

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2232 PRIVATE

A. E. SMITH

26TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

19TH DECEMBER, 1919 Age 25

Augustus (Gus) Eugene SMITH

Augustus Eugen Smith was born at Port Cygnet, Tasmania in 1891 to mother Isabella Smith. Augustus Eugene Smith was a grandson of the famous last full blood Aboriginal Tasmanian Fanny Cochrane Smith.

Isabella Smith, mother of Augustus Eugen Smith, died when he was 9 years old & he lived with his uncle William Smith.

Augustus Eugene Smith married Sylvia Gladys Johnston in 1913.

The 1914 & 1919 Australian Electoral Rolls for the district of Franklin, subdivision of Port Cygnet, Tasmania listed Augustus Eugene Smith, Labourer of Nichols' Rivulet.

Augustus Eugene Smith was a 23 year old, single, Labourer from Port Cygnet, Tasmania when he enlisted on 29th July, 1915 with the 7th Infantry Brigade, 26th Infantry Battalion, 4th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2232 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his Uncle – Mr W. H. Smith, Port Cygnet, Tasmania. Augustus' complexion was described as Dark.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 27th September, 1915.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was admitted to 4th Auxiliary Hospital at Cairo with mumps & was discharged to duty on 5th January, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was taken on strength of 26th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir, Egypt on 5th February, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance at Ismailia, Egypt on 9th February, 1916 with a broken leg. He rejoined his Battalion on 23rd February, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria, Egypt on 15th March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 21st March, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was written up for failing to salute an Officer on 28th March, 1916. He was awarded 72 hours Field Punishment No. 2.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was wounded in action in France on 5th August, 1916. He was taken to 2nd Field Ambulance then transferred & admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station on 6th August, 1916. Pte Smith was admitted to No. 26 General Hospital at Etaples, France on 6th August, 1916 suffering from Shell Shock. He was transferred to 2nd Divisional Base Depot at Etaples on 9th August, 1916. Pte Smith proceeded to join his Unit from 2nd Divisional Base Depot on 14th August, 1916 & returned to his Unit on 17th August, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was written up for a Crime while posted in the field – 1. Neglect to obey an order & 2. Absent without leave from 09.00 hrs to 21.00 hrs on 15th September, 1916 & 09.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs on 16th September, 1916. He was awarded 168 hours Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited 8 days' pay.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was admitted to Hospital in France with Rheumatism on 6th October, 1916 & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 16th October, 1916.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was detached for duty with Anzac Corps Workshops at Meante from 3rd January, 1917. Pte Smith proceeded on leave from Workshops on 18th October, 1917 & rejoined Workshops from leave on 30th October, 1917.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was accidentally injured on 26th November, 1917. He was admitted to 7th Australian Field Ambulance – amputation of middle finger. Pte Smith was transferred & admitted to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 26th November, 1917. Pte Smith was discharged to duty on 1st February, 1918 & rejoined the Corps Workshops on 2nd February, 1918.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was on leave to UK from France from 26th October, 1918. He rejoined Corps Workshops from leave on 16th November, 1918.

A Court Martial was held for Pte A. E. Smith, 2232, 26th Battalion on 17th January, 1919. He was awarded 28 days Field Punishment. No other details were listed.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith proceeded to Base for Return to Australia from Corps Workshops on 9th April, 1919. He was marched in to Australian Base Depot on 16th April, 1919 for return to UK. Pte Smith disembarked at Southampton, England on 17th April, 1919.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was marched in to No. 5 Group from France on 6th May, 1919.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was included in List No. 293 of Members of the Australian Imperial Force returning to Australia per H.T. *Port Lyttleton*. Mr W. H. Smith, uncle of Pte A. E. Smith was advised on 4th July, 1919 that his nephew - Private Augustus Eugene Smith did not embark as previously expected. Mr W. H. Smith was advised on 14th July, 1919 that Private A. E. Smith had been admitted to Devonport Military Hospital, England with Endocarditis & was seriously ill.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was evacuated to Military Hospital at Devonport, England from H.T. *Port Lyttleton* on 20th June, 1919.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was reported as seriously ill with Endocarditis at Devonport Military Hospital on 6th July, 1919.

Pte Smith's uncle was advised in August, 1919 that his nephew's condition was stationary & in September, 1919 that his nephew's condition was improving.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was transferred to No. 1 Australian General Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 10th October, 1919 with Ulcerative Endocarditis & nephritis. He was reported as dangerously ill on 27th October, 1919.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was transferred to Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 13th November, 1919 & reported as seriously ill on 20th November, 1919.

Pte Smith's uncle was advised in November, 1919 that his nephew was seriously ill & in December, 1919 that there was no change in his nephew's condition.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith died at 05.30 hrs on 19th December, 1919 at Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire, England from Nephritis & Heart failure.

A death for Augustus E. Smith, aged 27, was registered in the December quarter, 1919 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was buried on 22nd December, 1919 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England, – Plot number I. E. 3. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte A. E. Smith - *Coffin was Oak with brass fittings. Full Military Honours, Firing Party of 1 Sgt 2 Cpls 15 Privates. Coffin was draped with Flag of Australia and the Union Jack. Last Post was sounded by 2 Buglers. About 40 or 50 members of the A.I.F. and Imperial Troops attended a Service held by the Chaplain.*

Communications to Mrs S. G. Smith, widow of the late Private Augustus Eugene Smith, of 59 Queen Street, North Hobart, Tasmania, had been returned unclaimed. Enquiries were made by Base Records to locate Mrs Smith in 1920. A letter to Base Records in 1924 from 6th Military District, Australian Military Forces stated that the widow of the late Pte A. E. Smith had transferred her pension to Sydney. She had been "*living with her mother Mrs M. A. Johnson at 69 Queen Street, North Hobart, prior to her departure for Sydney. From our records the lady sought for is not of good character. P.S. Mr W. H. Smith of Port Cygnet, Tasmania, was nominated by the deceased soldier as his next of kin when he enlisted and our records show that a statement was made that the deceased soldier's wife deserted him over twelve months before he enlisted.*"

The Repatriation Commission, Sydney advised Base Records in September, 1924 that the pension of Mrs S. G. Smith, widow of the late Pte A. E. Smith, was cancelled in July, 1921 on account of the inability of the Department to locate the pensioner's whereabouts.

Base Records contacted Mr W. H. Smith, Uncle of the late Pte A. E. Smith & listed as the next-of-kin, in September, 1924 asking if he knew the present address of his nephew's widow & if there were any nearer blood relatives than himself 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.

Mr W. H. Smith replied to Base Records in October, 1924 stating that he had heard at the time of Augustus' birth that his father & eldest brother were dead & that his mother was not married when he was born but died a few years after. Mr W. H. Smith stated that his nephew's mother was his (Mr W. H. Smith) youngest sister. Augustus had lived with his late grandmother – Mrs F. Smith. Mr W. H. Smith stated the last time he had heard about his nephew's wife (his nephew could not live with his wife) she had been given 6 months imprisonment for stealing.

Base Records made a decision in October, 1924 that the Medals issued on the account of the service of the late Pte A. E. Smith would be handed over to Mr William Henry Smith, uncle of the late Pte A. E. Smith, on the distinct understanding that they would be preserved with due care & returned to the Department at any time should anyone with prior rights claim the Medals which would be upheld by the Minister. A Statutory Declaration was signed by Mr William Henry Smith, of Cygnet, Tasmania on 18th October, 1924 stating he would preserve with due care any War Medals & other items given into his custody & will return them to the Department of Defence should anyone with a prior right make a claim.

One package of the personal effects of the late Private Augustus Eugene Smith were sent to his listed next-of-kin – Mr W. H. Smith, of Port Cygnet, Tasmania. Another package was sent to his widow – Mrs S. G. Smith & was signed for in June, 1920.

Private Augustus Eugene Smith was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal & awarded to his uncle – Mr W. H. Smith under bond. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were sent to Pte Smith's widow (Scroll sent & signed for in September, 1921 & Plaque sent & signed for in February, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Augustus Eugene Smith – service number 2232, aged 25, of 26th Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private A. E. Smith is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 109.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

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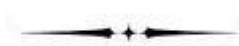
A. E. Smith is remembered on the Port Cygnet Roll of Honour Board which is located at the RSLA Club, Mary Street & Guys Road, Cygnet, Tasmania.



Port Cygnet Roll of Honour Board (Photo from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

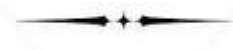
(114 pages of Pte Augustus Eugene Smith's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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





Private Augustus Eugene Smith



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTY LIST

Twenty-Two Names Given

6th Military District

Pte A. E. Smith, 26th Bn., died 19/12/19, illness (P.R. ill).

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 15 January, 1920)

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 A. E. Smith 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 Private A. E. Smith's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.





Cross of Sacrifice (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)