

Baverstock War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



4261 PRIVATE

P. FORSTER

30TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

17th FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 25*

Percy FORSTER

Percival Forster, a twin with Frank Forster, was born at 1 West View, Saltney, near Chester, England. He was a 25 year old,* single, Cook from G. P. O. Sydney, NSW when he enlisted on 14th February, 1916, with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 30th Infantry Battalion, 11th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 4261 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his twin brother – Frank Forster, of Saltney, Chester, England.

*(According to information gathered for the Roll of Honour, completed by Percy's twin brother Frank, Percy was aged 34 years at the time of his death.)

Information contained from the Roll of Honour, completed by Percy's twin brother Frank, states that Percy was chiefly connected with the town of Wellington, North Island, New Zealand. He was a Sailor and Adventurer & had previously been a Manager of a Boot Store in Manchester, England. Percy Forster had arrived in Australia when he was 28 years old & had previously served with the Earl of Chester's Volunteer Rifle Brigade. Other information provided – Percy had *“done much inland travelling in Mexico and South America and was always in danger of snakes or gunpowder, severely mauled on one occasion by Ireland Tribe, result finger missing & daintiest part of thigh & rump sliced off. Through father dying, he changed his course to Australia instead of _____. Worked on transports carrying A.I.F. troops to Egypt & Dardanelles.”*

Pte Percy Forster embarked from Sydney on SS *Port Nicholson* on 8th November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 10th January, 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.

Pte Percy Forster was written up for being Absent without Leave from midnight 26th January to 8 p.m. 27th January, 1917. He was awarded a total forfeiture of 11 days pay.

Pte Percy Forster was admitted sick to Hospital on 12th February, 1917 from “B” Company, 8th Training Battalion, Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

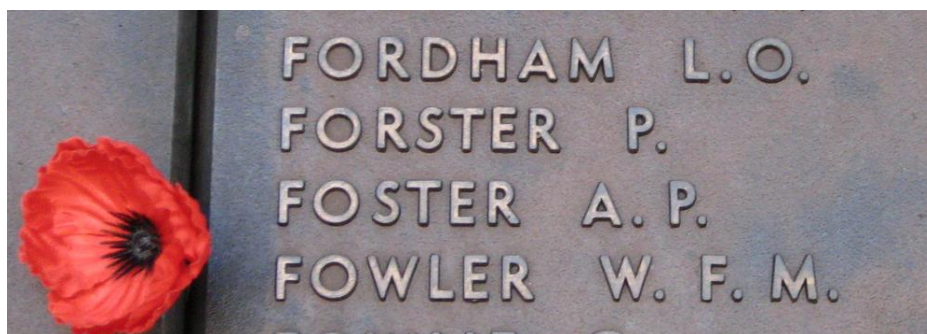
Private Percy Forster died at 6.30 a.m. on 17th February, 1917 from Pneumonia at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire.

A death for Percy Foster, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Private Percy Forster was buried in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire on 20th February, 1917 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

From the burial report of Pte Percy Forster - *Coffin was oak wood. Buried with full Military Honours at 11.45 a.m. 20.2.1917, all his personal belongings forwarded to the A.I.F. Kit Store London.*

Private P. Forster is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 117.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Pte Percy Forster was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Forster's brother – Mr Frank Forster (Both sent July, 1922)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Percy Forster – service number 4261, as being 25 years old & served with 30th Battalion Australian Infantry. No other family information is listed.

(50 pages of Pte Percy Forster's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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

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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 at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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)

Pte P. Forster does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.

(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Pte P. Forster's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)