

# Durrington War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



7099 PRIVATE

**P. F. WILLIAMS**

6TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

14TH MARCH, 1917 Age 33

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte P. F. Williams is located in Grave Plot # 221  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## Percy Francis WILLIAMS

Percy Francis Williams was born at Fitzroy, Melbourne, Victoria in 1883 to parents Edward and Mary Ann Charlotte Williams (nee Beddison). He was a 32 year old, single, Photographer from Bunyip, Victoria when he enlisted on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1916 with the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 7099 & his religion was Anglican. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs M.A. Williams of Main Street, Bunyip, Victoria.

While in Camp in Australia, Pte Percy Francis Williams had been admitted to Royal Park Hospital on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 & transferred the same day to No. 5 General Hospital with \_\_\_\_\_ Abscess. He was discharged on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 1916 & transferred to Rest Camp Macleod until 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1916.

Pte Percy Francis Williams embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 23 November, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

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.

Pte Percy Francis Williams was sent sick to Fargo Military Hospital on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 from 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion, Durrington, Wiltshire with Bronchitis & reported seriously ill with Broncho Pneumonia on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1917.

Private Percy Francis Williams died at 10.45 p.m. on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for Percy F. Williams, aged 33, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

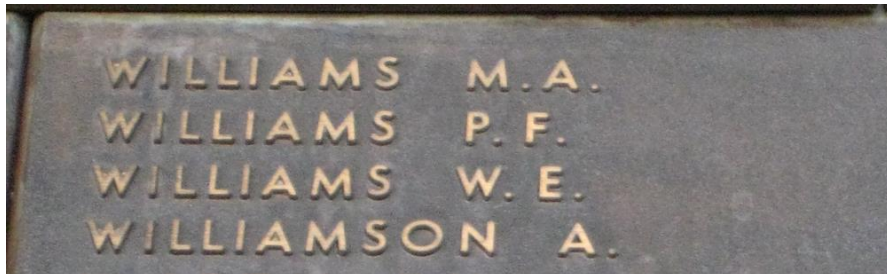
Private Percy Francis Williams was buried on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 221 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Percy Francis Williams – *The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral..... Referring to Private Williams – 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. W. A. Kelle, "B" Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion wrote – "...His loss is sincerely regretted by myself and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Sharp, likewise by N.C.O.'s and men of the Unit and those with whom he has come in contact since arrival here."*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Pte P. F. Williams contains a request from the Red Cross, on behalf of his family, regarding any details about his death. A reply from the Assistant Matron, Fargo Military Hospital reads:

*"Pte P. F. Williams 7099 died in this hospital on March 14<sup>th</sup> from Broncho Pneumonia. He was buried on 17.3.17 at Durrington Wilts, grave No. 221 right hand side of cemetery path. Pte Williams was very ill, but he made a very hard fight against the disease. He left no messages as his mind was not very clear the last few days. I wrote again to his people in Australia the other day – and also a cousin who lives quite near the hospital came over making enquiries a few weeks ago."*

Pte Percy Francis Williams requested in his Will that half of his money to be given to his mother – Mrs Maryann Williams & also his ring. The remaining half to be given to Doris Evelyn Walker & also his wrist watch was to go to D. E. Walker.

Private P. F. Williams is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 49.

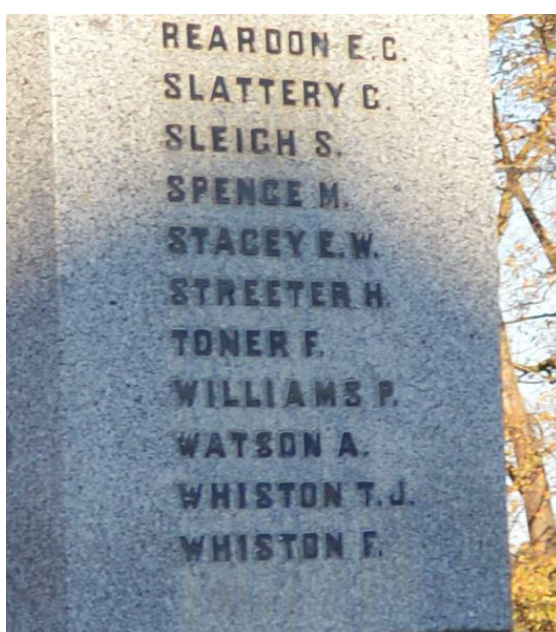


(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

P. Williams is also remembered on the Bunyip War Memorial located at Main & High Streets, Bunyip, Victoria.



**Bunyip War Memorial** (Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Brown)

Pte Percy Francis Williams was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Williams' father – Mr E. Williams (sent December, 1922 & January, 1923)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Percy Francis Williams – service number 7099 as being 33 years old & served with 6th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Edward and Mary Ann Charlotte Williams. Born at Bunyip, Victoria.

A War Pension claim for Edward Williams, father of late Pte Percy Francis Williams, was rejected as dependence was not shown. A War Pension claim for Mary A. C. Williams, mother of late Pte Percy Francis Williams, was approved in the sum of 14/ per fortnight from 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1917.

(63 pages of Pte Percy Francis 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*

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## Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

283RD CASUALTY LIST

DIED FORM ILLNESS

Pte P. F. Williams, Bunyip, 14/3/1917

*(Bendigo Advertiser, Victoria – Friday 30 March, 1917)*

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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)*

Pte P. F. Williams does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte P. F. Williams' Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)