, Brig-Genl.
Commanding 5th Aus. Inf. Bgde.
Monash Gully,
14.11.15.

Two soldiers were interviewed regarding Private Williams, 726, 17th A.I.F., who was "unofficially wounded".

- Private W. Walker, 1023, 17 A.I.F., Luna Park Hospital, Heliopolis, Cairo: "Informant knows a Private Williams in C Company. He comes from Sydney. He was wounded in the foot in August, left for Lemnos, and returned to his Unit at Quinn's Post in September. Informant saw him alive and well a week ago."
- Corporal J. L. Foote, 213, 17 A.I.F., Luna Park Hospital, Cairo: "Informant states that Williams was wounded at the beginning of December. He saw him being taken down to the dressing station. He heard later that he had left the Peninsula in a hospital ship."

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW, wife of Private T. H. J. Williams, wrote to Base Records on 10th November, 1915 stating she had received a letter from a friend in Egypt telling her that her "husband was wounded several weeks ago as I have had no news yet sir could you let me know if the report is true his name and rank are sir Private T. H. J. Williams No. 726 B Company 17th Battalion 5 Infantry Brigade AIF Forces."

Base Records replied on 19th November, 1915 stating that no official report that he was wounded or to any other effect had been received. "If you are in possession of a letter, or other documentary evidence to the contrary, I will, upon receipt of same, and if such action is warranted, cause inquiries to be instituted and the result communicated to next-of-kin in due course."

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW, wife of Private T. H. J. Williams, was advised by Base Records on 8th December, 1915 that her husband had been "wounded November 10th. Will promptly advise if anything further received."

Private T. H. J. Williams was awarded 168 hours Field Punishment No. 2 for absence without leave at Mudros W. from 10 pm on 26th December, 1915 to midnight on 28th December, 1915.

Private T. H. J. Williams was awarded 7 days Confined to Barracks at Ghezireh for absence without leave from 10 am on 1st February, 1916 to 12 pm on 3rd February, 1916.

A Court of Enquiry was assembled at Gundagai Post, Egypt on 19th February, 1916 for the purpose of reporting upon certain members of 17th Battalion, A.I.F. who absented themselves for a longer period than twenty-one days. Private T. H. J. Williams was named.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

N.B. The form being applicable to any Board of Officers or Committee or Court of Inquiry, this blank to be filled in accordingly. The Signature of each Officer composing the Board, &c., should be attached at the end of the proceedings, and sufficient space must be left below for the remarks and Signature of the Officer who authorized its assembly.

PROCEEDINGS of a Court of Enquiry
assembled at Gundagai Post, EGYPT.
on the 19th February, 1916
by order of _____
for the purpose of reporting upon certain
members of the 17th Battalion, A. I. F. who
absented themselves for a longer period than
twenty-one days.

P R E S I D E N T :
Captain B. Holmes.

M E M B E R S :
Lieut. R. V. Spier
Lieut. F. G. Barnett

The COURT having assembled in pursuance to order, proceeded to take evidence.

1st Evidence.

C.S.M. GREY.

) No. 1698 C. S. M. Grey, V. F. duly sworn, states
(" On the morning of the 22nd January, 1916,
(Private Butler, A. (No. 367) was absent from
(Tel-el-Kebir Camp, without leave, and he has
(not since returned to duty. I am C. S. M.
(of "A" Company, 17th Battalion and Pte. Butler
(is a member of that Company".
(
(

(SGD) V.F.GREY, C.S.M.
"A" Coy. 17th Battalion.

2nd Evidence.

C.Q.M.S. KATER.

) No. 589 C.Q.M.S. KATER, J.S. "B" Coy., duly
(sworn states :-
(" I am C.Q.M.S. of "B" Coy. 17th Battalion.
(and declare that No. 726 Private WILLIAMS,
(T.H.J., "B" Coy., 17th Battalion illegally
(absented himself without leave at Tel-el-
(Kebir Camp at Tatoo Report on 15th Day of
(January, 1916, and he is still absent."
(
(

(SGD) J.S.Kater, Q.M.S.
"B" Coy. 17th Battalion.

2.

3rd Evidence.

A/C.S.M. HODGSON.

) No. 906 A/C. S. M. HODGSON, H. Duly sworn,
(states :-
(" I am Acting C.S.M. of "C" Coy. 17th Battalion
(and I declare that the following men of "C"
(Coy., 17th Battalion, illegally absented them-
(selves without leave at Tel-el-Kebir Camp on
(the dates set opposite their names and are
(still absent."
(
(

) No. 1916 Cpl. DARBY. F.A. 24th Jan. 1916
(" 949 Pte. MURPHY W. 27th " "
(" 1022 " WILSON, R.J. 27th " "
(" 819 " BRENNAN, B.A. 9th " "

(SGD) H. HODGSON, A/C S.M.

4th Evidence

SGT. ELLIS

) No. 1365 Sergeant ELLIS, H., duly sworn, states:-
(" I am A/C. S.M. of "D" Coy., 17th Battalion, and
(" I declare that the following men of "D" Coy.,
(" 17th Battalion, illegally absented themselves
(" without leave at Tel-el-Kebir Camp on the dates
(" set opposite their names and are still absent."
(
(

) No. 1134 Pte. BERNBERG, R. 17th Jan. 1916.
(" 1538 " GARRICK S. 16th " "
(" 1344 " HARPER A.G. 17th " "
(" 1327 " EALS S. 30th " "
(" 1309 " THOMPSON, L.S. 30th " "

(SGD) H. ELLIS, Sgt.

FINDING

The Court declare that the following men of the 17th Battalion, illegally absented themselves without leave at Tel-el-Kebir Camp on the dates set opposite their names; and that they are still absent.

"A" Coy.	No. 367	Pte.	BUTLER A.	22nd	January	1916.
→ "B" "	No. 726	"	WILLIAMS T.J.	15th	"	"
	(No. 1916	Cpl.	DARBY, F.A.	24th	"	"
	(No. 949	Pte.	MURPHY W.	27th	"	"
"C" Coy.	(No. 1022	"	WILSON R. J.	27th	"	"
	(No. 819	"	BRENNAN. P.A.	9th	"	"
"D" Coy.	(No. 1134	"	BERNEBERG R.	17th	"	"
	(No. 1538	"	Garrick S.	16th	"	"
	(No. 1344	"	HARPER A.C.	17th	"	"
	(No. 1327	"	EALES S.	30th	"	"
	(No. 1309	"	THOMPSON L.S.	30th	"	"
	(BASIL HOLMES,	Capt. (President)			
	(R. V. SPIER,	Lieut.)			
	(F.G. BARNETT	Lieut.)			Members.

Private T. H. J. Williams was admitted to No. 3 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 25th March, 1916 with Consumption. He was transferred & admitted to Convalescent Hospital at Ras-el-Tin on 13th April, 1916 & discharged to Base at Alexandria on 29th May, 1916.

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW, wife of Private T. H. J. Williams, was advised by Base Records on 5th April, 1916 that Private T. H. J. Williams had been admitted to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital, Cairo on 25th March, 1916 with consumption, mild.

Private T. H. J. Williams was admitted to No. 2 A.S.H. (Australian Stationary Hospital) at Tel-el-Kebir on 31st May, 1916 with Bronchitis. He was discharged to Base on 2nd June, 1916.

A Medical Report was completed on Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams, 726, 17th Battalion on 6th June, 1916 at 3 A.G.H. (Australian General Hospital), Abassia. His disability was listed as Chronic Cough which had originated at ANZAC in December, 1915. "Quite well up to Dec on Anzac. Then got bullet through left leg & in 5th Fd. Ambce for 8 days. After going back to dug out caught cold on chest & have had it ever since. Into 3 Aux H. Heliopolis 25th Mch, 15 for 3 weeks then Ras-el-Tin for 6 weeks then 29th May to duty with Details at Tel-el-Kebir & next day examined by two M Officers & sent to 2 A.S.H. & after 24 hours sent 3 A.G.H." The Medical Officer stated the cause of the disability was due to Active Service as a result of exposure & Stress and wounded. Private Williams present condition was listed as "Weight on Enlistment 10 stone 3 lbs. Weight on 28th May 9st 8 lbs (after 6 weeks in Ras-el-Tin). Is thin & miserable looking, Coughs up about ½ oz to 1 oz yellow white phlegm in morning. Wakes up in cold sweats. Evening rise of temp to 98.6 – 99.4. Right Apex gives prolonged expiratory sounds. Other signs indefinite. Sputum examined for Tubercle Bacillus." The Medical Officer in charge of case recommended that Private Williams be discharged as permanently unfit. The Medical Board found that Private Williams should not be discharged but to have a change to Australia.

Private T. H. J. Williams was admitted to No. 3 Australian General Hospital at Abbassia on 10th June, 1916. He was transferred from Cairo to Hospital Ship for England on 24th June, 1916 with a chronic cough & embarked from Alexandria on Hospital Ship *Makeno* on 24th June, 1916.

17th Battalion

The 17th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. It left Australia in early May, trained in Egypt from mid-June until mid-August, and on 20 August landed at ANZAC Cove. At Gallipoli the Battalion participated in the last action of the August Offensive ' the attack on Hill 60 ' before settling into defensive routine in the trenches. For a short period part of the 17th garrisoned Pope's Hill, but for most of its

time on the peninsular the Battalion was responsible for the defence of Quinn's Post, one of the most contested positions along the entire ANZAC front. The Battalion was evacuated from Gallipoli in December 1915....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private T. H. J. Williams was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital at Wandsworth, England on 3rd July, 1916 with Congestion of the Lungs. He was transferred to No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield, England on 12th July, 1916 with Bronchitis. Private Williams was transferred to Military Convalescent Hospital, Epsom on 14th July, 1916.

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW, wife of Private T. H. J. Williams, was advised by Base Records on 18th July, 1916 that Private T. H. J. Williams was in the 3rd London General Hospital from 3rd July, 1916 suffering from congestion of lungs mild.

Private T. H. J. Williams was medically classified "A" (fit for active service) on 1st September, 1916 while posted at No. 1 Command Depot, Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England. He was granted furlough on 2nd September, 1916.

Private T. H. J. Williams was written up for an Offence at Rollestone, Wiltshire on 16th September, 1916 – Absent without leave from 15.00 hrs on 16th September, 1916 till 21.00 hrs on 18th September, 1916 (3 days). He was deprived a total forfeiture of 6 days' pay.

Private T. H. J. Williams was marched out to 5th Training Battalion on 20th September, 1916 from No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England.

Private T. H. J. Williams was written up for an Offence at Rollestone, Wiltshire - Absent without Leave from 08.00 hrs on 5th November, 1916 till 22.00 hrs on 7th November, 1916 (3 Days). He was awarded a total forfeiture of 6 days' pay on 12th November, 1916.

Private T. H. J. Williams was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital at Salisbury, Wiltshire on 3rd January, 1917 with Bronchitis. He was discharged to duty from Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 17th January, 1917.

***Clinical Charts for Private C. Woods, who was admitted to Fulham Military Hospital on 17th February, are included in the Service Record file for Private T. H. J. Williams.

The Medical Case Sheets for Private Charles Woods, 727, 17th Battalion, who was admitted to Fulham Military Hospital at 5 pm on 17th February, 1917, are included in the Service Record file for Private T. H. J. Williams. Private Charles Woods "*was thought to have Influenza on day before arrived cold, shivering, head retracted.*" He was being treated for Cerebro Spinal Fever.

Laboratory Reports for Private Charles Woods at Fulham Hospital are located in the Service Record file for Private T. H. J. Williams - ranging from 20th February to 6th March, for C. S. Fever. The Laboratory Report dated 7th March for Private C. Woods has the following "*relate to 726 Williams T. H. J. 17th Bn Deceased.*"

Private Charles Woods died at 9.30 pm on 8th March, 1917 at Fulham Military Hospital, London, England from Cerebro Spinal Fever.

Notification of the Death of a Soldier – Army Form W. 3037 recorded that the next-of-kin Mrs Williams – relationship ? of 15 National Street, Rozelle, Sydney, NSW had not been sent regarding the death of 727 Private Charles Woods, 17th Battalion who died on 8th March, 1917 from Cerebro Spinal Fever.

***** (Note: Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams had been admitted to Fulham Hospital under the name of Private Charles Woods.)**

A notification of the death of the Soldier named below has ^{just} ~~THIS DAY~~ been sent to his next of kin :-

† Next-of-kin { Name Mrs. Williams Relationship ?
 Address 15 National Street Roselle, Sidney, N.S.W.

Particulars of deceased Soldier :-
 Regimental Number 727 Rank Pte
 Name Woods Charles
17/A.I.F. Regiment.

Date of death 8-3-17
 Cause of death Cerebro Spinal Fever.

The Morning State of Sick – Army Form A. 27 recorded the death of “Pte Chas. Woods” at 9.30 pm on 8th March, 1917 at Fulham Military Hospital was crossed & replaced with the name Pte T. H. J. Williams.

REPORT OF DEATH						
All deaths are at once to be specially reported to the Officer Commanding the Corps, and to the Officer Commanding the Station on this portion of the Form, which is also to be used for all communications regarding a death or burial.						
Regtl. No.	Rank	Name and Corps	Age	Religion	Disease	Time and Place of Death
727	Pte	<u>Woods, Charles</u> <u>17/A.I.F.</u>	29	<u>Angl</u>	<u>Cerebro spinal fever.</u>	<u>9.30pm</u> <u>8-3-17</u> <u>Fulham Military Hospital</u>
726		<u>Williams, Thomas Henry James</u> <u>17/A.I.F.</u>				<u>12/3/17</u>
To <u>A.I.F. Records.</u>						
<u>A. Murray Gray</u> Medical Officer in Charge						

A Telegram was sent to John Wood, Buxton Rd, Leyton, Essex on 9th March, 1917 “Regret to report son number 727 Pte WOOD, Charles, 17th Battalion, A.I.F. died Military Hospital Fulham yesterday. Hospital desires hold Post Mortem please telegraph this office if same may be held.”

On 19th June, 1917: Death Reported 727 Charles Wood, 17th Battalion, corrected to read 726 Thomas Henry James Williams, 17th Battalion.

On the 27th February 1917 No.726 Thomas Henry James Williams, 17th Battalion, an absentee, was admitted to the Fulham Military Hospital, under the name of 727 Charles Wood, 17th Battalion, suffering from Cerebro Spinal Meningitis. On the 8th March he died, and his body was identified by Mrs Williams his wife in London - address unknown - . This man was buried on the 13th March under the name of Wood, as above mentioned, and the body interred in Grave No.178911 Australian Military Burial Ground, Brookwood Cemetery. The death was notified to Defence, Cable and the next of kin of Private Charles Wood notified. The notification was returned by this person, who advised us to the effect that his son No.727 Private Charles Wood, 17th Battalion, had not died, but was at present ill in hospital in France - this led to the discovery of the mistake. A corriganda Cable is being despatched on the 19th June No. changing the death from No 727 Private Charles Wood, 17th Battalion, to No.726 Thomas Henry James Williams, 17th Battalion, who is the person who actually died.

Williams is supposed to have had two wives - one in Australia Address - 15 National Street, Roselle, and one in London - address unknown.

The wife in Australia is drawing an allotment of 4/- per day.

Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams (previously recorded as Private Charles Wood) died at 9.30 pm on 8th March, 1917 at Fulham Military Hospital, London, England from Cerebro Spinal Fever.

(Note: The Field Service – Army Form B 2090A “*Report of Death of a Soldier*” recorded his name as “*Thomas Henry James Williams.*”)

A death for Thomas H. J. Williams, aged 29, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Fulham, London, England.

The Sydney Branch of the Australian Red Cross wrote to Base Records on 6th May, 1917 regarding No. 726 Private T. H. J. Williams, 17th Battalion, stating “*Mrs E. Williams, 15 National St., Rozelle, the wife of the above soldier, called at this office, and produced a letter from Miss Ethel Hine of 3 Treport Street, Garratt Lane, Wandsworth London, reporting the death of this soldier from spinal fever on the 8th March, 1917, saying she was with him when he died, and enclosing photos which proved the identity of the soldier. As Mrs Williams has received no official notification of his death, we thought we ought to send this to you, and we would be glad if you would forward us any information you have.*”

Base Records replied on 21st May, 1917 stating that “*No. 726 Private T. H. J. Williams 17th Battalion, is last reported as having been discharged from the Fargo Military Hospital to duty on 17.1.17. If Mrs E. Williams will forward to this Office, the letter she received in which it is stated that her husband died from spinal fever, upon receipt, and if such action is deemed warranted, cable enquiries will be instituted and the result transmitted to her.*”

Mr W. G. Mahony, Esq, M.P., 42 Darling Street, Balmain East, NSW wrote to Mr Trumble on 28th May, 1917 regarding 726 Private T. H. J. Williams, 17th Battalion. “*...This man’s family have not heard any word from the Defence Dept. They now received a letter from (Mrs) Ethel Hines 3 Treport St Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London, S.W. in which the writer (Mrs Hines) states that she was with Prvt T. H. J. Williams when he died in the 3rd London General Hospital at 9.30 pm on 8th March 1917. Mrs Hines returns photos & other things to this man’s mother Mrs Williams 15 National St, Rozelle, NSW. This man had a wife & two children in Rozelle & you will quite understand what their feelings are after having receive such a letter from a stranger to say that Williams was dead & do you think that the Dept should take some steps to have this matter explained.*”

Mr Trumble, Acting Secretary, Department of Defence replied to Mr Mahony on 30th May, 1917 stating “*.... the latest report regarding this soldier is that on 17/1/17 he was discharged from the Fargo Military Hospital for duty, after suffering from Bronchitis. However, in view of the statement that Private Williams died on 8/3/17, further enquiries are being made, and you will be notified of the result as early as practicable.*”

Mr Trumble, Acting Secretary, Department of Defence advised Major Lean, Base Records on 30th May, 1917 “*Will you please have early enquiries made in this matter.*”

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW wrote to Base Records on 1st June, 1917 stating “*I am in receipt of a letter of the 30th May from the N.S.W. Red Cross Society and I am enclosing a copy of the original letter sent to the Mother from England. Trusting your inquiries will be successful.*”

Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW wrote to Base Records again on 11th June, 1917 stating “*I am in receipt of letter this morning asking for the Original letter if possible. It is not possible for me to send it has His Mother has got it. I only had the copy of same. The soldier’s name & number is as follows No 726 Private T. H. J. Williams, 17th Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces.*”

Base Records replied to Mrs E. M. Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, NSW on 15th June, 1917 stating “*... a cable message has been despatched to London enquiring into the case of your husband, No 726 Private T. H. J. Williams, 17th Battalion. The reply when to hand will be promptly communicated to you.*”

3 Treport Street
Garrett Lane
Wandsworth
LONDON....S.W.

15/3/17

Dear Mrs. Williams, **TO BE RECORDED TO BASE RECORDS OFFICE**

It is with my deepest sympathy that I have to write you these sad news and I expect by the time you get this letter you will have heard from the Australian Headquarters of the death of your dear son Thomas. I feel sure that you will be more comforted to know that to his last he had friends with him. I cannot express how deeply I feel for you. He often used to talk to me of his dear Mother, but he seemed very worried the last three months on account of not hearing from you. His last letter he got from you when he was at Epsom Conv. Camp and it contained news that you were feeling very queer. He did not hear from his home at all after that, although he cabled several times. He spent all his leave at my Mother's home ever since his arrival in England.

He was brought to the 3rd. London General Hospital and I was the first to speak to him on his arrival. We became very good friends and when he was able to go out I brought him to my Mother's. She always did her best to make him as happy and comfortable as she could and he used to say that it always felt put in mind of his own Mother and home.

My Mother and Dad feel his death very much indeed for they had grown to care for him as one of their own boys and we shall all miss him very dearly.

I can hardly realise that all this is true yet for it seems too terrible for he was always so cheerful and it was only three weeks to the day that I got a wire to say that he was seriously ill that I was with him. He was then to have gone to France and not hearing from him I thought he was too busy to write, instead of that he was lying in Hospital very bad with spinal fever. It gave Mother and I the shock of our lives when we saw him, and I am sure that even you his Mother would not have wished him to live for he suffered terribly towards the end. They operated on his head thinking to save his life but he was too far gone for anything. He knew both Mother and I until an hour before he died. He then went unconscious. He passed away at 9.30 p.m. on the 8th. day of March, and was laid to rest on the 13th. of March 1917.

He was given full military honours and it was your own countrymen that laid him to rest. My Mother, Sketer and myself followed him to his last resting place.

The Australian Military Government have asked me to let you know that they have placed a small cross at the head of the grave until after the war, when they will have a large monument erected for all the lads who have laid down their lives for their country, and they will have their names inscribed upon it so that if any of their friends should ever

(2)

come to England they will know where their boys lie.

Dear Mrs. Williams I have enclosed two P.C. sent by you to dear Tom. He left them in my care and I feel sure you would like to have them. I am also enclosing three small ones of him taken in hospital and one taken after he came out of hospital. He told me he had sent you one but in case it has got delayed or lost I should like you to have this one of him.

I do pray God that he will give you strength to bear this terribly sad news which I have had to send to you.

My Mother, Dad and family and myself send our deepest sympathy to you, and should be very grateful if you would let us know if you get this letter safely.

Trusting you are in better health than you were when I heard last,

From

Yours very sincerely,

(Mrs) Ethel Hine

P.S. If there is anything that I can do for you over here I shall be very grateful to do so.

E.H.

Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams (previously recorded as Private Charles Wood) was buried on 13th March, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Plot number 178911.

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. M. Williams, 621 George Street, Sydney, NSW, widow of the late Private T. H. J. Williams, on 17th April, 1923 stating that the site of Private T. H. J. Williams' grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row F Grave 7. "*While the actual place of burial remains unchanged the previous registration allotted thereto has been altered to conform with the uniform layout of this Cemetery.*" This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference – XI. F. 7. Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relatives to The Adjutant, 17th Battalion, A.I.F., for any information regarding "*726 Pte T. H. J. Williams 17th Batt, A.I.F.*" A reply was received from The Adjutant, 17th Battalion, A.I.F. stating "*...I have to inform you that he has not been with this Battalion since our arrival in FRANCE.*"

The Red Cross also contacted The Matron, Fulham Hospital Hammersmith, in an attempt to gather the fullest details possible into the wounds, death and burial of No. 726 Pte T. H. Williams, 17th Battalion, A.I.F. The Captain R.A.M.C., Fulham Military Hospital replied to the Red Cross stating "*Died of Meningitis The deceased was admitted to this Hospital from Perham Downs Camp 17.2.17 and died at 9.30 pm on 8.3.17. He was suffering from Cerebro*

Spinal Fever. He was buried by the Australian Imperial Force Authorities, 130, Horseferry Road, to whom he should apply for further information."

Base Records replied to a communication to The Secretary, Australian Metropolitan Life Assurance Coy. Ltd., Sydney, NSW on 11th July, 1917 enclosing the requested certificate of report of death of the late No. 726, Pte T. H. J. Williams, 17th Battalion.

A War Pension was granted to Eva Marn Williams, 15 National Street, Rozelle, widow of the late Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 21st August, 1917. A pension was also granted to Edward Thomas Williams, son of Eva & the late Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams, in the sum of £1 per fortnight from 21st August, 1917.

Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Williams' widow – Mrs E. M. Williams, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent August, 1921 & Plaque sent February, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams – service number 726, aged 29, of 17th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Joseph and Emily Williams; husband of E. M. Williams, of 621 George St., Sydney, NSW.

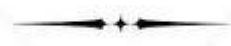
Private T. H. J. Williams is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 84. Listed on the Roll of Honour as Private Thomas Herbert Joseph Williams. Also known as Thomas Henry James Williams.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(102 pages of Private Thomas Herbert Joseph 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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTIES

123rd LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

WOUNDED

Pte T. H. J. WILLIAMS, 17 B., Rozelle

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 16 December, 1915)

MORE CASUALTIES

163RD LIST

New South Wales

Ill in Hospital

Pte T. H. J. WILLIAMS (Rozelle), previously reported wounded.

(Evening News, Sydney, NSW – 15 April, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LIST NO. 317

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private T. H. J. Williams (Rozelle)

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 3 July, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOUR

WILLIAMS – March 8, 1917, at Fulham Military Hospital, England, Private T. H. J. Williams (Tommy), only dearly-loved son of Mrs E. Williams, Wolger-road, Mosman, and the late J. J. Williams, Sydney. Two years on active service.

WILLIAMS – Died 8/3/17, Fulham Military Hospital, England, Private T. H. J. Williams, dearly-loved brother of Mrs P. Ellis, Naremburn; Mrs R. N. Bennet, Wolger-road, Mosman; and Mrs H. H. Eyles, Ranger's-avenue, Mosman.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 4 July, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOUR

WILLIAMS – March 8, 1917, at Fulham Military Hospital, England, Private T. H. J. (Tommy) Williams.

Inserted by his sincere friends, J. J. Cooney and family, of Thomas-street, North Sydney.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 7 July, 1917)

On Active Service

WILLIAMS – In loving memory of Private Tommy Williams, late 17th Battalion, died Fulham Military Hospital, England, March 8, 1917, dearly loved husband of Eva Williams, Rozelle.

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 8 March, 1918)

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)

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. M. Williams, 621 George Street, Sydney, NSW, widow of the late Private T. H. J. Williams, dated 13th June, 1920 to advise that the inscription she had chosen exceeded the limit imposed by the Imperial War Graves Commission, viz 66 letters and it would be necessary to abbreviate same. Her change of address had been noted.

Base Records wrote to the Finance Secretary in May, 1925 regarding the Headstone Inscription Fees for No. 726 Pte T. H. J. Williams, 17th Battalion of which the balance of 7/11 was outstanding.

Private T. H. J. Williams does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*To Have, To Love & Then To Part
Is The Saddest Story Of A Human Heart*

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)





Australian War Graves (Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)

Photo of Private T. H. J. Williams' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photos courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



