

## **Leslie John WILLIAMS, 10/3125**

Letter extracted from Probate of Will.

*Probate Record. Pages 7, 8, 9, 10.*

Archives NZ/FamilySearch  
22 April 2016

In the Trenches  
France

14. 10. 16

My dear Mrs Williams,

Long before you receive this note you will have had the sad news of the death in action on the 16<sup>th</sup> ulto of your son Leslie, and it is with deep feeling - how deep I cannot express - that I write these lines to give you what particulars I can.

As you ~~do~~<sup>no</sup> doubt know your husband and my father were old friends during their lifetimes and it makes it doubly hard for me as quite a number of the family I know quite well - in fact some of them are old friends - I often sent messages by Les to them and although I had only known him for a few months, we often had long chats and it seemed as if I had known him for all time.

2  
He was the youngest I met  
in the Section and was one of  
the most popular - a good  
soldier, cheerful, hard worker,  
and as brave as anyone  
could wish. No words of  
mine can express how the boys  
miss him - that is ~~the~~ those  
who are left - and we  
suffered heavily. Les no doubt  
sent you a photo and of that  
group only a dozen remain.  
And they join with me in  
expressing our heartfelt  
sympathy in your loss.

Les was killed near Flers  
on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>  
while on duty with a Company  
attacking the enemy trenches.

About a quarter of a mile  
from where he fell, in the  
south western corner of the  
village of Flers, he lies  
buried together with a good  
number of New Zealanders.

3

The Chaplain of our battalion read the service and a rough cross was erected on his grave by his comrades. This however will be replaced by a suitable cross by the military authorities.

Nothing I can possibly say can lighten the awful blow that has fallen but on behalf of the section & myself please accept our deepest sympathy. We can only hope that in the midst of your grief you will be proud to think that Les lived his life as God had ordained and died for what he considered his duty - the cause for which we are all fighting.

Should there be anything further you would like to know and it is in my power to supply it please do not fail to let me know &

4

I will do what lies in  
my power...

Believe me

Yours very sincerely

Chas. E. Reid  
Lieut  
Signal officer

This and the preceding sheet of paper writing  
is the letter marked "B" referred to in the annexed  
~~affidavit~~ <sup>affidavit</sup> of Eleanor Williams sworn at  
Inman this 12<sup>th</sup> day of ~~December~~ <sup>January</sup> 1917 before me

F. H. Rolleston

a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand