



SOUTH WILTSHIRE CORONER'S INQUESTS



Larkhill

Robert LYONS – Australian Soldier

24th September, 1917

Soldiers Fall on a Rifle

Private Robert F. Lyons, A.I.F, attached to the Field Post Office at Durrington Camp, had a strange accident on Thursday, September 20th, which, unfortunately, caused his death. He was unloading a mail wagon at Larkhill when he fell from it on to the muzzle of a rifle held by a sentry who was standing near, and sustained serious injuries from which he died the next day. An inquest was held by Mr F. H. Trethowan on Monday at Fargo Military Hospital.

Sergt L. A. Thompson, of the Australian Field Artillery, said that on September 20th Lyons was at Larkhill Camp Post Office with a wagon containing mails. He was standing in the wagon and had handed down two bags of parcels. When in the act of pulling out the third bag, which appeared to be held by something, it came away suddenly, and he over-balanced. To save himself from falling he jumped backwards. A sentry was near the wagon standing "at ease" with his rifle pushed forward in the proper manner. As Lyons fell he just touched the sentry, pushing him back, which brought the rifle out a little further and he fell on it. He complained that he was hurt, so witness took him into the post office, and seeing that his injuries were serious sent for medical assistance. Lyons told him it was not the sentry's fault.

Capt. L. L. Moore, R.A.M.C., said that Lyons was admitted to the hospital in a state of collapse and had a jagged wound in his body. After attention in the operating theatre he improved for a time but had a sudden collapse on Friday morning. He got worse all that day. Another operation was attempted but he died at 6.20 a. m. on Saturday. From what he said it appeared that he accidentally fell on the muzzle of a rifle that had no bayonet on it.

Corporal H. Heppell, of the Australian Postal Corps, stationed at Durrington, gave evidence of identification, and stated that Lyons was 28 years of age and his home was in Melbourne, Victoria.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

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