

**All Saints Cemetery,
Nunhead, Greater London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3949 PRIVATE

G. W. WILSON

21ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

13TH SEPTEMBER, 1916

Gilbert Walter WILSON

Gilbert Walter Wilson was born at Elsternwick, Victoria in 1894 to parents William Alexander & Margaretta Louisa Wilson (nee Bullock).

Margaret Louisa Wilson, mother of Gilbert Walter Wilson, died on 13th May, 1902.

Gilbert Walter Wilson was a 21 year old, single, Labourer from 57 Gillies Street, Fairfield, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 16th July, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3949 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr William Wilson, 57 Gillies Street, Fairfield, Victoria. Gilbert Wilson stated on his Attestation Papers that he was serving with 55th Infantry – Collingwood.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was posted to "M" Company on 16th July, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to "C" Company of 12th Battalion on 9th August, 1915 then transferred on 6th December, 1915 to "A" Company of 12th Depot Battalion. Private Wilson was transferred to 9th Reinforcements of 21st Battalion on 17th December, 1915.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Warilda* (A69) on 8th February, 1916 with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 21st Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements. Private Wilson was admitted to Ship's Hospital with warts on foreskin (no dates recorded for admission or discharge).

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson embarked for Overseas on Troopship *Oriana* on 21st March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 27th March, 1916.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was admitted to 9th Stationary Hospital at Marseilles, France on 27th March, 1916 from *Oriana*. He was discharged to duty on 12th April, 1916 (V.D.).

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was posted to 2nd Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 14th April, 1916. He was taken on strength of 21st Battalion in France on 24th April, 1916.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was wounded in France on 24th August, 1916. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 24th August, 1916 with an abdominal wound then transferred & admitted to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s). Private Wilson was admitted to Hospital (name not legible) on 27th August, 1916. He was transferred from Havre on 1st September, 1916 to England on Hospital Ship *Lanfranc* with G.S.W Spine.

21st Battalion

The 21st Battalion was raised, as part of the 6th Brigade, at Broadmeadows in Victoria in February 1915. Its recruits hailed from all over the state. The later enlistment of these men, and their average age of 29, would seem to indicate a more considered decision to enlist that set them apart from those who did so amidst the heady enthusiasm of late 1914.

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After evacuation from Gallipoli in December 1915, the 21st Battalion arrived in France in March 1916. In April, it was the first Australian battalion to commence active operations on the Western Front. During the battle of Pozieres it was engaged mainly on carrying duties, but suffered its heaviest casualties of the war during the fighting around Mouquet Farm.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 21st Battalion

OG 1 – 24th August, 1916:

9 am – "A" Coy withdrawn from line and moved to TOM'S CUT between point 75 and 12.

2 pm – “C” & “D” Coys took over line from 24th Battn points 55 through Quarry to 81 point 69 in Skyline Trench R3.3 C 5 ½ 9 ½. 24th Battalion taking over line vacated by 21st.

Position take over strengthened and improved.

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Casualties during period 22nd/26th August

	<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Missing</i>
<i>Officers</i>	<i>3 (named)</i>	<i>7 (named)</i>	<i>3 (named)</i>
<i>Other Ranks</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>213</i>	<i>131</i>

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was admitted to King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 2nd September, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Spine & Paraplegia. His condition was severe. The Hospital Admissions form recorded: *“Wounded on August 24th/16 while carrying ammunition. Complete paraplegia.....wound drained. Considerable shock followed by collapse & death after the operation.”*

Base Records advised Mr W. Wilson, 57 Gillis Street, Fairfield, Victoria on 7th September, 1916 that No. 3949 Private G. W. Wilson, 21st Battalion, was seriously ill with gunshot wound to back. Mr Wilson was advised again on 13th September, 1916 that Private G. W. Wilson was dangerously ill.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was reported to be seriously ill on 13th September, 1916.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson died on 13th September, 1916 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action in France – G.S.W. Spine.

A death for Gilbert W. Wilson, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was buried on 16th September, 1916 in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, Greater London, England – Grave number 32452. Square 89 Soldier’s Grave.

Base Records wrote to Mr W. Wilson, 325 Wellington Street, Collingwood, Victoria on 20th April, 1920 with the following: *“With reference to my communication of 16th August, 1917, regarding the regrettable loss of your son, the late No. 3949 Private G. W. Wilson, 21st Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from former site, and re-interred in Grave No. 20, Australian Section, Nunhead Cemetery, Nunhead. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain. The utmost care and attention is being devoted to the graves of our fallen soldiers, and photo graphs are being taken as soon as possible for transmission to next-of-kin.”*

This is now recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Grave Memorial - 16.33431 F. and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Mr William Alexander Wilson, 325 Wellington St., Collingwood, father of the late Private Gilbert Walter Wilson, applied for a War Pension but it was rejected on the grounds as *“dependence not proven.”*

Private Gilbert Walter Wilson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Wilson’s father – Mr W. Wilson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent May, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Gilbert Walter Wilson – service number 3949, of 21st Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

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Private G. W. Wilson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 95.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

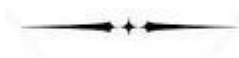
The Fairfield War Memorial, located at Fairfield & Alphington RSL Club, 7 Railway Place, Fairfield, Victoria does not list individual names.



Fairfield War Memorial (Photo from Monument Australia)

(49 pages of Private Gilbert Walter Wilson'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

THE 217th CASUALTY LIST

WOUNDED

Private G. W. Wilson, Fairfield

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 23 September, 1916)

DIED ON SERVICE

WILSON – Died of wounds, 16th September, Private Gilbert Walter, the dearly beloved youngest son of William and the late Margaret Wilson, aged 22 years.

Loved by all who knew him.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 2 October, 1916)

DIED ON SERVICE

WILSON – Died of wounds, King's Hospital, England, 16th September, Pte Gilbert W. Wilson, dearly loved cousin of M. Chatfield and M. Bullock.

In a soldier's grave he sleepeth,
One of earth's bravest and best;
In our hearts we miss you, dear Gilbert,
Thought we know you are only at rest.

Died as he had lived – a hero and a man.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 October, 1916)

GALLANT AUSTRALIANS

THIS WEEK'S CASUALTIES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Private G. W. Wilson, Fairfield

(*Preston Leader*, Victoria – 14 October, 1916)

Touching the death of Private Gilbert Walter Wilson, whose death we recently recorded, letters have come to hand from the sister in charge of the King George Hospital, the chaplain, and an Englishman, who visited him regularly in hospital, giving particulars of his death. He received a severe gun-shot wound in the spine, causing paralysis from the waist downwards. An operation was necessary, but the spinal cord was so damaged that nothing could be done. The brave boy passed away on the 13th September. Everything humanly possible in the way of skill and kindness was shown him.

(Northcote Leader, Victoria – 9 December, 1916) & (Preston Leader, Victoria – 9 December, 1916)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

WILSON – In loving memory of Private Gilbert Wilson, who died in England, 16th September, 1916, of wounds received in France, aged 22 years.

Far across the seas he went,
For he answered his country's call;
For us all was his life's blood spent,
So let us all honor a brave lad's fall.

-Inserted by his loving brother, sister-in-law, Hector, Isabella Wilson.

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 September, 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)

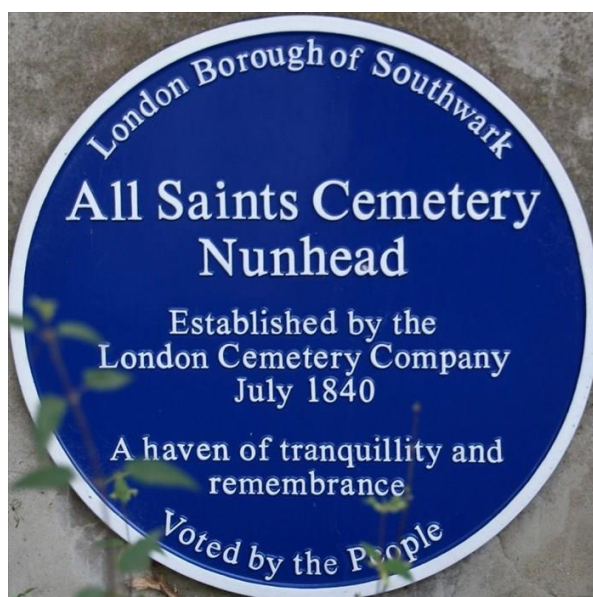
Private G. W. Wilson does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, Great London, England (also known as Nunhead Cemetery)

Nunhead (All Saints) Cemetery contains 592 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war. The majority are in three war graves plots; the United Kingdom plot (in Square 89) has 266 graves, the Australian plot (near the main entrance) has 23 and the Canadian plot (in Square 52, also containing New Zealand and South African burials) has 36. The graves in the Australian and Canadian plots are marked with individual headstones. The graves in the United Kingdom plot and the remaining war graves scattered throughout the cemetery could not be marked individually; the casualties buried in these graves are therefore commemorated by name on a Screen Wall inside the main entrance gate to the cemetery.

A second Screen Wall commemorates the 110 burials of the 1939-1945 war in a further war graves plot in Square 5 and elsewhere in the cemetery whose graves could not be marked by headstones.

There is also 1 Belgian burial of the 1914-1918 war and 7 Non-war Service burials, all commemorated on the Screen Wall. *(Information from CWGC)*



All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J00776

The Australian area at Nunhead Cemetery.

The grave in the centre front is 27 Lance Corporal Eric Lyndon Lowe, 18th Battalion, from Clarence Town NSW, who died on 10 September 1915 aged 18 years.

The grave to the right is 1560 Private (Pte) Leslie Raymond Talbot Gilbert, 14th Battalion, born in England, from Kogarah West NSW, who died on 20 January 1916 aged 19 years.

The grave 2nd row right side is 1019 Sergeant (Sgt) Victor Ronald Coombe, 15th Battalion, of Campbelltown, Tas, who died on 29 September 1915 aged 26 years.

From the collection of Mr Alfred Thomas Sharp. Mr Sharp was the Commonwealth Immigration Officer of Victoria and was based in the London Office during the First World War. He and his wife hosted and visited many soldiers, particularly those from Victoria, who were recuperating in London. He also photographed many Australian graves in English cemeteries. His photograph collection relating to this period in London was bequeathed to the Memorial in 1922 after his death. During his time in London he was a member of the British Volunteer Regiment, serving with the Willesden Battalion, Middlesex Volunteer Regiment.



Australian War Graves in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead (Photos courtesy of Neil Bright)



Photo of Private G. W. Wilson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, Greater London, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave - js)