



**Private James Godfrey TAYLOR**  
**5695 — 17th Battalion, 3rd Pioneers & 5th Field Butchery**

**Born:** c1891, stated Baldry in war record.

**Next of Kin:** Sister, Mrs Alice Devine

**Occupation:** Labourer

**District Connection:** Baldry, Cumnock

**Enlistment Date:** 7 Mar 1916

**Enlistment Age:** 24 years 6 months

**Embarkation:** 9 Sep 1916 - Sydney. *HMAT A14 Euripides*  
29 Dec 1916 - Fremantle *HMAT A34 Persic*

**Served:** Western front.

**Fate:** RTA 10 Nov 1919

**Honour Boards:** Cumnock Memorial Gates



17th Btn Unit  
Colour Patch

3rd Pioneer  
Btn Colour  
Patch



**Biography:**

James was born about 1891 in Baldry, near Cumnock. James's mother Jane Taylor was born in 1857 and registered in Molong. Her parents were Edward/Edmund and Eliza Taylor (nee Eliza Reiley). According to an Ancestry family tree Eliza was born c1831 in Balderogery. She married Edward Taylor at Molong on 11 Dec 1860. Eliza died in 1900 and the death was registered in Molong. Her father was listed as aboriginal but her mother was unnamed.

Jane Taylor married Laurent (spelt variously as Laurent, Lawrent and Lawrence) Kerdauid in 1874 (surname registered in the NSW Marriage Index as David at Molong). They had one child, Mary, born in 1875. Lawrence Kerdauid died, aged 23 years, at Baldry Station in 1875. Jane then had a number of other children: Emily, born in 1879 under the surname Kerdauid. Other known children under the surname Taylor: Alice, born in 1882; James born c1890; and Edward born 1894.

In 1913 James was working as a labourer at "Spring Vale", Balderodgery.

*The Leader*, Orange - 26 May 1915, p1, Cumnock:

*"On Wednesday, the 12th inst., there passed away at the Newtown hospital, Mrs J Taylor, at the age of 65 years. The deceased lady, who had been one of the first residents of Baldry had been a chronic invalid for about two years. She leaves a family of eight children— three boys, William, Edward and Herbert, and five daughters: Mesdames Kerdauid, D Grey, and G Devine (Alice), and Misses Sis and Sarah Taylor."*

The NSW Death Index actually list her name as Jane Kerdauid.

James Taylor enlisted at Cumnock on 7 Mar 1916 and was medically examined by Dr Ivie Aird. He was 5 feet 6½ inches tall, had grey eyes, black hair and a dark complexion. He was of the Church of England religious denomination.

Pte James Taylor embarked at Sydney on 9 Sep 1916 on *HMAT A14 Euripides* as a member of the 17th Battalion, 14th Reinforcements. When the *Euripides* reached Fremantle on 17 September, Pte Taylor was transferred to Fremantle hospital with Parotitis (mumps). He left Fremantle on *HMAT A34 Persic* on 29 Dec 1916 as a member of 3rd Pioneers and disembarked at Devonport on 3 Mar 1917.

Pte Taylor marched into the Pioneer Training Btn at Larkhill on 5 Mar 1917. He was Absent Without Leave (AWL) from 12 mn 16 Apr to 4 pm 17 Apr and received the punishment of 7 days Confined to Barracks and forfeited 4 days pay.

Pte Taylor was transferred to the Army Service Corps at Park Hill on 4 Jul 1917. He proceeded to France via Southampton on 12 Sep 1917 and joined the 5th Field Butchery (FB) on 23 Jan 1918.

There were 5 Field Butcheries, each one able to supply enough meat for a whole division. In France the field butcheries equipped daily pack trains which were dispatched to the divisions at the field.

The 5th FB was located at Boulogne in January 1918. Their strength was 1 Officer and 17 Other Ranks (OR). The Unit Diary for Jan 1918 stated, that *“Part of the Unit are now being employed discharging frozen meat from the ships also in connection with the meat issued from the Cold Storage works - the remainder are still on supply work of receiving and issuing supplies.”*

The 5th FB continued on similar work throughout the year, with the Unit Diary for September 1918 commenting, *“The Unit is still employed on the discharge of frozen meat ex various ships which loaded direct to trucks for dispatch to the various sections at the front - all surplus quantities being transferred to Cold Storage and held as reserve against further demands when ships are not discharging. The work is rather uninteresting and does not lead itself to the qualities of the practical butcher being brought into operation. Yet the men go at their work cheerily and have put up some good records in the handling of the consignments.”*

The 5th FB closed down on 5 Apr 1919 and most of the personnel proceeded to Calais where they were on detached duty.

Pte Taylor left England on 2 Aug 1919 per HMAT Ceramic and disembarked in Australia on 3 Oct 1919. He was discharged from the AIF on 31 Jan 1920 and was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

His younger brother, Edward also served in the AIF. Pte Edward Taylor - 5695, 54th & 55th Btns, enlisted 15 Feb 1916 and returned to Australia in February 1919.

*The Molong Argus* - 21 Nov 1919, p4, reported on a Welcome Home at Leary's Hall, Cumnock, for 13 local lads who had “done their bit for the Empire.” Pte JG Taylor was one of the soldiers. They were each presented with an inscribed gold medal.

*The Molong Argus* - 30 Jan 1920, p4, reported that James and his brother, Edward, were members of the Cumnock branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League.

James Taylor was granted land at Millers Farm in the Closer Settlement and Returned Soldiers Scheme, starting 9 Feb 1920 and ending 19 Jun 1920.

*The Western Champion*, Parkes - 25 Mar 1920, p6, reported:

*“At St John's Church, Molong, last Sunday, the Rev Poole married James Godfrey, son of the late Mr and Mrs James Taylor, of Baldry, and Florence Matilda, daughter of Mr and Mrs William Devine, of Cumnock. The bride was given away by her brother, Mr GE Divine. Mr and Mrs Taylor's residence will be at Cumnock. The bridegroom is a returned soldier and saw long service in France, with his brother.”*

James and Florence had one child, a daughter, Myra Jean Taylor, born in 1920. James and Florence appear to have parted ways sometime after their marriage. According to the NSW Electoral Rolls, Florence was living with her mother Rosina Devine in Coogee, Sydney, in 1934 until her death on 21 Aug 1936, aged 42 years.

The NSW Electoral Rolls list James Godfrey Taylor as working as a labourer at Riverside, Tamworth in 1930; as a shearer at Bogangate in 1934; and as a labourer at Parkes in 1936 and 1937. No other electoral roll listings were found and it is not known what happened to James after 1937.

There is a letter in James' war records, which would indicate he was then seeking aged care benefits, from the AIF Base Records, Canberra, dated 12 Sep 1950 that they were forwarding all documents regarding 5695 JG Taylor to the Repatriation Commission, Sydney.

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