

## BAKER

# William Henry

Service No: 181



PTE. H. W. BAKER.  
2nd Field Ambulance. **181**

Courtesy National Archives of Australia



## BASIC INFORMATION

Name: William Henry Baker

Service Number: 181

Date of Enlistment: 18/8/1914

Age at Enlistment: 31 years 5 months

Civil Occupation: Mill Hand

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal, 1914/15 Star

Height: 5 Feet 6 inches

Weight: 130 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 35 inches

Complexion: Dark

Eye Colour: Brown

Hair Colour: Brown

Father: Charles Baker

Married: Olive May Timms

## Life Story

William Henry Baker was born in Nottingham, England, in 1883. It is not known when he arrived in Western Australia but, by the time of his enlistment, William is believed to have been living on Avon Terrace in York and working at the flour mill. His first mention in local newspapers was in 1911, and he was known to be a member of the York Brass Band.

William enlisted on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 1914, listing previous experience in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He embarked on HMAT *Medic* at Fremantle on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, bound for Egypt, and was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Ambulance, C Section. After being admitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian General Hospital at Mena suffering from dysentery in January 1915, William proceeded to Gallipoli to join the British Expeditionary Forces.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> May, William received a gunshot wound to the right hand and was admitted to hospital in Alexandria. Discharged from hospital on the 26<sup>th</sup> June, he returned to Gallipoli, where he was promoted to Lance Corporal on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1915.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> December, William disembarked the *Caledonian* at Alexandria as the evacuation of Gallipoli was completed. He was promoted to Corporal on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1916.

William transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Clearing Station on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 1916 and, from there, to the 13<sup>rd</sup> Field Ambulance which was about to embark for France. He embarked the *Oriana* at Alexandria on the 6<sup>th</sup> June, disembarking at Marseilles, France, on the 13<sup>th</sup> June.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> July, William was temporarily transferred to the Assistant Director Medical Services (A.D.M.S.) 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Division, before being transferred to the 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 1917. On the 16<sup>th</sup> May, at his own request, William's rank reverted to Private.

Apart from a two-week period of leave in England (from 25<sup>th</sup> September to 8<sup>th</sup> October 1917), William remained with the Battalion in the Field in France until the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1918, when he was evacuated from his unit for return to Australia for home leave.

William embarked on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October at Taranto for the first leg of his transport back to Australia. On the 15<sup>th</sup> November, he embarked on HT *Port Darwin* at Suez, disembarking at Fremantle on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.

William was discharged on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1919.

He returned to York after his discharge, with a report, in June 1919, of his request to the York Roads Board to close a road alongside his orchard property leading from the Upper Beverley Road to the river.

William was a regular exhibitor and prize winner in various sections at the annual York Show, including livestock, such as ducks, and various types of produce. He was also a member of the York Agricultural Society.

In 1920 William's entry was awarded first place in the Best Collection of Farm, Garden and Orchard Produce for Returned Soldiers at the York Show, as well as being awarded the Eastern Districts Chronicle Cup. A report of the 1947 York Show mentioned he was the judge for the Vegetables section of the show.

From the early 1920s, William was regularly advertising fruit and produce for sale from his orchard property "Carlisle."

In February 1928, he was fined five shillings and thirteen shillings' sixpence in costs for driving a motor vehicle without lights at night.


In December 1932, notices were published advertising that William had taken over the greengrocer and fruit business next door to the Avon Butchering Co., with advertisements for his business published throughout 1933. He remained in the greengrocery business until November 1947.

William married Olive May Tams in 1944. She died at Como in 1979, aged 87.

They were never enrolled together on electoral rolls at the same address in York, though William remained enrolled at Carlisle Orchard, York, his occupation listed as Orchardist, from 1926 until his final enrolment in 1954, when he retired and his address changed to Seabrook St, York.

Olive was enrolled at Avon Terrace, York, on the 1949 roll and, from 1954 to 1977, was enrolled at 61 Birdwood Avenue, South Perth (later Como).



**W. H. BAKER,**  
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**Fruit and Vegetables**  
**Avon Terrace,**  
**YORK**  
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 **Case Lots at Market Prices**  
**Prime Fruit in Season**  
**The Best Quality Obtainable.**  
—  
**Peaches and Plums to follow.**  
**Valencia Oranges**  
**6/- per case.**  
—  
**P.O. Box 95** — **Phone 180**

York Chronicle end February 1934  
[trove.nla.gov.au](http://trove.nla.gov.au)

William was also active in the York Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. In January 1948, just two months after selling his business in York, he informed the Sub-Branch he could no longer be in charge of social amenities at meetings because he was going to be residing in the country. However, his 1949 electoral enrolment remained unchanged from Carlisle Orchard, York.

William was also very involved, over several decades, with the York Brass Band, including serving, at times, as Band Master in the late 1920s and 1930s.

William died in March 1957, and his ashes were scattered over the garden at Karrakatta Cemetery.

## Acknowledgements

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Heather Harvey

## References

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