

Wilfred Thompson Williams

Paymaster-Lieutenant, R.N.R. joined the Royal Navy at Liverpool, December 9th, 1914. Served in *H.M.S. Hilary*, which was torpedoed and sunk; afterwards in *H.M.S. Princess Margaret*, a mine-laying vessel. Caught influenza when bringing refugees from Riga. Died of pneumonia in hospital in Edinburgh, January 19th, 1919, and buried at South Naval Cemetery. Mentioned in despatches "for coolness and usefulness when his first vessel was sunk." 1915 Star and British War Medal.



WILFRED WILLIAMS was born near Kidderminster in Worcester in 1886; his parents were John Henry Williams and Elizabeth Mills. Wilfred was the youngest of six surviving children.

John Williams was a supervisor in the Inland Revenue, and he and his family seem to have moved around the country regularly. Wilfred lived in Worcester, Loughborough and Seaforth in Lancashire with his parents before John retired and he and Elizabeth moved to Devon. Wilfred stayed in Seaforth and in 1911 was living in a boarding house and working as a banker's clerk for the Midland Bank. He joined the Royal Naval Reserve at the start of the war and was obviously able to transfer his banking skills to the Navy, where he undertook Paymaster duties.

War Records of Corsham details that he was a Paymaster Lieutenant on the minelayer HMS *Princess Margaret*, which was involved as a hospital ship in bringing refugees

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out of Latvia, including Russian aristocrats fleeing from the Bolsheviks in January 1919. Tragically Wilfred contracted influenza during this exercise and died from pneumonia just days later, on 19th January 1919.

Wilfred is buried in Seafeld Cemetery in Edinburgh. The war grave record details that John and Elizabeth Williams were now living in Priory Cottage, Corsham. It is not known whether Wilfred spent any time in Corsham.