Thomas William Ellis ISM

The Early Days

Thomas William Ellis was born in 1886 at Crooks in the Westmorland area of England. He was one of seven children (4 boys and 3 girls).

His father William Taylor Ellis was a farmer in an area named Kirkby Lonsdale (which means church by the river) which Thomas later named his house in Orange, NSW Australia.

Thomas worked on his father's farm.

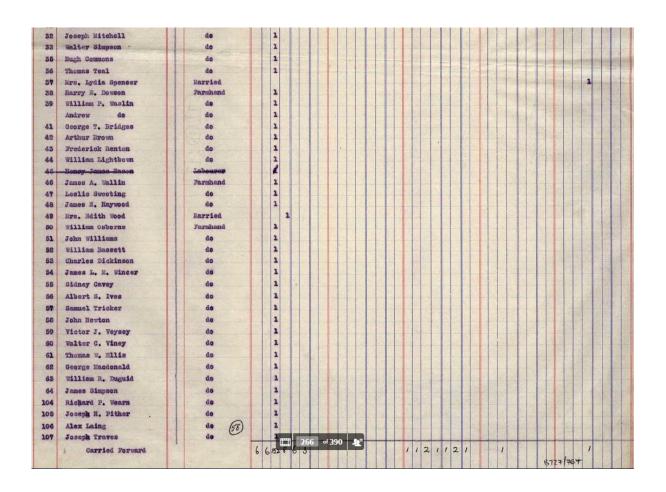
Thomas was in England in April 1911 when the Census was undertaken

In early 1912, Thomas allegedly had an argument with his father over not being paid for some of his lambs (that he had raised) which were sold by his father William. As a result, he left home and worked his way down to Portsmouth and caught a ship to Australia with a mate who also wanted to go to Australia.

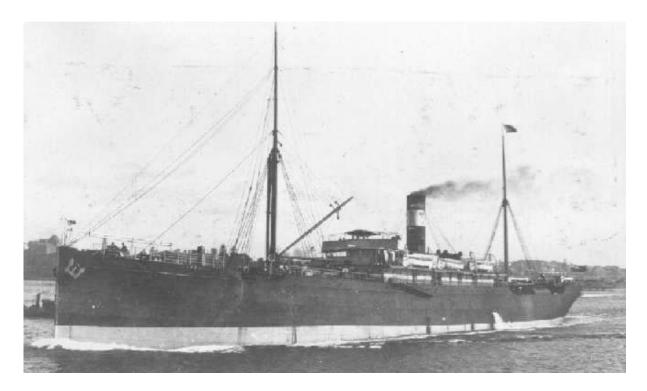
Australia - the Early Days

Thomas travelled to Australia on the SS Narrung departing London on 28 February 1912 – Passenger 61

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Name:	Thomas W Ellis
Gender:	Male
Departure Date:	28 Feb 1912
Departure Port:	England
Ship Name:	Narrung
Shipping Line:	P & O Branch Service
Search Ship Database:	Search for the Narrung in the 'Passenger Ships and Images' database
Destination Port:	Sydney, Australia
Master:	R Bidwell



SS Narrung

The SS Narrung, stopped in Adelaide on 14 April 1912 then Melbourne later in April. Thomas had booked to travel to Sydney but cannot locate the Narrung's arrival in Sydney.

Thomas is believed to leave the ship at Melbourne and work his way to Sydney, NSW doing odd jobs along the way.

Thomas applied for a job at Gladesville Mental Hospital in Sydney as a trainee attendant (trainee nurse) on 28 December 1912, being appointed on 1 January 1913

Thomas was then appointed a Junior Attendant on 1 January 1914 and Senior Attendant on 1 January 1918 (while he was serving in the army on the Western Front in Europe)

Thomas met his future wife Florence Mildred Thomas at the hospital who was working as a volunteer doing domestic work at the time.

World War 1 Army Service

Thomas Ellis enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces on 5 July 1915 as a private, serial number 8063 (National Archives of Australia: B2455).

Thomas's entire army service (1915 to 1919) was in two units of the medical corps:

- 2nd Australian General Hospital Unit 14 October 1915 to 8 April 2017
- 7th Australian Field Ambulance Unit 9 April 2017 to his discharge in from the army

Statement of Series	itled to 1914/15 Startening	Ellis	如	# 1x
Unit in which served.	Promotions, Reductions, Casualties, &c.	Period of service		Remarks.
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	hursing slaff		100	A. 136639

Thomas Ellis enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces on 5 July 1915 being appointed as a private in the 2nd Australian General Hospital Unit on 14 October 2015, serial number 8063 (National Archives of Australia: B2455).



AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons	Enlisted for Service Abroad.
No. 8063 Name E. Unit Land Joined on	LLIS T.W.
Questions to be put to the Pers	on Enlisting before Attestation.
1. What is your Name!	1. Thomas William Ellis ?
2. In or near what Purish or Town were you bornt	in the Country of When he heard
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject! (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.)	2 Ratural Book toglant
4. What is your age?	28 years
5. What is your trade or calling 1	s Ketspital attendant.
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so,) where, to whom, and for what period?	6
7. Are you married!	I
8. Who is your next of kin1 (Address to be stated)	mother, Mrs Boller Westerglage
9. Have you ever been emvicted by the Civil Power!	a no toyou
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Insoc- rigible and Worthless, or on account of Couvis- tion of Februy, or of a Sentence of Punal Servi- tude, or have you been dismissed with Diagracs from the Navy?	10 No
11. De you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia-Reserve, the Territorial Forces, Rayal Navy, or Collectal Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge.	n914
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous	12 Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service! If so, on what grounds!	12
14. Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with Pay would much sight shillings per day.	и Уг
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against smallpox and enterin fever?	15. Yes
by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or bey	do selemnly declare that the above answers made and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military and the limits of the Commonwealth.
	of the pay payable to me from time to time during
my service for the support of my wife wife and children Date	Highesters of person enlisted.

CERTIFICATE OF ATTESTING OFFICER. SPAN HARRISTAN PAR The foregoing questions were read to the person callated in my presence. I have taken ours that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly I have examined bigherthalted on prices and set of opinion that keep are domined. (This to be struck out except in the case of persons who are naturalized British Subject.) Dan 17 July 1915 . Aure afinit Lut OATH TO BE TAKEN BY PERSON BRING ENLISTED. 1. Therenas Williams Ellin , seem that I will will and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the Australian Imperial Force from 17 July 1918. until the und of the War, and a further period of four months thereafter unless corner lawfully discharged, dismissed, or removed therefrom; and that I will resist His Majesty's enemies and cause His Majesty's peace to be kept and maintained; and that I will in all matters appartaining to my service, faithfully discharge my duty according to law. SO HELP ME GOD Thomas W. Ellis Signature of Person Relieved Taken and subscribed at Level support in the State of Lands Scholards, Miller this May day 19/5, before no-Live a Priest Let A person unlisting who objects to taking an oath may make an affirmation in accordance with the Third Schools of the Act, and the above form must be amended asserdingly. All amendments must be initialled by the

National Archives of Australia NAA: B2455, ELLIS T W

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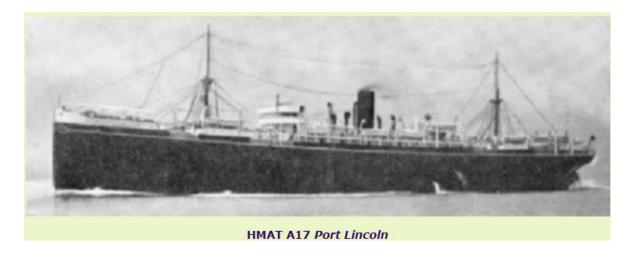
Thomas William Ellis – sn: 8063. (Photo from Sidney Riley Studios – Western Road, Rozelle)



Thomas William Ellis – sn: 8063. (Photo from Sidney Riley Studios – Western Road, Rozelle)

Embarkation

Thomas Ellis left Australia on 14 October 1915 from Sydney on the HMAT Port Lincoln (ship government reference A17) stopping at Melbourne, Victoria





Port Lincoln in the Port of Melbourne

Thomas Ellis was appointed Acting Sergeant from 24 October 1915 (until his arrival in Egypt on 17 November 1915, reverting to private on joining his unit)



Port Lincoln in Egypt November 2015

The epic four-week voyage across the Indian Ocean to Egypt has been described as "the longest journey to war in the history of the world".

On-board, Officers organised rigorous training drills and exercise sessions for the men. They were expected to do their own washing, sweep the decks and carry out other chores. Three hearty meals a day were served; breakfast usually consisted of porridge, stew and tea. Lunch included soup, meat, vegetables and pudding. Meat, bread with jam and tea was served for dinner.

Many of the troops experienced bouts of seasickness on the voyage. To alleviate boredom, sports carnivals were held with boxing matches, pillow fights and wheelbarrow races. The crossing the Equator ceremony, 'Neptune's Journey,' was played-out on each troopship.

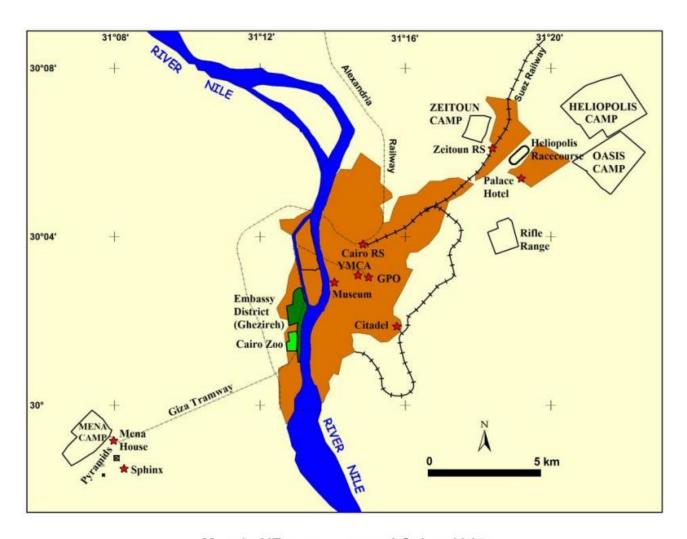
2nd Australian General Hospital Unit

The 2nd Australian General Hospital Unit's main body of staff previously departed Australia aboard <u>HMAT (A55) Kyarra</u> on 28 Nov 1914, being deployed at Mena House outside Cairo in Egypt

The No. 2 Australian General Hospital and No. 2 Australian Stationary Hospital served the 1st Australian Division camp at Mena.

On 25th January 1915, 2nd AGH took over Mena House, with 35 hospital marquees for general and seven for isolation cases pitched in the vicinity.

In May, additional beds were set up at Ghezireh Palace Hotel while Mena House was retained as an auxiliary. The total staff at this time was 14 officers, 51 nurses and 133 others.



Map 1. AIF camps around Cairo, 1915

Map compiled by D G Jones



2nd Australian General Hospital - Mena camp near Pyramids



Mena was always a desirable location as there was a tram line into Cairo.

Catching the last tram from Cairo to Mena camp was always precarious for everyone. If the men did not get back to the camp before their leave ran out, which was usually midnight, they were "crimed" for AWL (absent without leave) which cost the unlucky man usually a couple days' pay.

The tramways were not designed to carry such volumes of men and two things happened. To cope with the sheer volume, men were compelled to sit on the roof of the carriage. The bemused Egyptian pedestrians are looking at the progress of this tram.

Less entertaining was the desire of tram conductors to check every ticket regardless of the time it took to perform or the crowded state of the trams.

This caused great tension between both the tram conductor and the men. This officious behaviour often cost a tram load of men to be "crimed" for AWL purely because of the conductors' behaviour.

There were many cases occurring of angry Australian soldiers taking out their frustrations on particularly officious and lugubrious conductors.

Many complaints were lodged at Mena Camp Headquarters by conductors who were assaulted for carrying out their duties.

On other occasions, conductors were assaulted and tossed off the trams if it was felt that the behaviour would result in the tram arriving late to Mena.



Men crowded on the roof tops of the tram.

Later in 1915, due to the casualties from Gallipoli, it was necessary for the preparation of a second hospital at Ghezireh Palace Hotel.



Combined the two hospitals had a total of 1500 beds.

In March 1916 both hospitals were ordered to close and to follow 1 ANZAC Corps and the 2nd Division into France.

Evacuation of Injured from Gallipoli

Injured solders were evacuated of a number of hospitals over the campaign

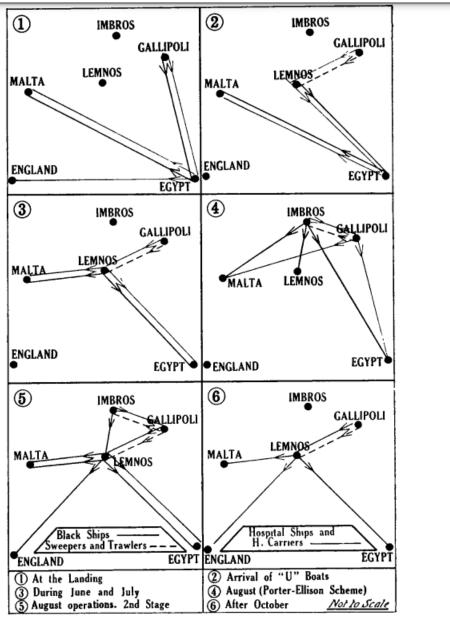


DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROBLEM OF SEATRANSPORT OF SICK AND WOUNDED DURING THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

Final Evacuation from Gallipoli

Gallipoli was finally evacuated between 15th December 2015 finishing 20th December 2015

Thomas Ellis stated that he went to Gallipoli and detailed evacuations undertaken from the beach.

We can only presume Thomas assisted with the Gallipoli evacuation due to his medical training and was later recorded as serving on the Hospital Ship Braemar Castle.

However, it is not detailed on his war records as his overseas service is not recorded before 25 March 2016 when he departed Egypt of the Hospital Ship Braemar Castle (which is obviously after the December 2015 evacuation of Gallipoli).

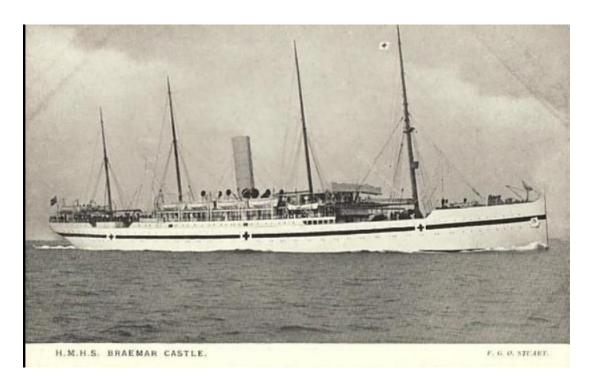
However, as Thomas arrived in Egypt on 17 November 1915 and he was subsequently on the Hospital Ship Braemar Castle, we can only presume he was involved in the evacuation of Gallipoli.

The evacuated troops from Gallipoli were transferred to via Lemnos to Egypt between 21-31 December 2015

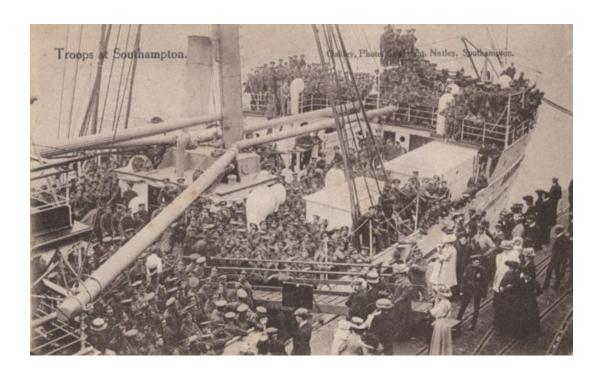
France & the Western Front

The 2nd Australian General Hospital unit was ordered to close down operations in Egypt and move to France Thomas transiting to Alexandria in March 1916

Thomas left Alexandria, Egypt to join the British Expeditionary Forces on 25 March 1916 on the hospital ship the HMHS Braemar Castle, sailing to Marseilles, France - disembarking on 4 April 1916.



The HMAS Braemar Castle was originally used as a troop transport ship to Gallipoli in 1915 being converted to a well fitted out hospital ship of 421 beds during 1915, staffed by Australian & New Zealand medical staff.





After arriving in Marseilles Thomas's unit had to undertake a brief period of isolation at Moussot, near Marseilles (screening for infectious cases from Egypt)

The unit then established itself at Wimereux, France (near Boulogne), arriving on 30 Jun 1916, the eve of the advance on the Somme.

While the number of dead and injured at Gallipoli had been appalling (Australian losses were over 8,000), the Somme was a slaughterhouse. On the first day of the Somme offensive 60,000 British troops fell, a number equal to the total Australian losses for the war. In the first few days of its first action on the Somme (23-27 July 1916)

The 1st Division AIF, at Pozieres, suffered 5,000 casualties and was replaced by the 2nd Division AIF, which suffered 3,500 casualties in a few days.

By 3 September 1916, when the Australians were replaced by Canadians, the Anzac Corps had lost 23,000 men in the space of 6 weeks.

The AIF divisions still had nearly two years of fighting in France ahead of them.



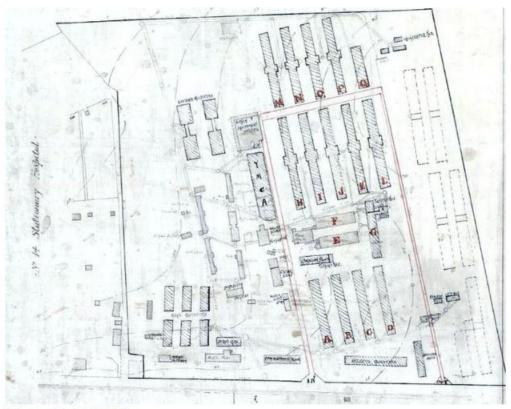
2nd AGH Wimereux



Ward at Wimereux



Tent lines during 1916-17 winter



Plan of 2AGH Wimereux

Thomas's unit was deployed in various conflicts through Europe, many being the most horrific battles of the war.

The battles he attended in the 2nd AGH were:

2nd Australian General Hospital Unit – 14 October 2015 to 8 April 2017

- In April 1916 Boulogne, France treating casualties from the Somme
- April 1916 the unit was at Fort Rompu, near Erquinghem, west of Armentieres.
- In August 1916 they were in Vadencourt treating the injured from Pozieres and Mouquet Farm battles.

7th Australian Field Ambulance Unit

On 8 April 1917, Thomas was transferred to the 7th Australian Field Ambulance Unit

Thomas's new unit continued to be deployed in some of the most horrific battles of the war.

The battles he attended in the 7th Field Ambulance Unit – from 9 April 2017 (until his discharge)

- April 1917 Somme
- In Dec 1917 the unit was at Pont d'Achelles which had been the collection point for casualties from the battle of Messines in July of that year.
- In March 1918 it was at Westhof Farm in Belgium

• In May 1918 they were on the Somme and remained there supporting the advance by the Australian Infantry.

Thomas Ellis was gassed when on the Western Front and evacuated to Belgium to recover.



Thomas Ellis (Far right) and fellow soldier convalescing with family in Belgium



Thomas Ellis sn. 8063 (under X in photo) – Picture of last camp with 7th Field Ambulance Unit (believed taken in France)

On 26 February 1919 Thomas was transferred to England.

This was the first time he returned to England since he emigrated in 1912, apart from brief leave breaks during the war.



Description on Photo – Sergeant Ellis (photo L Ed Dupont Estaires)

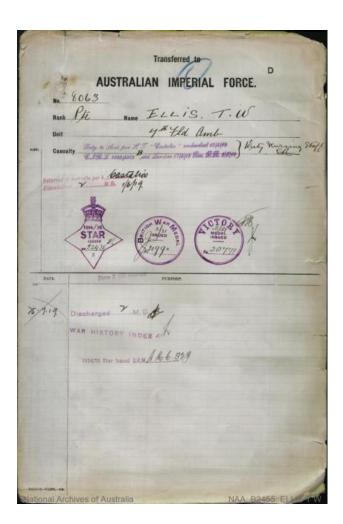
Thomas returned to Australia on 13 April 1919, on the ship SS Castalia.

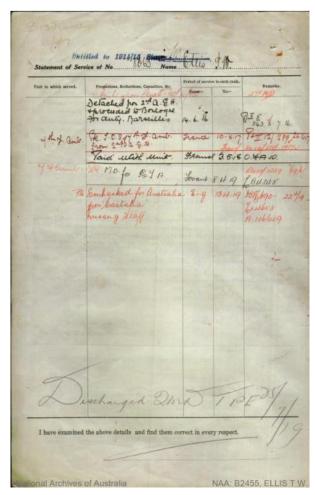




The SS Castalia was a passenger liner that previously transited between Bombay and Glasgow. During WW1 the government commandeered the ship for troop movements

Thomas was discharged from the army on 25 July 1919 when his unit was demobilised.





Thomas received the following medals for his service during the war:

- 1914-15 Star
- The British Service Medal
- Victory Medal









After WW1

Thomas returned to work at Gladesville Hospital, Sydney, NSW as a Senior Attendant (Senior Nurse) marrying Florence Mildred Thomas on 12 July 1919.

Services to Health Services

In October 1925, Thomas was transferred to the newly to be opened Bloomfield Hospital in Orange, NSW (Bloomfield Hospital opened in November 1925) where he was appointed a Charge Attendant (In Charge Nurse)



Official Opening Bloomfield Hospital 1926

Thomas, was later appointed a Supervising Attendant (Supervisory Nurse) in January 1937

Thomas was Acting Chief Attendant (In charge of all male nursing) at Bloomfield Hospital Orange in 1947

On 6 September 1948, Thomas's appointment as Chief Attendant, Division of Mental Hygiene, Department of Health (Head of Male Nursing at the hospital reporting to the Medical Superintendent) - being published in the Government Gazette 10 September 1948.

Thomas and his family moved into the Chief Attendant's residence at the hospital on 24 September 1948 due to the staff shortages caused by World War 2



Honour Board Bloomfield Hospital, Orange New South Wales

On 15 October 1950, His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales approved Thomas's retirement from the Public Service in terms of Section 66(3) of the Public Service Act, 1902 (i.e., Reaching the mandatory retirement age with accumulated untaken leave)

Bloomfield Hospital

The hospital was located on 640 acres, being virtually self-sufficient with carpenters, shoemakers, cooks, gardeners, painters and even a piggery. By 1932 there were 1,100 patients and 195 staff with 23 ward buildings with some 29 buildings for associated services, administration and staff accommodation

The hospital primarily treated patients with mental disorders. Above all, the location of the hospital in a vast estate with beautiful spacious grounds and gardens, providing a serene environment for patients to start their journey to recovery.

Recreational and occupational therapy were developed as important forms of treatment at Bloomfield from 1929 and the value of sporting activity was recognised from early on.

The first cricket pitch was established near the most northern entrance to the side. During the 1930s this pitch and adjoining area (39 hectares (96 acres) in total) was redeveloped as Bloomfield Aerodrome.

A second pitch, located on land between the eastern and western part of the site was developed in 1928.

This Cricket Ground became a focal point for patients, staff and visitors over the years.

An important addition to the hospital was the construction of two TB Wards in 1934. These Wards were built in response to a decade or more of measures put in place to control the epidemic spread of TB.

Thomas Ellis had over 37 years' service to the Department of Health, only interrupted by his war service in the army medical corp.

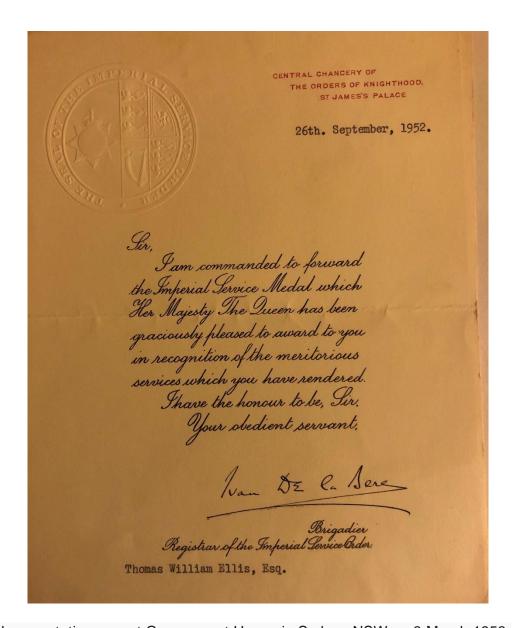


Thomas William Ellis 6 January 1951

Civil Awards

On 26 September 1952 Queen Elizabeth 11 approved the award of The Imperial Service Medal to Thomas Ellis for his service to health

The award was instituted in 1902 by King Edward VII to recognise distinguished public service by senior officers and at junior levels of the British and of the civil services of Commonwealth countries for a period of in-excess of 25 Years.



The award presentation was at Government House in Sydney NSW on 3 March 1953.



The Family

Thomas and his wife lived in Sydney after they were married.

They moved to Orange in 1925, where they lived in 11 Peisley Street Orange until September 1948 when the family moved to the Chief Attendants residence at Bloomfield Hospital (as it was essential that he reside on site due to the challenges the hospital was facing during WW2).

Thomas and Florence had three children:

- Jean (born December 1919 in Sydney died Sydney January 1920)
- Frederick Born Orange September 1926
- Joyce Onley (nee Ellis) Born Orange April 1928

The Later Years

Thomas retired in October 1950, returning to his residence at 11 Peisley Street, Orange; later moving to 5 Sackville Street, Hurstville, in Sydney (pictured below)



5 Sackville Street, Hurstville, Sydney NSW, Australia

After an illness lasting a number of weeks, Thomas died in the Concord Repatriation Hospital, Sydney, NSW in 1962 (Registered at Burwood), some 12 years after his retirement from lung related issues.

Thomas was cremated at the Woronora Crematorium on 20 August 1962

Sporting Interests

When Thomas was in Orange, he became a judge for the local grey hound coursing club race meetings (which were organised by the RSL - Returned Soldiers League).

The local newspapers regularly had articles about his decisions being disputed by grey hound owners.

Returned Soldiers League

Thomas was an active member of the Orange RSL Sub-branch, marching each ANZAC Day

Annexure 1

Overseas Army Service Record

Regimental No. 8063 Rank P Ealisted (a) Te-ms of Ser	SAC III	SPORTS OF STREET	Property.
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PART I.	(1)	Pte.	10	
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	Decorations.		Christian Names.	Thomas William
ė		<u>P</u>	articulars.	
Mana	Date of Entirement	17/7/15.	Place of Entistment	Liverpool, N.S.W.
Nothing to be written in this Margin.	Age on Excistment	26 Years Mo	Any subsequent claim es to ago after verification of Birth Certification	Auth. C.R. / Months
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3	Sirthplace	Hawkshead, Eng.	If Married	Bo.
2	Trade or Calling	Hospital Attendent	itsi if an Apprentice	No.
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The Deputy Com Repairation	missioner.	AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE, Base Records Office, CANBERRA, A.C.T. /5//0/1933
x-member of the	rewith documents indicated rela AIF—	tive to the service of the indemonstroned
Reg. No.	Name & Unit.	Documents attached.
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