

# Durrington War Graves

## World War 1



*Lest We Forget*



**696 CORPORAL**

**S. WILLIAMSON**

**4TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**8TH MAY, 1917**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Cpl. S. Williamson is located in Grave Plot # 244  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## Samuel WILLIAMSON

Samuel Williamson was born at Killyman, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, Ireland around 1871 to parents William and Annie Williamson.

The 1911 England Census recorded Samuel Williamson, Gunner, Royal Artillery, aged 39, born Kilyman, Tyrone, Ireland, located in the Military Census at Arabia, Cyprus and Gibraltar.

From information on his Attestation Papers for service in Australian Imperial Forces in 1914 – Samuel Williamson stated he had served 20 years & 18 days with R.G.A (British Army) & was discharged at his own request.

Samuel Williamson was a 39 year old, single, Irondresser when he enlisted at Randwick, Sydney, New South Wales on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1914 with the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion "B" Company of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 696 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as M. Williamson, Queen's Hotel, Ontario, Canada. Mail was returned from this address unclaimed. Samuel Williamson's brother – William James Williamson of Drumkee, Coalisland, Co. Tyrone, Ireland was named as the new next-of-kin.

Pte Samuel Williamson embarked from Sydney for the War on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1914.

Pte Samuel Williamson was wounded between 6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1915 with a gunshot wound to head & cheek which occurred at Anzac. Records also state that Pte Williamson received a chest wound on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1915.

Pte Samuel Williamson was transferred to Rest Camp at Mudros on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 1915 & rejoined his Unit on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1915. He was again transferred to Mudros on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1915 suffering from Influenza.

Pte Samuel Williamson was promoted to Temporary Corporal, whilst performing the duties of N.C.O. 1/C Sanitary Squadron on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 1915 at Gallipoli Peninsula.

Temporary Cpl. Samuel Williamson was promoted to Corporal and transferred to "supernumerary list of Battalion" on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 1915 at Gallipoli Peninsula.

Cpl. Samuel Williamson embarked from Alexandria, Egypt for Overseas on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1916.

Cpl. Williamson was sent to Hospital on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 1917. He embarked on Hospital Ship at Calais, France for England with Bronchitis on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 1917 & was admitted to 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1917.

Cpl. Williamson was Absent without Leave from No. 1 Command Depot, Perham Downs from 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 until 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1917. He was declared an illegal absentee.

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.

Cpl. Samuel Williamson was attached temporarily from Admin. Headquarters to 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion but was sent sick to Fargo Hospital, Wiltshire the same day - 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1917.

Corporal Samuel Williamson died at 2 p.m. on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Syphilis & Heart Failure.

A death for Samuel Williamson, aged 46, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Corporal Samuel Williamson was buried on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 244 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Cpl. Samuel Williamson –He was provided a Military Funeral. *Coffin was Elm. The Rector of Durrington is arranging for one of his Parishioners to tend and care for this grave, and he will gladly reply to any enquiries.*

Corporal S. Williamson is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 42.



*(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)*



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Corporal Samuel Williamson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Williamson's brother - Mr W. J. Williamson of Ireland (both sent May, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal Samuel Williamson – service number 696 as having served with 4th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of William and Annie Williamson of “Drumkee” Coalisland, Co. Tyrone, Ireland.

(41 pages of Cpl Samuel Williamson'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 Reports

### **CORPORAL S. WILLIAMSON**

Mr Wm. Jas. Williamson, Drumkee, Coalisland, has received intimation of the death of his brother, Corporal Samuel Williamson, of the Australian Imperial Forces, who died on the 9th inst., from heart failure at Fangs Military Hospital, Rollestone, Wiltshire. His remains were interred in Durrington cemetery with military honours. He had served 21 years in the Army, and took his discharge from Bombay, and emigrated to Australia, where at the outbreak of war he volunteered, and landed at the Dardanelles with the first Australian Forces, was wounded twice, and afterwards served in France. He was at home a few weeks ago, and looked remarkably well, and spent a very pleasant night in Ballynakelly Orange Hall, amongst his friends and neighbours, and got a very hearty reception. He was a member of the Bush Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 163, the members of which deeply regret the loss of such a gallant soldier and esteemed member.

*(Tyrone Courier, Ireland – 17 May, 1917)*

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### **A YEAR OF COMMEMORATIONS LAUNCHED WITH LIST OF DUNGANNON'S WAR DEAD**

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War One, the Tyrone Times has compiled a list of the 524 men and women from the Dungannon District who died during the four-year conflict.

Each one represents a compelling story of heroism and sacrifice, and heartbreak for loved ones left behind.

Listing them together, however, reveals the true horror and destruction the war wreaked on such a relatively small rural district that was never directly threatened by the conflict.

Although conscription was never imposed on this part of the United Kingdom, villages such as Castlecaulfield, Caledon, Moy, Fivemiletown and Ballygawley lost an entire generation of men with dozens of casualties occurring during one day, July 1, 1916, at the Somme. In fact, three Dungannon soldiers with the same name Robert Anderson, died on that fateful day.

Many of those killed had enlisted believing they were fighting for the political future of Ireland.

Based on the original research by the Friends of The Somme Mid Ulster Branch, the roll of honour includes soldiers whose date of death is unknown, and casualties who died after 1918 from injuries sustained during the war.

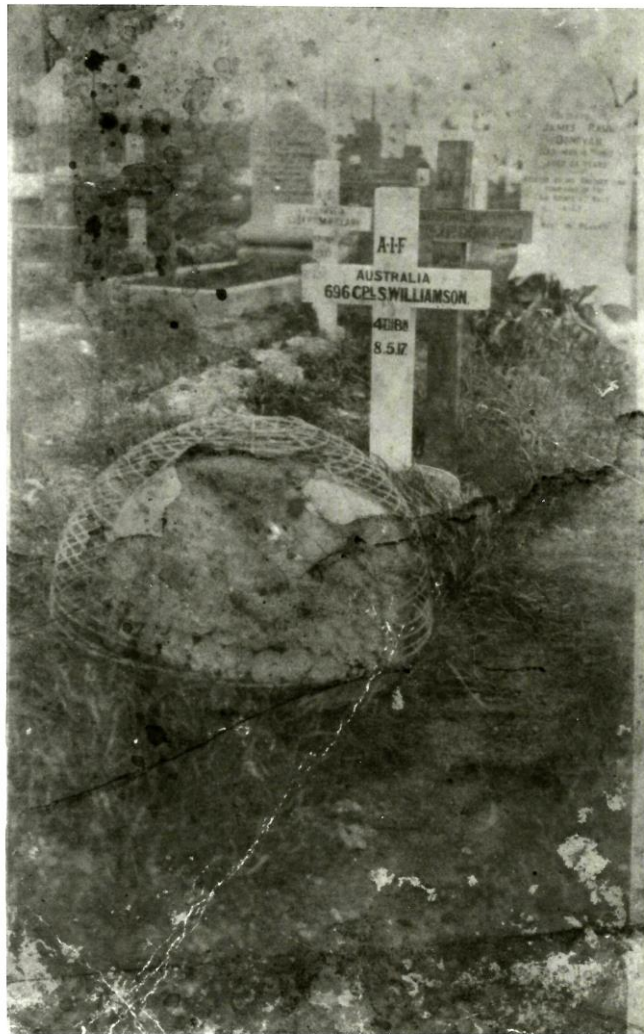
Along with each chronologically listed casualty is information about his or her battalion, service number, date of death and burial place. Most were buried in military graves in France, Belgium and England, while others were interred in graveyards in far-flung places such as Malta, Dar es Salaam, Gaza, Cairo and Basra.

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Williamson, Samuel 696 Australian Infantry 8/5/1917 Durrington

*(Tyrone Times, Ireland – 20 June, 2014)*

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**Original Wooden Cross marking the Grave of Cpl. Samuel Williamson**

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#### 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 at Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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)*

Corporal S. Williamson does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Corporal S. Williamson's Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



*(Photo © Ian King - with permission)*

Corporal S. Williamson is also remembered on the Red Granite Obelisk Memorial to Men of 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion A.I.F. which is located in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



**Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire** (Photo by Dave Healing 2013)



**Memorial to 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion A.I.F. at Durrington Cemetery**

(Photos by Ian King 2010)



**Memorial to 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion A.I.F. at Durrington Cemetery**