



In Memory of  
**Private**  
**WILLIAM BERRY**

**4437**, 47<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Infantry A.I.F.  
who died age 22  
on 07 August 1916

Son of Ethel Caterer,  
of Fiji Islands.

Remembered with honour  
VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL, FRANCE



PRIVATE  
**WILLIAM BERRY**

47<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY BATTALION  
SERVICE NUMBER: 4437



A small number of the men on the Toowoomba Mothers' Memorial had little direct connection with Toowoomba apart from their attendance at Toowoomba Grammar School. **William Berry** was one of these. According to the War Graves Commission in the 1920s he was the son of William Berry and Ethel May Tufnell and his place of birth was Nansori, "in the Fiji Islands". William senior died in 1909 at Dalby, and Ethel wrote her son's home-place also as Dalby in the late 1920's. However, frequent movement seems to have been part of the family's life; William was educated for a time at Scotch College in Melbourne as well as Toowoomba. Ethel re-married so that by the time William embarked for overseas service she was listed as NOK as Mrs E.M. Caterer of Auchenflower in Brisbane. She also lived for a time in Wellington, New Zealand.

William gave his occupation as farmer when he enlisted in Brisbane on 6 September 1915. He had turned 21 in April, about the time of the Landing at Gallipoli. He was almost 5'7" tall and weighed 135 pounds, with a fair complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair, and was Presbyterian. He was posted to the 14/15<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Brisbane and sailed from there on the A62 *Wandilla* on 31 January 1916.

William's reinforcement unit arrived in Egypt as the AIF was undergoing a major reorganisation. The 15<sup>th</sup>

Battalion had returned from Gallipoli and was being divided to create a new battalion, the 47<sup>th</sup>, drawing in the men newly-arrived from Australia. William was transferred to the new battalion and sailed as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division for France.

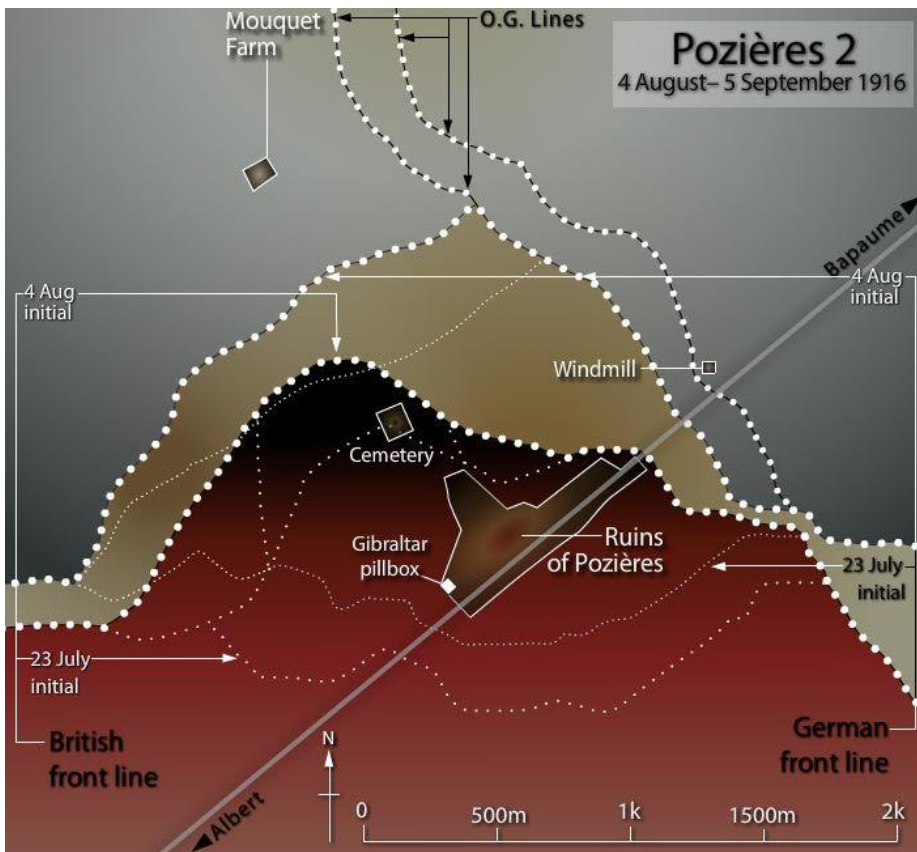
In France William's time was short. He travelled with the 4<sup>th</sup> Division to the Somme front where the Australians were involved in weeks of fighting at Pozieres. His battalion was committed to defending the gains made on Pozieres Heights in August. On 7 August the 47<sup>th</sup> went into the line to relieve the 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion that had sustained a severe German bombardment and counter-attack. For five days the 47<sup>th</sup> held the front line; according to the battalion diary casualties were heavy. William was killed in action on 7 August. After days of continual fighting his grave could not be located.

Living in Sydney in 1923 Ethel continued writing to the army for information regarding William's personal possessions and the commemorative instruments issued by the government, none of which had reached her. In February she wrote revealingly of the problems faced by women enduring heavy personal loss in those days. To the Records Office, on 5 February, *In reply to communication received this morning inquiring as to whether the father of my late son (details) still survives. I beg to inform you that my late husband also a William Berry passed away at Dalby Queensland in Dec. 1909. He, Pte WB, was my only son and the eldest of a family of three, my baby girl died in Jan. 1910 – and my only surviving child, a daughter, is resident in*

*Queensland. I think this answers all your enquiries. I am very regretful that my son's effects have not been found. . . . Yours truly.*

William Berry's army career lasted eleven months. He was 22 years old when he died. His name was recorded on the Australian Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state that William was a student at the school from 16<sup>th</sup> July 1907 to 24<sup>th</sup> September 1909, The School Magazine of November 1916 states, 'William Berry joined the school in 1907 but shortly afterwards his parents moved from Toowoomba. He was recently killed in action in France.'



Map of Pozières 4 August - 5 September 1916



No. 2

*Anzac Field Dressing Station 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 courtesy of Queensland State Library*



*Australian 49<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Battle of Messines 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 courtesy of AWM*

**External Links**

[National Archives of Australia Military Records](#)

[CWGC](#)

[Scotch College Commemorative Web Site](#)

[Australian War Memorial Honour Roll](#)

[AWM4 unit war diaries Item No 23/64/3 47TH BN August 1916](#)