

## Harry Adams



**Private Harry Adams**  
**13th Battalion, AIF**  
**Service Number: 5972**

**Born:** 20 April 1891, St Marys, NSW

**Died:** 7 January 1917, Wiltshire, England

Harry Adams was born on 20 April 1891 at St Marys, the son of Charles William Adams and Elizabeth (nee Rope). The family lived in Gidley Street St Marys and Adams attended St Marys Public School. He was orphaned at the age of six and was raised by his father's sister, Selina Burgess. At the time of his enlistment on 6 March 1916, Adams was a labourer. He listed his sister, Nellie Dollin as next of kin.

Adams was allocated to A Company, 19th Reinforcements, 13th Battalion. On two occasions during training at Kiama, he was found guilty of being intoxicated and absent without leave (AWOL). On 22 August 1916, Adams embarked on *HMAT Wiltshire*, disembarking at Plymouth on 13 October 1916. He was posted to the 4th Training Battalion at Codford. Here he was again found guilty of being AWOL. On 21 December 1916, Adams was admitted to Codford General Hospital and transferred to the New Zealand Hospital with pneumonia and cerebro-spinal meningitis. He was transferred to the Salisbury Isolation Hospital and died on 7 January 1917. Selina Burgess applied for a war pension and was initially refused because

she had not been dependent on Adams at the time of his enlistment. This decision was later overturned and she received £1 per fortnight. She also received his war medals following the consent of his elder brother, George. Selina was living with her niece Nellie Dollin in Saddington Street St Marys when she died in 1923.

A touching memorial service was held for him on 28 January 1917 at St Mary Magdalene Church of England, St Marys. The *Nepean Times* published a letter from Adams in its 3 February 1917 issue: ‘Dear Friends – your parcel of Christmas good to hand this morning. I thank you heartily for sending them to me. You know the boys heartily appreciate a letter or a parcel from home...The people here cannot make us chaps out, because we are so cheerful. Well, I would not mind being home for a few days at Christmas; but never mind, I can only hope to be back for the following one...It was quite a shock when I got the parcel this morning. I came in from outpost duty and one of my mates said to me “I say, Digger, there’s a parcel up top for you!” We call everyone “Digger” here, as we have to dig ourselves in from being outed by Fritz.’

#### **Memorial Details:**

- Strathford-Sub-Castle (St Lawrence) Churchyard, Wiltshire England
- Honour Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys
- Honour Roll, St Marys Mechanics Institute
- Honour Roll, St Marys Public School

#### **Sources:**

- [National Archives of Australia](#): B2455, ADAMS H
- Australian War Memorial First World War Nominal Roll
- [Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour](#)
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Penrith City Library Biography files
- Forde, L (1997). *Timeless Heroes: The Story of the Volunteers and their Families from the St Marys' District NSW World War 1 (The Great War 1914-1918)*

#### **TROVE:**

- [Nepean Times 20 January 1917, pg. 4, Col. 1](#)
- [Nepean Times 3 February 1917, pg. 3, Col. 2](#)
- [Nepean Times 3 February 1917, pg. 3, Col. 2](#)
- [Nepean Times 2 June 1917, pg 3, Col.1](#)