

William Viles

..... was born in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England in 1893. He was the son of a Tripe Dresser (Shop Keeper) by the name of George Viles. William also had an older brother with the name of George. It is possible that William adopted the name of his father or brother when he first started playing with Wests. William was identified in the 1901 Census living at Bennington St Cheltenham with his parents and siblings.

Household Members (Name)	Age	Relationship
George Viles	37	Head
Rosa Viles	35	Wife
Clara Viles	11	Daughter
George Viles	10	Son
William Viles	7	Son
Florence Viles	3	Daughter
Charles Viles	2	Son

England Census 1901

Administrative County		GLOUCESTERSHIRE		The undermentioned Houses							
Civil Parish		Ecclesiastical Parish		County Borough, Municipal Borough, or Urban District							
of <i>Cheltenham</i>		of <i>St Marys</i>		of <i>Cheltenham</i>							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
No. of House	ROAD, STREET, &c. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES				Number of Houses occupied if less than five	Name and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	Condition as to Marriage	Age last Birthday of	
		In habited	In Occupation	Not in Occupation	Building					Males	Females
	<i>3 Bennington St East</i>						<i>George Viles</i>	<i>Son</i>		<i>10</i>	
							<i>William Do</i>	<i>Son</i>		<i>7</i>	
							<i>Florence Do</i>	<i>Daughter</i>			<i>3</i>
							<i>Charles Do</i>	<i>Son</i>		<i>2</i>	

England Census 1901

His family must have been doing well in the Tripe business as William was educated at Cheltenham and played with the Cheltenham Old Boys rugby union team in the 1909-10 season. While William was not yet seventeen years of age he was playing in good company. The Cheltenham team included a couple of Schoolboy Internationals.

CHELTEMHAM OLD BOYS V. BRISTOL OLD BOYS.
 These schools intermediate teams met at Cheltenham Athletic Ground on Good Friday. The result was a well deserved win for Cheltenham Old Boys by two tries to a try. In the first half Cheltenham had the best of the deal, Bloodworth, the International, who captained the side, shining brilliantly. He was the best forward on the field. At half-time the home team were leading by a try to nil, Viles having scored. After the interval Hill, the Bristol right wing, ran the whole length of the field and scored a splendid try. Viles, for Cheltenham, was again successful. Although the visitors were a bigger lot, the Cheltenham boys were more clever and beat them easily all round. If the Bristol three-quarters had been able to get going there would have been only one team in it. As it was they had few chances of obtaining the ball, the Cheltenham boys holding the scrums splendidly. "The gate" was as good as at a Cheltenham First match, and the crowd often showed they were enjoying the game.

Gloucester Citizen 26 March 1910

Household Members (Name)	Age	Relationship
George Viles	48	Head
Rosa L P Viles	46	Wife
William H Viles	17	Son
Florence M Viles	13	Daughter
Charles F Viles	12	Son
Lilian K Viles	8	Daughter
Elizabeth Cook	19	Servant

England Census 1911

Both Cheltenham and William Viles had a successful 1909-10 season, however in 1910-11 the team had a high turnover of players. Of the thirty four games played, only four team members played more than eight games that season. The disruption reflected the performance on the field.

FOOTBALL.

There will be a most interesting game on the Athletic Ground this afternoon—quite one of the sporting fixtures of the Season. Cheltenham meet Cinderford, and will be represented as follows: B. Davy, back; H. Hughes, L. W. Hayward, W. Hayward, W. H. Viles, A. Davis, three-quarters; L. G. Pocock, B. Bloodworth, halves; W. N. Unwin (capt.), G. Cossens, H. Wixey, F. T. Wixey, W. G. Beauchamp, L. H. Peckover, F. Vick, and W. Talbot, forwards.

Cheltenham Looker 10 December 1910

Cheltenham.

A POOR RECORD.

The Town unfortunately have not much to be proud of in the record of the past season, for of 34 games played only 14 have been won, 16 lost, and four drawn, compared with 34 played last season, 18 won, 13 lost, and three drawn. They also have a majority of three against them on the total points scored, whereas last season the majority was in their favour to the extent of 25.

sideration of inevitable injuries, etc., to rely upon a fairly regular fifteen. With such large numbers of players every year the somewhat erratic records are not surprising. There have been two backs, 27 three-quarters, ten halves and 24 forwards, some eight or ten of the players having been in different positions. The players and the number of their appearances were as follows: Back, B. Davy 32 times, W. Ellaway 2; three-quarters, Townsend 1, W. H. Viles 6, H. Hughes 29, W. G. Deakin 4, L. G. Powell 1, L. W. Hayward 24, C. Clifford 15, A. Davis 1, C. Booth 7, C. Meek 1, P. Shefford 3, B. W. Bloodworth 7, T. Poulson 1, B. W. Onslow 2, A. James 2, A. Meek 3, M. G. Turland 5, G. Ryland 6, G. Ellaway 2, Champain 3, G. Bowstead 1, A. Fisher 1, L. G. Pocock 1, Gwilliam 1, Collier 8, H. Stolz (Lennox) 1, and Barnes 1

able new asset this season as a kick. Champain could not appear more than three times this season, and a notable and regrettable feature of the year was his departure to British Columbia. The most useful new blood discovered during the season was Viles, Bloodworth (old Schoolboy International), Turland (St. Paul's College), Ryland (old Schoolboy International), three-quarters; and the Bendalls, halves.

The other try-getters, in addition to those mentioned, were Bloodworth 5, Cossens 4, Hayward 4, Talbot 3, Townsend, Onslow, and A. Bendall 2 each, and Pym, Deakin, Viles, C. Meek, R. Shefford, J. Bendall, F. T. Wixey, Champain, Ryland, and Turland 1 each. Talbot converted eight out of 24, Hughes six out of 13, Davy four out of 10, and Beauchamp one out of two. Onslow failed to kick one. Hughes and Talbot each kicked three penalty goals, and Beauchamp one. One drop goal each was contributed by Barnes, Davy, Hughes, and Turland, and two goals kicked from a mark by Talbot and one by Davy.

Gloucester Citizen 22 April 1911

By the end of 1911, two momentous events affected the life of William Viles. The first thing of note is that William decided to emigrate to Australia, and he departed from England on 28 December 1911. It appears that he was part of a migration scheme and was with a group of single "Farm Hands" heading for Sydney via Melbourne. It appears that if he did take up the role of Farm Hand, it wasn't for long as he was recorded as an Assistant Boilermaker in 1916.

342	Wm. N. Wilkin.	Farmhand.	1
344	Wm. J. Page.	do	1
345	Thos H. Cowin.	do	1
346	Wm. H. Viles.	do	1
348	Chas W. Dowdeswell.	do	1
349	Fred. R. Birkett Barker.	do	1
353	Victor H. Baker.	do	1
354	James M. Seagar.	xxxx .do	Y 1

The second thing of note was that William's father passed away on 31 December 1911, three days after William departed England for Australia. For William there was no turning back and he arrived in Melbourne on the S.S. Geelong in February 1912.

FUNERAL OF THE LATE MR. G. VILES.
 The funeral took place on Wednesday of Mr. George Viles, who carried on the business of a restaurant keeper in Bennington-street, Cheltenham. He died at the age of 48 on Sunday. The interment took place at the Cemetery, and in addition to the family mourners many friends were present to pay a last tribute of respect. The Liberal Club, of which deceased was a member, was represented, and also sent a wreath.

Gloucester Citizen 4 January 1912

Name	Wm H Viles
Gender	Male
Departure Date	28 Dec. 1911
Departure Port	England
Ship Name	Geelong
Shipping Line	P & O Branch Service
Search Ship Database	Search for the Geelong in the 'Passenger Ships and Images' database
Destination Port	Sydney, Australia

Departure from England 28 December 1911

Name	W H Mr Viles
Age	18
Birth Year	abt 1894
Departure Date	Feb. 1912
Departure Place	Victoria, Australia
Destination	SYDNEY
Ship	GEELONG II

Departure from Melbourne to Sydney 18 February 1912

New South Wales, Australia, Unassisted	Name	Messieur W V Viles
Immigrant Passenger Lists, 1826-1922	Departure	London
Passenger lists	Arrival	19 Feb. 1912 Sydney, New South Wales
View		

Arrival in Sydney 19 February 1912

No record has been found relating to William Viles first two years in Australia. It is likely that he was playing junior football in the Western Suburbs district as he was first recorded making an appearance for Wests Second Grade team in a trial match on 30 August 1914.

Second Grade team had a trial against Western Suburbs Seconds. They showed out well, but the game appeared to be too open for them. Viles and Buckley crossed for Western Suburbs, and Medcalf kicked a goal. Wests won by 8 points to nil.

30 August 1914

In 1915 William Viles came to prominence. He made his First Grade debut in round five against Eastern Suburbs and created some interest in his first game in the top grade. Wests were unlucky to go down to Easts 3-6, but William Viles played well at half back. A report in the Sydney Sportsman noted that Viles was “a new English scrum half” and that he turned out “quite the finished article.” The news report helps confirm that this player was William Herbert Viles who learned his early football in England.

Wests played a new English scrum half, named Viles, who turned out quite the finished article, and will be sure to retain his position.

Sydney Sportsman 16 June 1915

1915 Round 5 Saturday 12th June St Luke's Park		
Eastern Suburbs 6	def.	Western Suburbs 3
George CHALLIS	<i>Fullback</i>	Athol WHITE
Dan FRAWLEY (c)	<i>Wing</i>	Walter SIMPSON
Leslie CUBITT	<i>Centre</i>	Cecil FOORD
Bernard DALTON	<i>Centre</i>	Dick VEST
Wally MESSENGER	<i>Wing</i>	Bill CONNELLY
R McKELLAR	<i>Five-eighth</i>	Archie PRENTICE
Edward COYNE	<i>Half</i>	George VILES
Percy WHITE	<i>Lock</i>	Frank HOLT
Charlie LEES	<i>Second Row</i>	Harold LEDDY
Jack WATKINS	<i>Second Row</i>	Martin ANDERSEN
Robert WILLIAMS	<i>Front Row</i>	Edward COURTNEY (c)
Sid PEARCE	<i>Hooker</i>	Clarrie PRENTICE
Jim DUFFY	<i>Front Row</i>	William JOASS

William Viles First Grade debut – Round 5, 1915

William played the next game against Glebe but Wests were well beaten. A report in the Sydney Sportsman noted, “Viles again put up a good game for Wests behind the pack.”

In his 3rd First Grade game for Wests (round seven), William was again playing well however he went off injured in the second half. The match report noted that Viles, the English half-back, broke his hand which was a shame as he was in good form.

He missed the next four games before coming back in round twelve against Easts. The match report noted that, "Viles, the half, served it out well, but they could do little with their chances." The following week Wests played Glebe but were well beaten. The match report noted, "Viles and A Prentice were solid tacklers and ended several promising movements." Also, "Simpson and Viles were the most consistent of the other backs."

William played six First Grade games for Wests in 1915 as well as one City Cup match. If he hadn't been injured mid-season, it is most likely that he would have played a lot more in the top grade.

It is noted that William was recorded as G Viles on a number of occasions during 1915. However he was also recorded as W Viles in the Evening News on 21 August 1915. The mis-recording of names during the early years of rugby league was not uncommon. However with all of the supporting information, it is evident that there was only one player by the name of Viles who had played football in England and was of the right age. That player was William Herbert Viles.

WESTERN SUBURBS v. GLEBE.
(Played at Wentworth Park.)
GLEBE.—Full-back, M. ... three-quarters, F. Saunders, J. ... M. Seannell, T. Leggo; halves, A. ... and P. Regan; forwards, F. Burze, A. D. ... B. Gray, J. Knight, C. ...
WESTERN SUBURBS.—Full-back, A. White, three-quarters, W. H. Connelly, ... Foord, R. Vost, W. L. Simpson; halves, A. Prentice, G. Viles; forwards, F. Holt, W. Joass, C. W. Prentice, E. Courtney, H. J. ... and M. Anderson.

Evening News 19 June 1915

WESTERN SUBURBS.—H. Clarke, full-back; W. J. Connelly, C. McFadyen, A. Waite, and W. L. Simpson, three-quarters; J. McCauley, five-eighths; G. Viles (injured, and replaced by Foord), half; E. Courtney, H. J. Leddy, C. Tye, A. Smith, W. Joass, and F. Holt, forwards.

Referee 1 September 1915

WESTERN SUBURBS v. ANNANDALE.
(Played at Wentworth Park.)
WESTERN SUBURBS.—Full-back, A. White; three-quarters, C. McFadyen, W. J. Connelly, W. Simpson, A. W. Prentice; halves, W. Viles, T. McCauley; forwards, C. Prentice, W. Joass, A. Smith, F. Holt, H. Woodward, C. Tye.

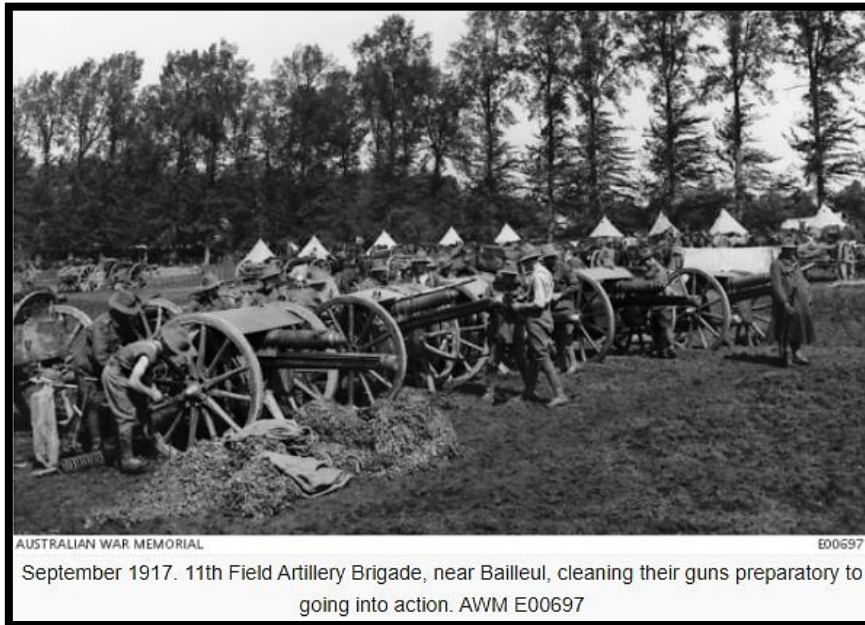
W. Viles Evening News 21 August 1915

William Viles was a good football player and had the potential to be a member of the Wests First Grade team for some time to come. However, William did not play the following year. He enlisted with the Australian Army on 24 January 1916 and was posted to the 2nd Divisional Ammunition Column as a Driver. His address at the time of enlistment was "Trafalgar", Park Rd Burwood, NSW.

He embarked from Sydney on 29 July 1916 and arrived in Plymouth, England on 14 September. William undertook training in England before being deployed to France in February 1917 with the 4th Field Artillery Brigade. The winter of 1917 was particularly cold and William entered hospital suffering from influenza and laryngitis.

William was posted to the 11th Artillery Battery in early April 1917, just before the battles at Bullecourt, France. He remained unscathed during the war but had further bouts in hospital in 1918 and 1919. William remained in the Army and was based in England throughout 1919.

With hostilities well and truly over, he absented himself for a fortnight in August 1919. This earned him 27 days in detention at Lewes on the south coast of England. He was transferred from Lewes to a departing ship and arrived back in Australia in November 1919.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL E00697
 September 1917. 11th Field Artillery Brigade, near Bailleul, cleaning their guns preparatory to going into action. AWM E00697

On his return to Australia, William reconnected with Wests. He didn't achieve the same success that he had prior going to war. He played twelve Reserve Grade games in 1920 and a further four Reserve Grade games in 1921.

In September 1920, Wests contested both the City Cup and League Cup Finals. In close results Wests were defeated in both games. William Viles was a reserve for the League Cup Final.

AGRICULTURAL GROUND, 2 P.M.		LEAGUE C FINAL		AGRICULTURAL GROUND, 2 P.M.	
GLEBE. Color—Red.				WESTERN SUBURBS. Color—Black.	
FULL BACK: 25—J. MURPHY				FULL BACK: 38—M. R. DOWNEY.	
THREE-QUARTERS: 24—J. TOOHEY 25—T. RICKETTS		W. STIRTON—27 E. GALLAGHER—30		THREE-QUARTERS: 34—J. BURRADGE 38—J. PARNELL	
HALVES: 48—W. SPLOTT		J. REGAN—31		HALVES: W. HOPPING—31 W. MATTHEWS—37	
FORWARDS: 32—T. McGRATH 34—E. IRELAND 36—H. ANGUS		C. HENRY—33 E. GODDARD—35 S. QUIGLEY—37		FORWARDS: 40—A. BOSSI 20—E. LARKIN 26—SMITH 28—MOLLOY	
RESERVES: 44—B. MASON 39—W. ARAHILL		A. WETHERED—41		RESERVES: A. CLARKE—41 STAPLETON—39 LANE—27	
Referee—V. DICKENSON				22—W. VILES Touch Judges—A. THORNTON and W. P. FINIGAN	

1920 League Cup Final - Wests were defeated by Glebe 6-9.

NORTH SYDNEY		WESTERN SUBURBS	
Colors—Red and Black		Color—Black	
FULL-BACK: 1—E. TAPLIN		FULL-BACK: 1—L. WALL	
THREE-QUARTERS: 2—H. HORDER (Capt.) 3—H. PETERS		THREE-QUARTERS: 2—R. VEST 16—P. BURNS	
HALVES: 18—D. HODGINS		HALVES: 6—F. GRAY	
FORWARDS: 10—G. HORSEY 12—A. FAULL 11—J. PYE		FORWARDS: 18—J. REIDY 9—W. JOASS 11—C. PRENTICE	
RESERVES: 17—T. JONES 16—J. MURRAY		RESERVES: 14—A. WHITE 9—A. McPHERSON	
Referee—T. McMAHON		Touch Judges—C. Russell and W. Neill	

1920 City Cup Final – Wests were defeated by North Sydney 7-14 after extra time.

A family history search has found a family tree for William Viles with a number of comments which appear to have been recorded by his descendants. One of those refers to him being a rugby schoolboy international. That is highly unlikely as in 1909-10, William was a “new find.” He did however play alongside team mates who were schoolboy internationals.

The second comment relates to William winning a championship medal while he was in Australia. This is quite likely to be true as he was a member of the Wests League Cup team that played in the “championship” final.

Education
 1909/10 • Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England
 Rugby schoolboy international. Also England trialist and whilst in Australia won a championship medal

From William Viles Family Tree

During his time at Wests, William played six First Grade, sixteen Reserve Grade and one City Cup game. It is likely that he played some Reserve Grade games in 1915 as well as some League Cup games in 1920. It is not known how many of these additional games he might have played as the reporting on these matches was very limited.

Surname	Forename	Year	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	City Cup	Tries	Goals	Fld. Goals	Points
Viles	William	1915	6						
Viles	William	1915			1				
Viles	William	1920		12		1			3
Viles	William	1921		4					
			6	16	1				3

William Viles Wests Playing Record

William's mother died in January 1924 and this may have been the catalyst for him to return home to England, which he did in December 1924. He was returning to his former address in Bennington St Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England.

Ship T.S.S. "ESPERANCE BAY" Port of Arrival Southampton Date of Arrival 6 DEC 1924 192															
Ship Line AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH LINE Whence Arrived AUSTRALIA															
NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BRITISH PASSENGERS.															
(1) Port of embarkation	(2) Port at which Passengers have been landed	(3) NAMES OF PASSENGERS	(4) Proposed Address in the United Kingdom	(5) CLASS (Whether 1st, 2nd, or 3rd)	(6) Profession, Occupation or Calling of Passengers	(7) AGES OF PASSENGERS						(8) Country of last Permanent Residence*	(9) Country of Intend. Future Permanent Residence		
						Adults of 12 years and upwards		Children between 1 & 12		Infants					
						Accompanied by husband or wife	Not accompanied by husband or wife								
						Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females				
Southampton SYDNEY	VILES	Mr. W. H.	3 Bennington St. Cheltenham, Glos.	3rd.	Brought forward	22	12	12	4	5	11	12	1	AUSTRALIA	1

Passenger List TSS Esperance Bay Sydney to Southampton 1924

Name	Mr W H Viles
Arrival Age	31
Birth Date	abt 1893
Port of Departure	Australia
Arrival Date	6 Dec. 1924
Port of Arrival	Hull, England
Ports of Voyage	Sydney; Melbourne; Fremantle; Adelaide; Brisbane; Colombo; Port Said; Southampton
Ship Name	Esperance Bay

William settled in Cheltenham and appeared to have done well in business. In 1930 he was recorded as the sole purchaser of the business known as Messrs. Viles Brothers, Tripe Dressers, for the impressive sum of 495 British pounds.

SALE OF GOODWILL
 Considerable interest was taken in the sale on Tuesday afternoon by Messrs. Loishman and Copeland of the goodwill of the business and the property and effects of the partnership carried on by Messrs. Viles Brothers, tripe dressers, 3 Bennington-street, Cheltenham. Bidding commenced at £30 and after spirited competition Mr. W. H. Viles became the purchaser at £495,

Gloucester Citizen 27 September 1930

William Viles lived the remainder of his life in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England and died there in April 1956.