

STEVENS, Robert William (Pellow)

Rank: Private

Service Number: 2240

Unit: 5th Light Horse Regiment

Place of Birth: Parish of Sheldon, Honiton, Devon, England.

Date of Birth: March quarter 1898, Honiton, Devon, England. Vol 5b Page 16

Enlisted at Rockhampton, Qld on 8 September 1915 aged 18 years 6 months.

Next-of-kin was father, Albert J Stevens, Calliope Station, via Gladstone, Queensland.

On enlistment he was 5 ft 6.75 inches and weighed 9 stone 9 lbs. His chest measurement was 33-35 inches. His occupation was station hand at Calliope Station, via Gladstone, Qld. Unit embarked from Sydney, New South Wales, on board HMAT A67 *Orsova* on 11 March 1916. Served Egypt. Hospital with influenza 20 July 1916. Returned to duty 24 July 1916. Joined School of Cookery 23 August 1917.

On the night of 18 October 1918, Stevens shot himself in the chest while on guard duty at Number 11 post at the Prisoner of War compound. A Court of Inquiry was held on 11 December 1918 at Sidi Bishr, Alexandria. Witnesses gave evidence that they heard a gunshot and that Trooper Stevens was lying on the ground. One witness gave evidence that Stevens had been "very much depressed, and I asked him if he wished to see the Medical Officer. He said 'No'."

Stevens gave evidence: *"I was discharged from No. 17 General Hospital to Sidi Bishr for out of door treatment for venereal disease. About the 16-10-18 I went on guard. On coming off guard on the morning of the 18-10-18 I found I was much worse. This disease had been depressing me greatly for some time. On finding that I was getting worse, I completely broke down. I have no recollection of anything that happened between 10 a.m. and when I found myself shot."*

Dr Hamilton Johnstone state that he saw Trooper Stevens the next morning on 19 October 1918. *"He was depressed but there were no symptoms of insanity that could be noticed."*

The Court stated that they were of the opinion that the evidence pointed to the possibility that Stevens had been of unsound mind when he shot himself.

The Brigadier General, RC Boyle, was of the opinion that Stevens was not insane when he shot himself and that he must be tried by FGCM.

Returned to Australia 28 June 1919. Arrived 26 September 1919. Died 26 June 1963. Buried Toowong Cemetery.

Service Record: [View digital copy \(naa.gov.au\)](#)

Paulette Flint, 2024