

Durrington War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



2468 PRIVATE

W. A. LILLEY

47TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

2ND JANUARY, 1917 Age 25

*Oh For The Touch
Of A Vanish'd Hand
The Sound Of A Voice
That Is Still*

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte W. A. Lilley is located in Grave Plot # 146
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

William Alexander LILLEY

William Alexander Lilley was born at Boulia, Queensland in 1891 to parents John Charlton & Martha Lilley (nee Ball). He was a 24 year old, single, Labourer from Boulia, North Queensland when he enlisted on 5th April, 1916 with the 47th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2468 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Martha Ball Lilley of Boulia, North Queensland.

Pte William Alexander Lilley embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Seang Choon (A49)* on 19th September, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 9th December, 1916. Pte Lilley had been admitted to the Isolation Hospital on 7th December, 1916 & discharged on 8th December, 1916. Pte Lilley had posted a letter home from Durban on 6th November, 1916.

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 Alexander Lilley was marched in to 12th Training Battalion, Codford, Wiltshire from overseas on 9th December, 1916.

Private William Alexander Lilley was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 26th December, 1916 with Bronchitis (seriously ill). A Telegram was sent to Mrs Lilley advising that her son was seriously ill with Bronchitis.

Private William Alexander Lilley died at 11 p.m. on 2nd January, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire from Broncho Pneumonia.

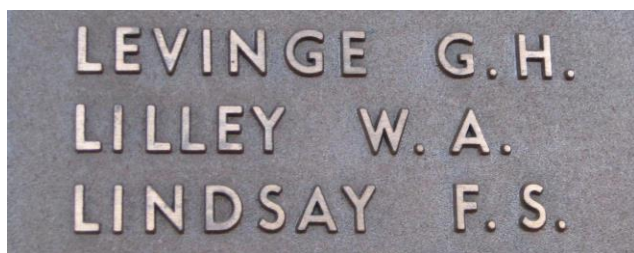
A death for (Male) Lilley, aged 26, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Private William Alexander Lilley was buried on 6th January, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Plot number 146 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

A letter from Chairman of Boulia Shire Council on behalf of Mrs Lilley dated 31st March, 1917, to Officer in Charge, Military Base Records queries if Mrs Lilley's son is in fact dead. She had received communication that Pte Lilley had died on 2nd January, 1917 but after this received a Christmas card & a letter from her son "both bearing post-mark dated 3 Jan '17 "Codford St Mary". Base Records replied stating that the letters could possibly have been given to the Hospital Orderly to post but instead had carried them around in his pocket for days – unaware of the death of the soldier in question.

Pte W. A. Lilley 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 Lilley's father – Mr J. C. Lilley (sent March, 1923 & July, 1922)

Private W. A. Lilley is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 144.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

The Boulia War Memorial located at Herbert Street, Boulia, Queensland does not contain individual names. A New Memorial was dedicated in 2006.



Boulia Old War Memorial

(photo by Shirley & Trevor McIvor)



Boulia New War Memorial *(photo by Evan Blackman)*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Alexander Lilley – service number 2468 as being 25 years old & served with 47th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of John Charles and Martha Lilley of New Goodwoods, Boulia, Queensland.

(44 pages of Pte William Alexander Lilley'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

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Newspaper Reports

ROLL OF HONOUR - 263RD CASUALTY LIST

QUEENSLAND – ILL

W. A. Lilley, Boulia, seriously

(Queensland Times, Ipswich, Queensland – Tuesday 16 January, 1917)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES LIST No. 265

DIED OF ILLNESS

W. A. Lilley (Boulia)

(Morning Bulletin, Rockhampton, Queensland – Thursday 18 January, 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 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 W. A. Lilley does have a personal inscription on his headstone, though he does not have the Christian cross.

Oh For The Touch Of A Vanish'd Hand The Sound Of A Voice That Is Still

Photo of Pte W. A. Lilley's Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)