

Private William Stephenson[©]
Regimental number: 18806
15th (Service) Battalion, Hampshire Regiment

born: about 1899 – died: 28 June 1916

Private William Stephenson was born in about 1899¹ in Dundee, Forfarshire, Scotland.² He was the son of Henry (born in about 1867 in Ulverston, Lancashire) and Hilda (born in about 1866 in Scotland) Stephenson. Henry and Hilda started their married life in Scotland,³ where most of their eight children were born. Their children included Maxwell (born in about 1892), Alice (born in about 1893), Rebecca (born in about 1894), Joseph (born in about 1896), Henry (born in about 1897), William,⁴ Hilda (born in about 1902) and Maggie (born in about 1904).⁵

By 1901 they had returned to Lancashire, the county of William's father's birth. They were living at 78 Kirkland, Kendal, where his father was a shoemaker and boot finisher. In 1911, he was a shoe repairer and living at 67 Benedict Street in Bootle, Lancashire.

William enlisted in Portsmouth and joined the 15th (Service) Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment. In mid-June 1916, the 15th Battalion was stationed on the front lines in Ploegsteert Wood, just north of Armentières, across the border into Belgium. William was injured and admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,⁶ where he died on 28 June.⁷ He was one of 1,986 admitted to No 1 CCCS in June and one of 86 to die there.⁸

He was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Grave Reference: II, E, 142). Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several casualty clearing stations, including No. 1 Canadian CCS, were quartered there for considerable periods. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918; they occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.⁹

William's mother, who was living with his father at 271 Twyford Avenue, Stamshaw in Portsmouth, was his next-of-kin and notified of his death.¹⁰ She also received the monies owing to him from the army upon his death.¹¹

William was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹²

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¹ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson, Registration district: Kendal, Sub-registration district: Kendal, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, , Piece: 4912, Folio: 29, Page: 14, Household schedule number: 73

² "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson

³ "1891 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 November 2016), entry for Henry Stephenson, Enumeration district: 2, Household schedule number: 62, Line: 1, Roll: CSSCT1891_215

⁴ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson

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- ⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson, Registration district: West Derby, Registration district number: 455, Sub-registration district: Bootle, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 4, Piece: 22410
- ⁶ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Stephenson, W.
- ⁷ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson. The journal of the chaplains at No. 1 CCCS indicated that William died on 27 June 1916, but other military records indicate 28 June.
- ⁸ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIN&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G: accessed 7 September 2014)
- ⁹ "Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000047/Bailleul%20Communal%20Cemetery.%20Nord>: accessed 5 August 2015)
- ¹⁰ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Stephenson, W.
- ¹¹ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson
- ¹² "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 26 November 2016), entry for William Stephenson