

**St. George's Churchyard,  
Fovant, Wiltshire  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**2212 PRIVATE**

**D. CURNOW**

**5TH AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS**

**6TH SEPTEMBER, 1917 Age 30**

## Daniel CURNOW

Dan/Daniel Curnow was born at Gawler, South Australia between 1875 & 1887 (conflicting age details between age on Attestation Papers & age at death). His mother was Ellen.

Dan Curnow was a 29 year old, single, Labourer when he enlisted at Perth, Western Australia on 20th October, 1915 with the 1st Pioneer Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2212 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Pratchett, of 17 Stewart Street, Maylands, Western Australia.

Private Dan Curnow was posted to No. 33 Depot on 21st October, 1915. He was transferred to 4th Depot Battalion (no date recorded) then transferred as Sapper to Mining Corps on 3rd December, 1915. Sapper Curnow was transferred to 1st Pioneer Battalion (no date recorded).

Private Dan Curnow embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Clan McGillivray (A46)* on 3rd May, 1916 & disembarked at Alexandria on 13th June, 1916.

Private Dan Curnow was transferred to 5th Pioneer Battalion on 17th June, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir. He was taken on strength of 5th Pioneer Battalion on 17th June, 1916 at Moascar.

Private Dan Curnow embarked from Alexandria on 19th June, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) on HT *Canada*. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 25th June, 1916.

Private Dan Curnow was taken to 15th Field Ambulance in the field in France on 27th September, 1916 suffering from sub-acute Gastritis. He was transferred to 5th DRS on 29th September, 1916. Pte Curnow was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station with Gastritis on 11th October, 1916. He was discharged on 24th October, 1916 & rejoined 5th Pioneer Battalion from Hospital on 28th October, 1916.

Private Dan Curnow was sent sick to Hospital on 4th November, 1916. He was admitted to 5th Field Ambulance with influenza then transferred to CRS the same day. He rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 20th November, 1916.

Private Dan Curnow was sent sick to Hospital on 26th November, 1916. He was admitted to 15th Field Ambulance on 1st December, 1916 then transferred to 36th Casualty Clearing Station with Myalgia (also reported to have "Rheum"). He was transferred to Ambulance Train then admitted to 1st C. G. Hospital at Etaples, France on 2nd December, 1916. Pte Curnow embarked from Calais, France for England on Hospital Ship *Brighton* on 13th December, 1916.

Private Dan Curnow was admitted to Graylingwell War Hospital, England on 13th December, 1916 with Influenza – slight. He was transferred to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital at Southall on 29th December, 1916 & discharged to Wareham on 4th January, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham, Dorset from Southall on 4th January, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was written up for an offence – A.W.L. (Absent without leave) from 9 pm on 25th January, 1917 to 5 pm on 26th January, 1917. He was awarded 5 days Field Punishment No. 2 & was in custody awaiting trial for 5 days. He also forfeited 12 days' pay.

Private Dan Curnow was marched out from No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham on 14th March, 1917 & marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 17th March, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Dan Curnow was sent sick to Fovant Hospital, Wiltshire on 4th April, 1917 with "Pernicious Anemia".

Private Dan Curnow was written up for an offence on 18th March, 1917 while posted at Fovant - 1. Drunkenness & 2. Neglecting to obey orders of 11.8.16. He was awarded 12 hours detention

Private Dan Curnow was medically classified as B1 A3 (Fit for Overseas Training Camp in two to three weeks) at Hurdcott on 28th March, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was marched in No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott from Fovant Hospital on 6th June, 1917 & was medically classified as B1 A2 (Fit for Overseas Training Camp in three to four weeks) at Hurdcott on 7th June, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was written up for an offence - A.W.L. (Absent without leave) from 7 am on 14th June, 1917 till 11.30 pm on 17th June, 1917 & neglecting to obey R.O. dated 11th August, 1916. He was awarded 4 days Field Punishment No. 2 on 19th June, 1917 & was in custody awaiting trial for 1 day. He also forfeited 9 days' pay.

Private Dan Curnow was medically classified as B1 A3 (Fit for Overseas Training Camp in two to three weeks) at Hurdcott on 20th June, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was medically classified as A3 (fit for overseas training camp, to which transferred for hardening, prior to rejoining unit overseas) at Hurdcott on 25th June, 1917.

Private Dan Curnow was marched out from No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott on 30th June, 1917 & marched in to Pioneer Training Battalion at Fovant.

Private Dan Curnow was written up for an offence in London - Drunkenness on 21st July, 1917. This was admonished by Capt M. Sorenson.

Private Dan Curnow was written up for an offence - A.W.L. (Absent without leave) from midnight on 23rd July, 1917 till 9pm on 3rd August, 1917. He was awarded 11 days detention with a forfeiture of 22 days' pay. In custody awaiting trial 3 days – total forfeiture 36 days' pay.

Private Dan Curnow was admitted to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire on 5th September, 1917 having been found on the Railway Line with his left leg amputated.

Private Dan Curnow died at 2.40 am on 6th September, 1917 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Shock following an accident.

A death for Daniel Curnow, aged 42, was registered in the September quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

A Court of Enquiry was assembled on 7th September, 1917 at No. 3 Camp Fovant, Wiltshire, England for the purpose of enquiring into and reporting on the circumstances under which No. 2212 Pte D. Curnow, 5th Australian Pioneers was injured.

PTE. CURNOW.

This man was admitted on Sept. 5th. 1917 having been found on the Railway Line with his left leg amputated by a train.

He was almost dead when he arrived but by everyone doing their best he rallied somewhat but never enough to tell us even his name. After doing what was necessary for the damaged leg he again collapsed and died at 2.40 a.m. on Sept. 6th. 1917.

It will be a comfort to know I think he passed away in a sleepy condition and was not in pain.

(Sgd) E. Huntley.  
Capt. R.M.O.

Military Hospital  
Fovant.  
14.9.17.

Evidence:

1st. Witness. Capt. A. Enson, R.A.M.C. attached to Fovant Military Hospital being duly sworn states:-

I was called at about 10.45 p.m. on the 5th. Sept. 1917 to Chicks Grove Railway Crossing to see an Australian Soldier who was said to have been run over.

On arrival there about 11 p.m. I saw the patient who was then in the Signal Cabin. His left leg had been torn off about the knee joint and he was collapsed and pulseless from loss of blood. He was conscious but too ill to give any information regarding the accident. When I arrived the Ambulance was there and he was taken to Fovant.

I afterwards went to the place on the line where the accident occurred. It was on the upside of the track about 40 yards from the gate crossing. At this spot the left leg was lying in a pool of blood together with the hat and at a point opposite on the line there was another pool of blood, about 6 ft. away from the first. I have no reason to suppose from his condition that the patient was under the influence of liquor.

(Sgd) C. A. Enson. Capt.,  
R.A.M.C.

The members of the Board then proceeded to Chicks Grove Crossing to inspect the place where Pte. Curnow was injured.

2nd. Witness. Mrs. Gould of Chicks Grove Crossing Tisbury, states:-

At about 10.15 on the 5th. Sept. 1917 I came from the kitchen of my cottage at the crossing and heard a groan from a short distance away. I then informed my husband and son, who went up the line and found a soldier on the side of the line. My son immediately went for the doctor and we brought the injured man in, and did what we could to stop the bleeding.

The last "Up" train passed the Signal Cabin about 10.0 p.m. I did not see or hear the soldier pass my house previous to that time.

Question. Do you frequently see soldiers using the railway track near the Cabin?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Was it a dark night when the accident occurred?

Answer. Yes, very dark.

Question. How far was it from the crossing to where the injured man was found?

Answer. About 40 yards.

(Sgd) B. Gould.

3rd. Witness. No. 2197. Pte. A.W. Norris of the 5th. Pioneer Battalion attached to Pioneer Training B. duly sworn states:-

I last saw Curnow in Tisbury at about 8.30 p.m. on the 5th. Sept. 1917. He left me then and said he would be back

in a few minutes, but although I waited until 9 p.m. I did not see him again

Question. Was Pte. Curnow then in good health and not suffering from liquor.?

Answer. He was in good health and I did not notice any sign of being under the influence of drink.

Question. It has been reported that Pte. Curnow was hard of hearing, can you say if this is so?

Answer. Yes, when speaking to him I always had to speak very loud to make him hear.

Question. Do you know if the railway track is used by soldiers proceeding to and from Tisbury?

Answer. I have not used it myself, but have been told it is a short cut and have occasionally seen soldiers walking there.

Question. Have you recently noticed any signs of despondency or mental trouble in Pte. Curnow?

Answer. No, I have not.

(Sgd) A.W.Norris.

4th. Witness. No. 2503 A/CSM. Jones F.H. of the 5th. Aust. Pioneers attached Pioneer Training Battalion being duly sworn, states:-

No 2212. Pte. D. Curnow was a member of No.5. Company Pioneer Training Battalion. He has always been noticeably deaf on parade, but in all other respects a steady and good soldier.

No. 2503. F.H. Jones A/CSM.  
No. 5. Company,  
Pioneer Training Bn. A.I.F.

#### Finding of the Court:

The Court is of the opinion that No. 2212 Pte D. Curnow was injured whilst trespassing on the Railway Track and from the evidence and from inspection of the scene of the occurrence that the soldier met his injuries accidentally and no blame is attachable to the Railway Company of its servants.

An inquest was also held under arrangements made by Fovant Military Hospital Authorities & the following verdict was recorded – "*Injuries received by being accidentally run over by a train on the Railway at Quarry Gates, Chicks Grove, East Tisbury whilst trespassing on the Railway on 5.9.17.*"

REPORT ON THE DEATH OF PRIVATE DANIEL CURNOW NO. 2212 5th PIONEERS A.I.F. RELIGION R.C.

*The above mentioned was run over by a train running towards Salisbury. The place where the accident occurred was about 30 yards this side, that is Salisbury side of the Quarry Gate crossing which is about 1 mile Salisbury side of Tisbury R.S. Time about 9.45 pm 5.9.17 about 5 minutes after the train passed, the Gate keeper's wife heard a groan and calling her husband and son searched and found an Australian soldier with his left leg cut off about the knee.*

*The son was sent to Tisbury for a Doctor, and the husband rang up the Signal Box at Dinton station, and they in turn rang up the Camp Hospital at Fovant. An ambulance was sent from the Hospital, and it arrived at the place of accident at about 10.30 pm.*

*At about 10.35 the doctor arrived from Tisbury. Dr Enson, Military Doctor. The ambulance left the place of accident about 11 pm with the patient for Fovant Military Hospital. The ambulance arrived at the Hospital about 11.30 pm. The man died at 2.40 am on 6.9.17.*

*(Signed) A. F. Hopkins Lt. R.T.O.*

Private Daniel Curnow was buried on 8th September, 1917 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England – Plot number II. B. 7. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte Curnow - *Coffin was good oak. The funeral took place on Saturday 8th September, 1917 from Fovant Military Hospital to Fovant Cemetery and was attended by a large number of his mates from the Battalion. Arrangements are being made for the erection of a cross.*

### **5th Pioneer Battalion**

The 5th Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 5. Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

*(Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)*

A War Pension was granted to Ellen Pratchett, of Stewart Street, Maylands, Western Australian, Mother of the late Daniel Curnow, in the sum of 40/- per fortnight from 11th November, 1917.

Base Records contacted Mrs Pratchard, 17 Stewart Street, Maylands, Western Australia in July, 1921 & again in November, 1921 asking if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself in regards to the War Medals on account the service of Private D. Curnow & due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc. The letters was returned unclaimed.

Base Records were advised in May, 1922 by Military Headquarters, Perth that the father of Pte D. Curnow was deceased & his next-of-kin was his mother – Mrs E. Pratchett, c/o Mr R. Hickey, Royal Arcade, Perth, Western Australia.

Private Daniel Curnow was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Curnow's mother - Mrs E. Pratchett, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent May, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Daniel Curnow – service number 2212, aged 30, of 5th Australian Pioneers. No family details are listed.

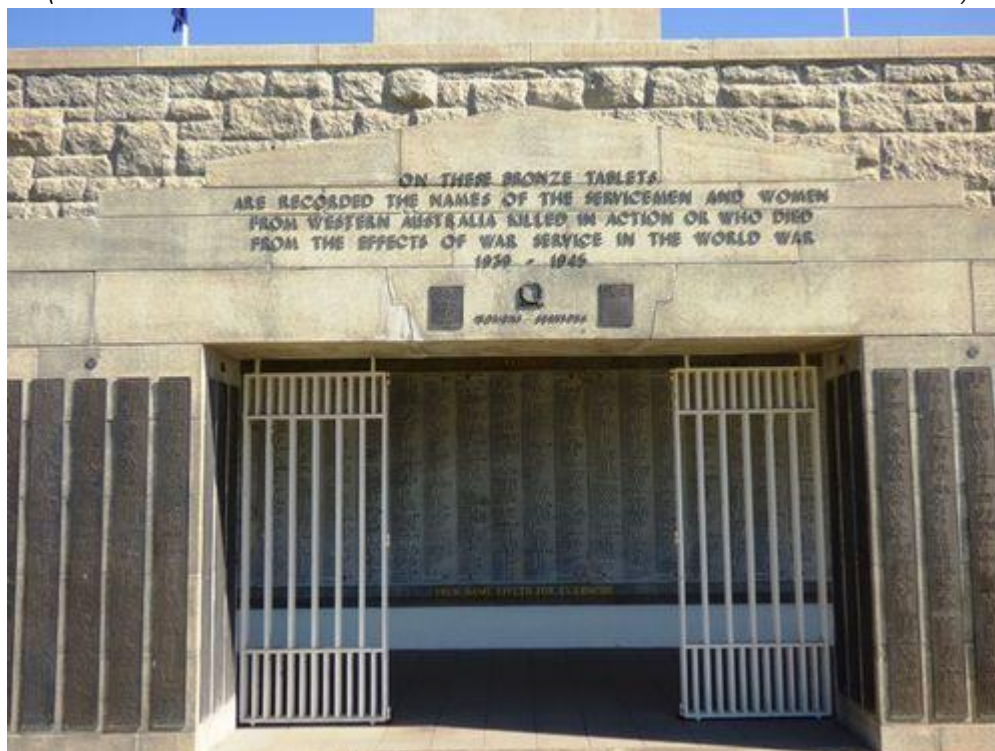
D. Curnow is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



**Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)  
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names**

*(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)*





Engineers Corps Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)

Private D. Curnow is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 174.



(Photos Cathy Sedgwick)

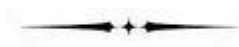




*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

(66 pages of Pte Daniel Curnow's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES**

#### **Casualty List No. 339**

Western Australia

DIED, RESULT OF ACCIDENT

D. Curnow

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 22 September, 1917)

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### **AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION**

#### **W.A. ROLL OF HONOUR**

Other Causes

Dan Curnow, Maylands, died result of accident.

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 22 September, 1917)

### Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

*(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)*

Private D. Curnow does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

### **St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England**

There was a 600 bed hutted military hospital at Fovant during the First World War, and the concentration of Australian depots and training camps in the area is reflected in the 63 First World War burials in this churchyard. The war graves form two groups, one west of the church and the other at the east end. There is also one burial of the Second World War. There are 44 War Graves belonging to those who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1.

*(Information from CWGC)*



**Cross of Sacrifice** *(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00299

**St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire** *(Photo c 1919)*





**St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at front & rear** (*Churchyard photos courtesy of Andrew Stacey*)



Photo of Private D. Curnow's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.

