

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2829 CORPORAL

G. V. HARRIS

4TH AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

2ND FEBRUARY, 1919 Age 24

George Venus HARRIS

George Venus Harris was born at Silver Creek, near Beechworth, Victoria in 1894 to parents George and Margaret Harris (nee Stalker).

George Venus Harris attended Silver Creek State School, Victoria.

George Harris was aged 20 years & 9 months, single and a Clerk from Wangaratta, Victoria when he enlisted in Melbourne on 30th June, 1915 with the 4th Infantry Brigade, 14th Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2829 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr G. J. G. Harris, care of Co-operative Store, Wangaratta, Victoria. George Harris stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served 12 months with Cadets at Beechworth & 12 months at North Carlton. He had also served with Citizen Forces for 3 years. As George Harris was under the age of 21 years – his mother signed her consent for her son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad.

Private George Harris was posted to Depot on 9th July, 1915. He was transferred to 9th Reinforcements of 14th Infantry Battalion on 20th July, 1915.

Private George Vanue Harris (Name as per Nominal/Embarkation Roll) embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 27th September, 1915.

Private George Harris joined his Unit (9th Reinforcements) in Ismailia on 8th January, 1916.

Private George Harris was transferred to 4th Pioneers on 16th March, 1916 & taken on strength with 4th Pioneers that same day.

Private George Harris was taken to 12th Field Ambulance on Serapeum on 4th April, 1916 with Dysentery. He was transferred to 11th Casualty Clearing Station the same day then transferred to No. 1 Australian Stationary Hospital at Tel-el-Kebir on 5th April, 1916. He was discharged to duty at Serapeum on 24th April, 1916.

Private George Harris proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on “*Scotian*” on 4th June, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 11th June, 1916.

Private George Harris was marched in to A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France from Marseilles on 14th June, 1916. He was marched out to 4th A.D.B.D. on 15th June, 1916. Pte Harris was marched out to join his Unit on 21st July, 1916 & joined his Unit on 22nd July, 1916.

(Note – no details recorded on Casualty Form – Active Service between 22nd July, 1916 & 17th July, 1917)

Private George Harris was wounded in action on 17th July, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to right Hip. He was admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 17th July, 1917 then transferred to No. 12 Ambulance Train on 19th July, 1917. He was admitted to 2nd Stationary Hospital at Abbeville, France on 19th July, 1917. Pte Harris was listed for transfer to England on 23rd July, 1917 with gunshot wounds to right buttock. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* on 24th July, 1917.

Private George Harris was admitted to 2nd Southern General Hospital at Bristol, England on 25th July, 1917 with shrapnel wounds to right buttock – severe. He was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 22nd August, 1917 then discharged to furlo from 27th August, 1917 to 10th September, 1917 & was then to report to Depot at Perham Downs.

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 George Harris was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 10th September, 1917 & medically classified as B1 A 4 (Fit for overseas training camp when passed dentally fit).

Private George Harris was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 5th October, 1917 with Scabies. He was discharged to Convalescent Training Depot at Parkhouse on 13th October, 1917. He was discharged to No. 3 Command Depot on 23rd October, 1917.

Private George Harris was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire from Convalescent Training Depot on 23rd October, 1917. He was medically classified as B1 A4 (Fit for overseas training camp when passed dentally fit) on 24th October, 1917.

Private George Harris was marched in to Overseas Training Depot at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 21st November, 1917.

Private George Harris proceeded overseas to France from Longbridge Deverill via Southampton on 27th December, 1917. He was marched in to the 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 28th December, 1917 & was marched out to his Unit on 29th December, 1917.

Private George Harris rejoined his Unit from being wounded in the field on 1st January, 1918.

Private George Harris was appointed Lance Corporal on 18th February, 1918 to complete Establishment.

Lance Corporal George Harris was promoted to Temporary Corporal – vice Cpl. Emery wounded on 7th April, 1918.

Temporary Corporal George Harris was sent to Australian Corps Gas School on 15th June, 1918 & rejoined his Unit on 24th June, 1918.

Temporary Corporal George Harris retained his rank on 9th July, 1918 – vice Cpl. Fielding wounded.

Temporary Corporal George Harris reverted to rank of Lance Corporal on 2nd August, 1918 on Cpl. Fielding rejoining from Hospital.

Lance Corporal George Harris was promoted to Temporary Corporal on 17th September, 1918 vice Cpl. Thomas to Australia.

Temporary Corporal George Harris was on leave to England from France from 14th November, 1918 & returned from leave on 2nd December, 1918.

Temporary Corporal George Harris was appointed Corporal on 6th January, 1919 in France – vice Cpl. Thomas to Australia.

Corporal George Harris proceeded to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) on 16th January, 1919 re- Australian draft. He was transferred to England on 23rd January, 1919 as part of 1915 Personnel.

Corporal George Venus Harris was admitted to No. 2 Group Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 26th January, 1919 suffering from influenza. He was transferred to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire on 29th January, 1919 dangerously ill with Pneumonia.

Corporal George Venus Harris died at 10.40 pm on 2nd February, 1919 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Pneumonia.

A death for George V. Harris, aged 24, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

4th Pioneer Battalion

The 4th Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 4th Division. 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 A.I.F. 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)

Corporal George Venus Harris was buried on 7th February, 1919 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England, – Plot number I. F. 4. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Corporal George Venus Harris - *Coffin was good, Elm with brass mounts. Deceased was buried with full Military honours. The coffin draped with the Australian flag, being conveyed to the graveside on a gun-carriage, preceded by a firing party from No. 4 Command Depot. Six Australia supported the Pall. The "Last Post" was sounded and three volleys fired over the grave. The funeral was attended by 1 Officer and about 80 N.C.O.'s and men. Headquarters, A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

Private George V. Harris requested in his Will dated 3rd December, 1915 that in the event of his death all his property and effects were to be given to his mother – Mrs George Harris, Silver Creek, Beechworth, Victoria, Australia.

Corporal George Venus Harris was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Corporal Harris's father – Mr G. Harris, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent October, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal George Venus Harris– service number 2829, aged 24, of 4th Australian Pioneers. He was the son of George and Margaret Harris of Swan St., Wangaratta, Victoria. Born at Silver Creek, Beechworth, Victoria.

Corporal G. V. Harris 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 by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

G. V. Harris is remembered on the Wangaratta War Memorial, located in Monument Gardens, Docker & Ovens Streets, Wangaratta, Victoria,

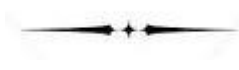


Wangaratta War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Roger Johnson/Sandra Brown)



(97 pages of Corporal George Venus Harris' 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



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05248.058

Corporal George Venus Harris



Newspaper Notices

"Is my country worth fighting for, or is it fair that I should let others fight for me? Answer this question." Writing from the trenches in France, Private George Venus Harris, formerly of the Lands and Education Departments, thus addresses a departmental officer who was his mate before he enlisted.

(Mount Alexander Mail, Victoria – 24 February, 1917)

THE 330th CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian Names are:-

WOUNDED

Private G. V. Harris, Beechworth

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 15 August, 1917)

VICTORIA'S ROLL OF HONOUR

CASUALTY LIST 460

DIED OTHER CAUSES

Harris, Corp. G. V., Wangaratta

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 6 March, 1919)

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)

Corporal G. V. Harris 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)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00 299

(Photo c 1919)





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



Photo of Corporal G. V. Harris's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.





Cross of Sacrifice (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)