



In Memory of
Private
PAUL NORMAN HAMILTON

505, 3rd Bn. Australian Machine Gun Corps
who died age 22
on 8 August 1918

Son of John Edward and Katharine Florence Hamilton, of Campbell St.,
Toowoomba, Queensland.

Remembered with honour

CROUY BRITISH CEMETERY, CROUY-SUR-SOMME, FRANCE



PRIVATE
PAUL NORMAN HAMILTON

3RD BN. AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN CORPS
SERVICE NUMBER: 505



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Paul Norman Hamilton seems to have had a susceptibility to serious chest infections before he embarked for overseas. The rigours of front-line service could ruin the health of the strongest of men; Paul suffered greatly under the strain of military operations in France in 1917 and 1918.

Paul Hamilton was born in Toowoomba, the son of John Edward and Katherine Florence Hamilton of Campbell Street, Toowoomba. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School and became a surveyor's assistant, with six years' experience before his enlistment. He was 21 years of age, almost 5'9" tall and weighed 140 pounds. He had a dark complexion, grey eyes, dark hair and stated his faith as COE.

After volunteering in Toowoomba on 30 September 1916, Paul began infantry training at Enoggera, but was swiftly transferred to the Machine Gun Corps, travelling soon afterwards to Seymour in Victoria. Here he had a bout of influenza that put him in hospital for two weeks. On 19 February 1917 he embarked at Melbourne aboard *A70 Ballarat* for a two-month voyage to the UK. In England he moved through the camps to Grantham, Lincolnshire, and the Machine Gun School. Before his unit was ready for transfer to France, he spent another three weeks in hospital

with laryngitis and another bout of influenza. He crossed over to France on 25 June 1917.

Paul was attached to the 11th M.G. Company for the fighting at Ypres in the autumn of 1917. He was now part of the 3rd Division and joined the attacks at Broodseinde Ridge in early October. On 16 October he was wounded in action, receiving a shrapnel wound to the right thigh. The injury was not life-threatening but was a "Blighty"; he spent six weeks recovering before being granted a furlough of two more weeks. He went back to the division's camp in Wiltshire in mid-January 1918. Paul was now an experienced fighting soldier; he knew what awaited him when he returned to France, so it is not surprising that he lost a few days' pay for a short stint of AWL. He went back to the front as the German offensive of spring 1918 was launched. For several weeks he fought the enemy and a third bout of influenza.

In March Paul's 11th M.G. Company had been amalgamated with the other machine gunners of the division to form the 3rd M.G. Battalion. In July and August, the Allies took the offensive, their first major attacks of the year. The Australians were now fighting with the Americans and British near the Somme battlefields of 1916. On 28 July Paul was again ill with what seemed to be another dose of influenza. He presented at the Australian Field Ambulance and was taken back to 5th CCS. He was admitted, but his condition did not improve. Soon he developed pneumonia and on 8 August, the day of a great victory near Amiens, he died. The CO of the CCS noted he "died of disease contracted through service in forward areas". The chaplain Rev. J.G. Byrne conducted a service as Paul was buried in what later became the Crouy British Cemetery, Crouy-sur-Somme (grave V.A.12). He was 22 years of age.

News of Paul's death reached Toowoomba within a couple of weeks. A sister wrote to the army from Bridge Street, Toowoomba, in 1923; she reported that his father had died and another brother lived at Mapleton, near Nambour. A second brother, John Edgar Hamilton, served with the 11th Light Horse in Palestine where he was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) for bravery under fire in November 1917. John survived the war. It seems the medals and mementoes for Paul were shared among members of the family.

Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state that he started at the school on 1st June 1903 and left 12th December 1903. The School Magazine of November 1918 states, '*HAMILTON, PAUL N.-Second son of Mrs. J. E. Hamilton, of Godfrey St., Toowoomba--Gunner 11th Machine Gun Coy. Died of pneumonia in France, August 7th, 1918.*'

External Links:

[National Archives of Australia Military Records](#)

[CWGC](#)

[Australian War Memorial Honour Roll](#)

[Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing](#)

[AWM4 AIF unit war diaries 23/3/34 3rd inf bn aug 1918](#)



Courtesy of TGS School Magazine May 1915