

**St. Peter's Churchyard,
Meavy, Devon
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



14591 GUNNER

J. R. WILSON

5TH BDE., AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY.

2ND DECEMBER, 1918 Age 24

A Soldier And A Man

James Reginald WILSON

James Reginald Wilson was born at Yelverton, near Plymouth, Devon, England on 10th December, 1893 to parents Charles and Caroline Wilson (ne Pepperell). His birth was registered in the March quarter, 1894 in the district of Plympton St. Mary, Devon, England.

The 1901 England Census recorded James R. Wilson as a 7 year old living with his parents at 20 Hyde Park Road, Charles, Plymouth, Devon, England. His parents were listed as Charles Wilson (Wine Trade Manager, aged 44, born Plymouth, Devon) & Caroline Wilson (aged 44, born Salcombe, Devon). James was the youngest of five children listed on this Census (all born at Plymouth, Devon) – Lilian Wilson (aged 19), Mabel Wilson (aged 18), Charles N. Wilson (aged 11), Dorothy Wilson (aged 9) then James.

James Reginald Wilson attended Nuttley Grammar School, Plymouth, England.

James' mother, Caroline Wilson, died on 25th February, 1911.

The 1911 England Census recorded James Reginald Wilson as a 16 year old, having just left School, living with his widowed father – Charles Wilson (aged 55) who was running a Boarding House. The Census listed that Charles & his late wife Caroline had a total of five children & the five children were living with their father – Lilian Wilson (Boarding House, aged 29), Mabel Wilson (Boarding House, aged 28), Norman (Accountant – Plymouth Corporation, aged 21), Dorothy Wilson (Apprentice Artist Materials, aged 19) then James. There were 4 Servants also listed & 14 Boarders listed on the Census for The Devon Tors Hotel, Yelverton, Devon.

James' sister, Lilian Wilson, died on 16th September, 1911.

According to information supplied by Charles Wilson (father) for the Roll of Honour, James Reginald Wilson came to Australia when he was 20 years old.

James Reginald Wilson was a 22 year old, single, Farmer from Welshpool, Gippsland, Victoria when he enlisted on 29th December, 1915 with the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade, 16th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 14591 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Charles Wilson of Devongors Hotel, Yelverton, near Plymouth, England.

Private James Reginald Wilson was posted to "B" Company, 23rd Depot Battalion at Royal Park on 5th January, 1916. He was transferred to Field Artillery Reinforcements on 7th January, 1916 & his rank became Gunner.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was transferred to 2nd Field Artillery Brigade, 16th Reinforcements on 1st April, 1916.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Port Lincoln (A17)* on 4th May, 1916.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson joined Artillery Training School at Tel-el-Kebir (no date recorded).

Gunner James Reginald Wilson embarked for England from Alexandria on *Lake Manitoba* on 1st August, 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.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was marched in from Parkhouse to D. Battery Artillery Training Depot at Bulford, Wiltshire on 4th September, 1916.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was written up for being Absent without leave from 24.00 hrs on 24th October, 1916 to 14.00 hrs on 26th October, 1916 while at Bulford. He was awarded 4 days detention & forfeited 6 days pay.

Gunner Wilson was marched in from Parkhouse to 3rd Divisional Artillery Column at Larkhill, Wiltshire on 13th November, 1916.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 6th December, 1916 with Influenza. He was discharged to duty on 13th December, 1916.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson proceeded overseas to France from Southampton on 31st December, 1916 with 23rd F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade).

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was transferred from 23rd F.A.B. to 7th Field Artillery Brigade on 6th January, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was transferred to 3rd A.D.A.D. on 12th January, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was attached from 3rd Australian Divisional Artillery Details on construction work in connection with Divisional Rest Camp on 16th January, 1917. Gunner James Reginald Wilson was detached from 3rd Divisional Headquarters & attached to 3rd Divisional Artillery Column on 2nd February, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was transferred from 3rd Divisional Artillery Details to 3rd D.A.C. (Divisional Artillery Column) on 10th March, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was transferred to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) in France from 3rd D.A.C. on 20th March, 1917.

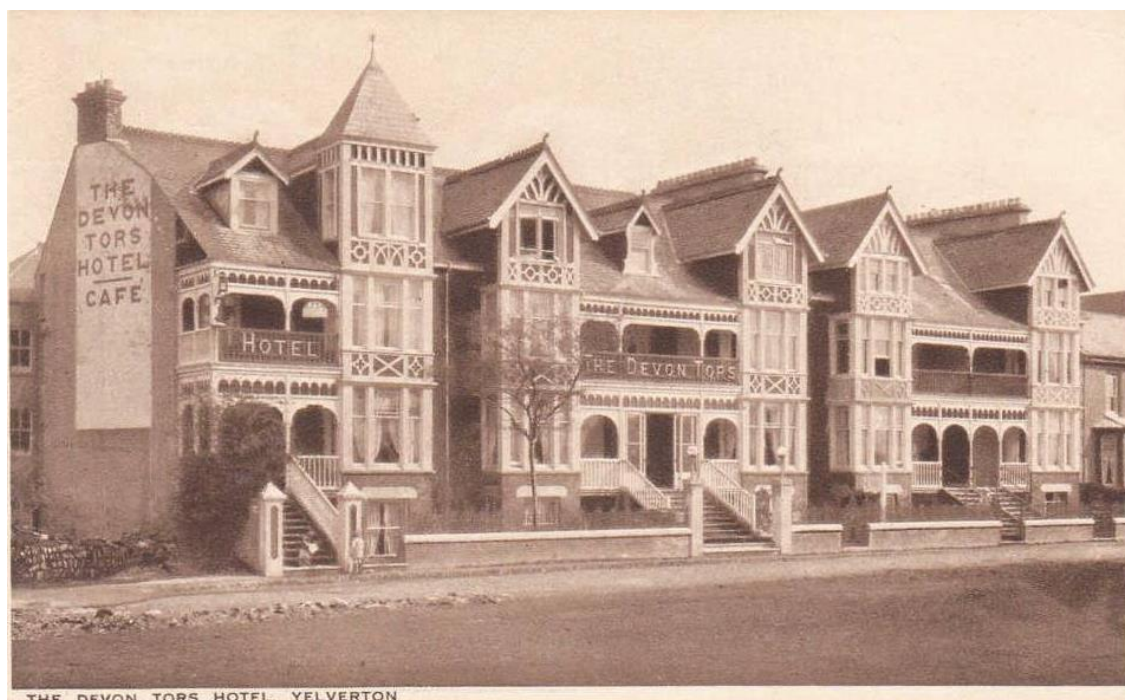
Gunner James Reginald Wilson was marched out to 2nd Divisional Artillery at Etaples, France on 17th May, 1917 & taken on strength in the field on 18th May, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was taken on strength with 5th Brigade from 2nd D.A.C. & posted to 15th Battery on 18th August, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson proceeded on leave to UK on 27th November, 1917 & rejoined from leave on 13th December, 1917.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was on leave to UK (no date recorded).

Gunner James Reginald Wilson died on 2nd December, 1918 at the "Devon Tors" Hotel, Yelverton near Plymouth, Devon, England from Influenza & Broncho Pneumonia. Gunner James Reginald Wilson died at home at his father's residence & place of business.



A postcard showing "The Devon Tors" Hotel

A death for James R. Wilson, aged 24, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Tavistock, Devon/Cornwall, England.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was buried on 5th December, 1918 in the family grave at St. Peter's Churchyard, Meavy, Devon – south of the Chancel. He is included on the family headstone but his death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. From the burial report of Gunner Wilson - *Coffin was Elm with brass fittings. The deceased soldier was interred privately in a family grave at Meavy Cemetery by his relatives. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. In attendance at the funeral were – Father, Brother, Cousins and Friends.*

From information proved by Charles Wilson, father of late Gunner James Reginald Wilson, the following statement was made on the Roll of Honour information sheet: *"Twice gassed. Wounded once. Could never get him to say where, when or how but came back a nervous shattered wreck."*

Base Records wrote to The Secretary, Imperial War Graves Commission, London on 10th October, 1930 (?) to advise that the publication of Meavy (St. Peter) Churchyard Register containing the particulars of the late No. 14591 Gunner J. R. Wilson, 5th Field Artillery Brigade *"It should be noted that according to the records at this office date of death should properly read 2nd December, 1918."* The Imperial War Graves Commission had the date of death incorrectly listed as 2nd November, 1918.

(Note: I have advised the Commonwealth War Graves Commission today (2nd September, 1916) that the date of death for the late No. 14591 Gunner J. R. Wilson are still incorrect on their website.)

James Reginald Wilson, 14591 serving in the 2nd D.A.C., requested in his Will dated 3rd June, 1917 that all his personal estate he bequeathed to his father – Charles Wilson, Devon Tors, Yelverton, Sth Devon, England.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner Wilson's father – Mr Charles Wilson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque both sent to England in November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner James Reginald Wilson – service number 14591, of 5th Bde., Australian Field Artillery. No family details are listed.

Gunner James Reginald Wilson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 14.

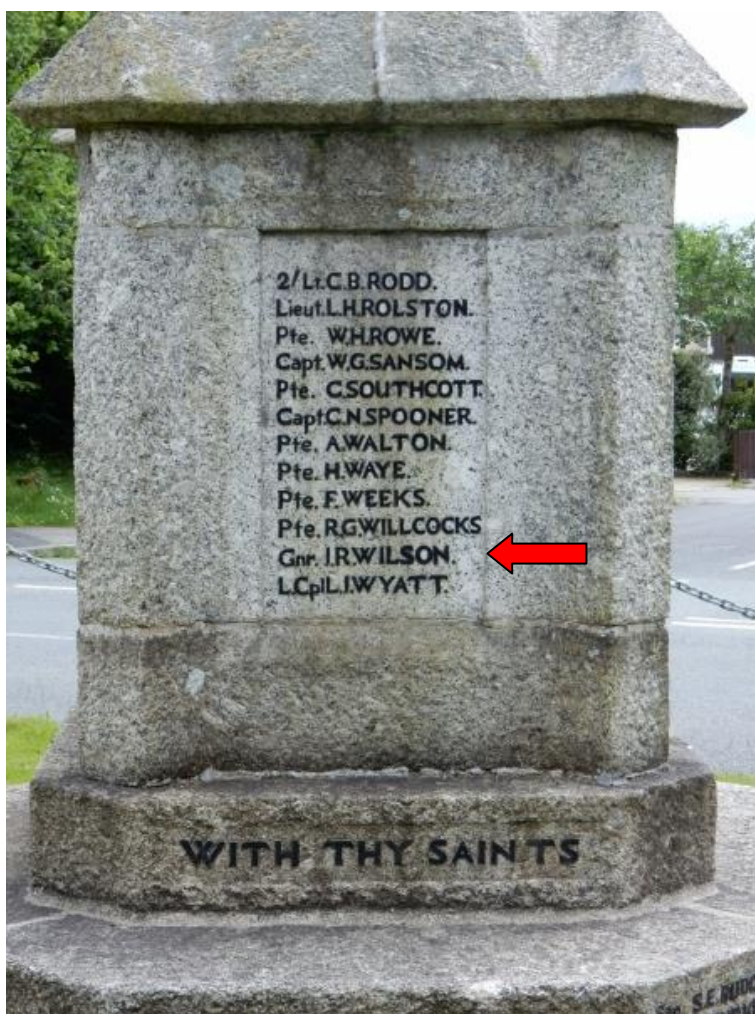


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Gunner J. R. Wilson is remembered on the Buckland Monachorum War Memorial, Devon, England. The War Memorial is a decorative cross on a plinth and five steps at the junction of Stoke Hill Lane. It includes the villages of Buckland Monachorum, Milton Combe, Yelverton, Crapstone and Clearbrooke.



Buckland Monachorum War Memorial (Photos by andifoxy)



(36 pages of Gunner James Reginald Wilson'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

WAR CASUALTIES

LIST No. 453

DIED OTHER CAUSES

WILSON, J. R., England, 2/12/18

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 27 December, 1918)

St. Peter's Churchyard, Meavy, Devon, England

St. Peter's Churchyard, Meavy, Devon contains only 1 Commonwealth War Grave.

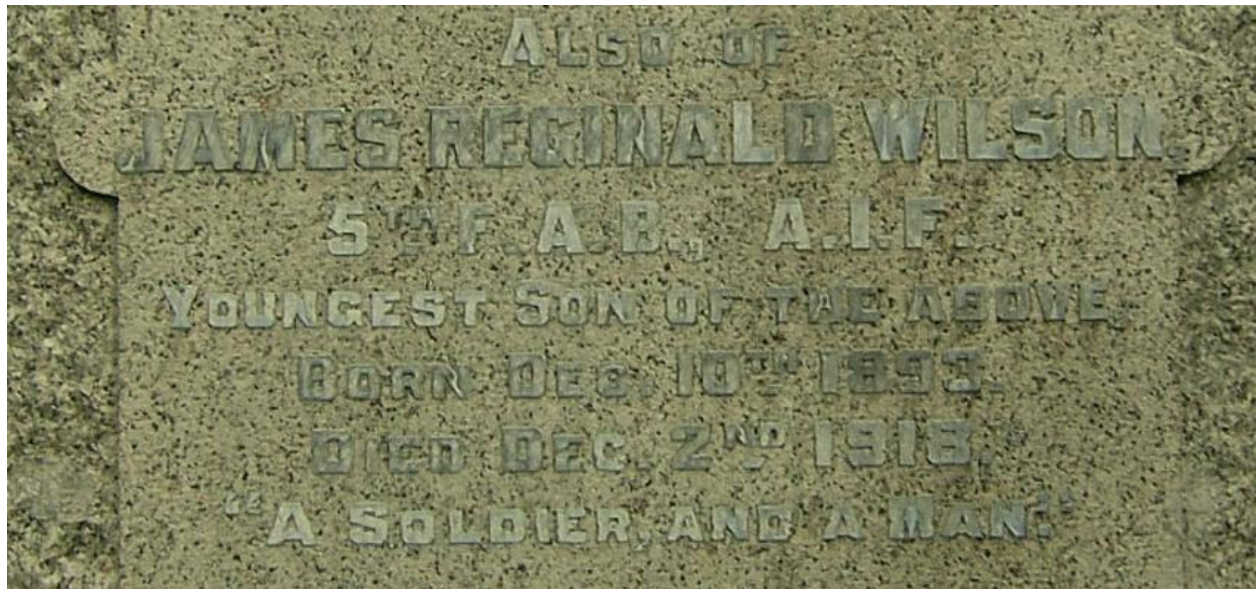


(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett Private Collection)

Photo of Gunner James Reginald Wilson's Family Headstone in St. Peter's Churchyard, Meavy, Devon, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett Private Collection)



In

Loving Memory

Of

CAROLINE WILSON

Wife Of Charles Wilson

Born March 28th 1856,

Died Feb. 25th 1911.

*Also of **LILIAN***

Eldest Daughter Of The Above

Born June 21st 1881,

Died Sept. 16th 1911.

Also Of

JAMES REGINALD WILSON

5th F.A.B., A.I.F.

Youngest Son Of The Above

Born Dec. 10th 1893,

Died Dec. 2nd 1918

“A Soldier And A Man “