

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1428 PRIVATE

W. WILLIAMS

34TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8TH JUNE, 1917 Age 34

*Have Mercy Upon Him O Lord
& Let Perpetual Light
Shine Upon Him*

William WILLIAMS

Griffith William Williams was born at Darlinghurst, Sydney, New South Wales in 1883 to parents William Griffith Williams & Hannah M. Williams (nee Dempsey).

William Griffiths Williams, father of Griffith William Williams, died on 15th February, 1900 at Sydney, NSW.

Hannah Williams, widowed mother of Griffith William Williams, remarried on 10th May, 1906 in Wollongong, NSW to Martin Manion.

William Williams married Jessie McIntosh in 1912 in the district of Maitland, NSW. A son – William Griffith Williams was born on 20th September, 1912 at Abermain, NSW. Another son – Thomas Williams was born on 24th November, 1913 at Abermain, NSW. A daughter – Elsie Ellen Williams was born on 16th October, 1915 at Abermain, NSW.

William Williams was a 33 year old, married, Miner when he enlisted at West Maitland, NSW on 21st February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1428 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Jessie William, Abermain, NSW.

Private William Williams was posted to 34th Battalion on 21st February, 1916 for recruit training.

Private William Williams embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 2nd May, 1916 with the 34th Infantry Battalion & disembarked at Plymouth, England from *Aragon* on 23rd June, 1916. (Note: Private William Williams does not appear to be listed on any Embarkation Roll on the Australian War Memorial website.)

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 Williams proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 21st November, 1916.

Private William Williams was wounded in action on 5th February, 1917. He was admitted to 10th Field Ambulance on 5th February, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Spine then transferred to 2nd Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Williams was transferred from 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station to Ambulance Train 10 on 7th February, 1917. He was admitted to 13th Stationary Hospital on 8th February, 1917 then transferred to 13th General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 11th February, 1917. Private Williams was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Princess Elizabeth* on 12th February, 1917.

34th Battalion

The 34th Battalion was formed in January 1916 at a camp established at the Maitland showground in New South Wales. It was planned that the bulk of the battalion's recruits would be drawn from the Maitland area and thus it was dubbed "Maitland's Own". The first recruits for the 34th, however, hailed from the far north-west of the state and arrived at Maitland after joining a recruiting march that began at Walgett. These men were known as the "Wallabies".

The 34th became part of the 9th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division. It left Sydney, bound for the United Kingdom in May 1916. Arriving there in late June, the battalion spent the next five months training. It crossed to France on 22 November, and moved into the trenches of the Western Front for the first time on 27 November, just in time for the onset of the terrible winter of 1916-17.

The 34th Battalion had to wait until the emphasis of British and Dominion operations switched to the Ypres Sector of Belgium in mid-1917 to take part in its first major battle; this was the battle of Messines, launched on 7 June.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 34th Battalion

Armentieres February 1 to 5:

In Billets. Training, Supplying Working Parties, Kit Inspection etc. Bathing and cleaning up generally. "D" Battalion Evacuated 27 Rehomed 12 and Capt Wheeler.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private William Williams was admitted to King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 12th February, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to spine – severe.

Mrs J. Williams, Abermain, NSW, wife of Private William Williams, was advised by Base Records on 22nd February, 1917 that Private Williams had been admitted to Hospital on 12th February with gunshot wound to spine severe. She was advised on 12th March, 1917 "*Condition Private William Williams Stationary.*"

Mrs J. Williams, Abermain, NSW, wife of Private William Williams, was advised by Base Records on 20th March, 1917 that Private William Williams was seriously ill & on 28th March, 1917 she was advised that Private Williams was progressing favourably.

Mrs J. Williams, Old School Hill, C/o Post Office, Abermain, NSW, wife of Private William Williams, wrote to Base Records on 29th March, 1917 asking "*can you tell me where my husband 1428 Private W. Williams 34 Battalion is in Hospital. I was advised that he was admitted to Hospital 12th February severely wounded & since reported seriously ill. If I knew where he is I could get relatives to go & see him...*" Base Records advised Mrs Williams on 3rd April, 1917 that Private Williams was admitted to King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London.

Mrs J. Williams, Abermain, NSW, wife of Private William Williams, was advised by Base Records on 9th April, 1917 that Private Williams was now reported seriously ill. She was advised again on 26th April, 1917 & on 19th May, 1917 that Private Williams was still improving.

Mrs J. Williams, Abermain, NSW, wife of Private William Williams, was advised by Base Records on 7th June, 1917 that Private Williams was "*still seriously ill.*"

Private William Williams died at 10 am on 8th June, 1917 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action in France – G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to spine.

A death for William Williams, aged 34, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Private William Williams was buried on 12th June, 1917 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Plot number 179.398, Australian Military Burial Ground. (Note: The War Gratuity Schedule in the Service Record file of Private William Williams incorrectly recorded that he was buried in Cite Bonjean Military Cemetery but quoted the correct Grave number) From the burial report of Private William Williams - *Coffin was good, polished Elm. The deceased soldier was buried with Military honours. Firing Party and Bugler comprising members attached to the Administrative Hdqrs A.I.F. London were in attendance. The "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside. The coffin was shrouded with the Australian flag and surmounted by a lovely floral tribute. The service was conducted at the graveside by Chaplain Bossante, A.I.F. Headquarters. No relatives were present at the funeral. Temporary oak memorial to be erected by the Commonwealth Military Authorities.* (The back of the Burial Report records details of the Next-of-kin & place of Attestation. Private Williams also lists a family member – Sister-in-law, Mrs McIntosh, 16 Dingwall Road, Earsfield.)

Base Records wrote to Mrs J. Williams, Post Office, Abermain, NSW, widow of the late Private W. Williams, on 17th April, 1923 stating that the site Private W. Williams grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 11 Row E Grave 22. "*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. E. 22. Private William Williams has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

A War Pension was granted to Jessie Williams, of Old School Hill, Abermain, NSW, widow of the late Private William Williams, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 11th August, 1917. War Pensions were also granted to the following children of Jessie & the late Private William Williams, granted from 11th August, 1917: Wm. Griffith Williams - £1; Thomas Williams – 15/- & Ellie Elsie Williams – 10/-.

Private William Williams was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Williams' widow – Mrs J. Williams, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Williams – service number 1428, aged 34, of 34th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Hannah Marion and the late Mr Williams, of Sydney, husband of Jessie Williams, of Abermain, New South Wales.

Private W. 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 124.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

G. W. Williams is remembered on the Abermain War Memorial, located in Jeffries Memorial Park, Cessnock Road, Abermain, NSW.



Abermain War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)



Abermain War Memorial

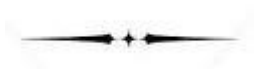
(52 pages of Private William Williams' Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



Connected to Private William Williams:

Younger brother Percy Joseph Williams – Enlisted 7th August, 1915 as a 23 year old, single, Miner from Charles Street, Abermain, NSW. Next-of-kin – Mother – Mrs Marion Manion (same address). Embarked as Service number 1862 with 30th Battalion, 2nd Reinforcements on 17th December, 1915. Killed in Action 11th August, 1916. Remembered on Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01920.015

Private William Williams (c 1916)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01920.001

Abermain, NSW. c. 1920. A composite photograph, presented to the Abermain RSL by the ladies of the Abermain Comforts Fund. The composite photograph comprises portraits of the twenty five servicemen from Abermain who lost their lives in the war of 1914-1918.

Left to right; Top row; 1140 Private (Pte) Robert Hugh Humphris, 53rd Battalion (written as Humphries on the photograph); 797 Pte Alexander R. Hincks, 35th Battalion; 476 Pte Thomas Richard Kinneard, 35th Battalion; 918 Signaller (Sig) Robert Wilson, 34th Battalion; 254 Pte Archibald Scott, 56th Battalion:

Second row; 5620 Sapper (Spr) Charles K. Smart, 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company; 1263 Lance Corporal (L Cpl) Albert Joseph Wailes, 34th Battalion; Lieutenant (Lt) James Glen McDonald, 19th Battalion; 540 L Cpl Robert Patterson, 36th Battalion; 1383 Pte Thomas George Dando, 13th Battalion also known as Francis George Dando (written as Bdr F. G. Dando on the photograph):

Third row; 2534 Pte John Albert Barker, 35th Battalion [note photograph has been switched with that of his father J Barker]; Pte J P Williams; 568 Sergeant (Sgt) William Henry Webb, 30th Battalion; **1428 Pte Griffith William Williams, 34th Battalion**; 1477 Pte James Barker, 34th Battalion [note photograph has been switched with that of his son J A Barker]:

Fourth row; 501 Pte John Richard Musgrove, 34th Battalion; 1903 Pte Joseph Clarke, 17th Battalion; 1484 Corporal (Cpl) William J McMillan, 1st Battalion (written as McMullan on the photograph); 942 Pte John McInnes, 34th Battalion; 374 Pte James Allan, 36th Battalion (written as Allen on the photograph):

Bottom row; 4820 Pte Lawrence P Halpin, 55th Battalion; 1232 Pte Henry Hope Ridley, 17th Battalion; 1905 Pte Thomas Whitfield, 34th Battalion; 1718 Pte Albert Bland Chappell, 1st Battalion; 489 Pte Michael Malloy, 1st Battalion.

Newspaper Notices

CASUALTY LIST

The 284th list of casualties sustained by Australian troops was issued yesterday.

NEW SOUTH WALES

ILL

Pte W. WILLIAMS, Abermain (seriously), previously reported severely wounded

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 31 March, 1917)

DISTRICT CASUALTY DEAD

Mrs Martin Mannion, of Charles-street, Abermain, received word from the Base Records Office on Wednesday, that her son, Private William Williams, died from wounds. He was wounded in the spine, and lingered four and a half months. This is the second son she has lost at the front, the other being killed in action last August. She is still represented there by her husband and another son. Much sympathy is expressed for Mrs Mannion, also deceased's wife and three young children.

(*Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, NSW – 18 June, 1917)

315th LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

Died of Wounds

Pte W. Williams, Abermain (previously reported seriously ill)

(*The Land*, Sydney, NSW – 29 June, 1917)

Roll of Honour

WILLIAMS – In loving memory of my dear husband, Private William Williams, aged 34, who died June 8th from wounds received in France February 6th, 1917.

We loved him in life, he is dear to is still,
But in grief we must bend to God's holy will;
Only those who have lost one are able to tell,
The part at the heart at not saying farewell.

Inserted by his sorrowing wife, Jessie Williams, and children Tom, Will, and Elsie.

WILLIAMS – At King George's Hospital, London, June 8, 1917, of wounds received in France on active service, Private William Williams, aged 34 years, eldest son of Hannah Manion, of Abermain.

He gave his life for his country,
For honour, faith, and right,
With us his memory ever lives,
He fought a noble fight.
'Misdst the roaring of the battle,
And the rain of shot, and shell,
Fighting for home and country,
He like a hero fell.

(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 30 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 W. Williams does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Have Mercy Upon Him O Lord & Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him

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 (Photo by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





Australian War Graves (Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)

Photo of Private W. Williams' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.

