

George William Williams

Gunner 1549135 21st Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Artillery



George was born in London on 30th May 1913 to Albert and Esther Williams. His mother Esther died the following day and his father Albert was killed in France in September 1917 during the Great War.

George married Violet Florence Lawson of Coolham in August 1933 and the couple had a daughter, Thelma. In 1933 George was described by a family member as a gent's outfitters shop assistant. On the 1939 Register he was a civilian living in Battersea and training at a Government Training Centre where his trade was described as an internal grinder. At some point after this George joined the Army and was sent overseas with 48 Battery of the 21st Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment of the Royal Artillery.

George was captured by Japanese forces during the Fall of Singapore in February 1942; he was to spend the rest of his life in Prisoner of War camps under the Japanese. According to Japanese records George appears to have been taken initially to Garut, West Java on 8th March 1942 and he may also have spent time in a camp in Thailand. The most part of his imprisonment appears to have been in Malaysia, in the state now known as Sabah, then known as British North Borneo. It was not until March 1943 that he was recorded as missing while stationed in the Netherlands East Indies, now Indonesia, on Casualty List 1092. It may be that at some time before this report he was transferred to the island of Labuan, off the coast of Brunei. We know from historical records that prisoners and local civilians were made to construct airfields on Labuan so that Japanese fighters could attack possible Allied invasion forces coming in by sea from the direction of the Philippines. George may or may not have been part of this, and next appears on Casualty List 1053, in July 1944 as a prisoner of the Japanese.

George spent two and a half years as a prisoner of war and passed away on 29th November 1944 on the island Labuan, the cause of death given as dysentery. It was not until July 1945, nine months after his death that he was officially recorded as having died on Casualty list 1804.

Violet, his wife, lived at 1 Blacksmiths Cottages, Coolham at the time of George's death. George was awarded the War Medal 1939 – 1945 and 1939 – 1945 Star. He is buried and commemorated in the Labuan War Cemetery, Malaysia. The inscription reads "When the day of life has fled, in Heaven we hope to meet where no tears are shed".



Left: War Medal 1939 – 1945



Right: 1939 – 1945 Star

In Memory of
Gunner

George William Williams

1549135, 48 Bty., 21 Lt. A.A. Regt., Royal Artillery who died on 29 November 1944 Age 33

Son of Albert and Ester Williams; husband of Violet F. Williams, of Coolham, Sussex.

Remembered with Honour
Labuan War Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission