

Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing  
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War  
1DRL/0428

6021 Private  
Robert Alvin Draper  
Fowler

16th Battalion



11002026

16th Battn.  
A.I.F.

Fowler.  
R.A.D. 6021

"Missing 26.9.17"

I saw him lying dead at Ypres when we went over the top, killed, I think, by a shell. Five men were lying together 4 wounded and he was dead. I don't know if buried but as we held the line it is almost certain he must have been. He was a fair size, young, and fair complexion and came from West Australia. I knew him well and we came over in the Miltiades together - we both belong to Donnybrook W.A.

Informant:- R.W. Leslie 6055  
16th Battn.

W. Alison.

Barefield. Ward 38.

London.

29.1.18.

Off.M.  
P.I.

A.I.F. 16th Btn

FOWLER  
R.A.D. 6021

"MISSING"

Killed in action 26-9-17 - previously reported Missing  
Cert. by A.I.F.Hqrs 22-2-18.

P & P.I.

London  
2-3-18

16th Battn.  
A.I.F.

Fowler.  
Pte.R.A.D. 6021

"Missing 26.9.17"

The above soldier was reported officially missing on the 26th Sept 1917 and his mother has now received the following letter from Pte. Rusden:- "Enclosed you will find a pocket book of you son who was killed on the 26th September. I found his body on the battlefield in Belgium and buried him where he lay and marked his grave with a cross. No doubt you will be notified by the Military before you receive this. Trusting you receive the parcel in good order, you have my sympathy during your sad bereavement"

(Sgd) 3709 Pte.H.W.Rusden

A.Coy. 45th Battn. A.I.F.

If you could possibly get into touch with Pte.Rusden we should be glad to have a report on this matter.

Extract Letter from:- Perth letter

London.  
5.3.18.

14.12.17.

P.  
P.I.

*In Report from H.W.Rusden 2709*

16th Battn.  
A.I.F.

FWLER.  
R.A.D. 6021

"Killed in Action 26.9.17."

Pte. J. Robinson, 6035, of C. Coy, 16th A.I.F. (stretcher bearer) told me that he had seen R.A.D. Fowler killed on Sept. 26th at Polygon Wood. We all three came from near Donnybrook, W. Australia, and knew one another very well. I don't know what Coy, Fowler, was in, but I knew his initials R.A.D. and No. 6021, and am quite certain of the man. We called him Alvin. His father's name is Robert Fowler. I was not there myself when he was killed.

A.G. Campbell Informant:- Cpl. S. Woodbrook, 5973,  
16th A.I.F. C. Coy, 11th Pltn,  
London. Dartford.  
23.4.18.

P.  
P.I.

NOTE Written to Robinson 22.4.18.

16th Battn  
B.Coy.  
A.I.F.

FOWLER,  
R.A.D. 6021

"Killed in action 26.9.17."

I did not see the casualty, but I saw his dead body the day after it happened. He had been caught by shrapnel, pieces of which had passed through his head, death evidently being instantaneous. I took all his personal belongings, and sent them to his mother in London, W.A. this was in October 1917. but so far I have received no acknowledgement of them. I did not know him very well. The casualty happened near Zonnebeke. I assisted to bury him in the field at place of casualty, and marked the grave with a cross bearing his number, name and unit.

Informant:- Pte. H.W. Rudden, 2409  
45th Battn, A.Coy, 2nd Pltn,  
3.A.A.H. Dartford.

W.Oman.

London.  
7.5.18.

P.  
P.I.

C O P Y

Statement made by No. 2709 Pte Rusden R.W. 45th Btn.

re No. 5021 Pte Fowler R.A.D. 16th Btn.  
Missing 26.9.17

I was one of a party which assisted to bury the above-named on September 26th 1917., and I sent some of his personal belongings to his mother.- Mrs R. Fowler, Lowden, Western Australia.

*3 copies**Two other reports by Pte Rusden**since this report was received**W. Rusden  
P1*

Dated at Sutton Veny, this 25th day of January 1918.

(Sgd) R.W. Rusden

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) J. Cant.

Captain.

16th Batt. A.I.F.

Fowler.R.A.D. Pte. NO.6021

K/A  
Missing Sept 26th 1917.

I saw him killed by a machine gun bullet on the 21st Sept, at Polygon Wood. He was buried close in a shell hole close to where he fell by a party from the coy, a couple of sticks were placed over the grave to mark it, I knew him in the Coy, he was on the Lewis Gun with me. I could not say where he came from.

Description. Age. 22. Height. 6 ft. Complexion. Fair. Medium Built.

Witness. Pte, Eggladen, H.E, NO.153. 16th Batt.

Taken at  
Fovant Mil Hospital.  
20-5-18.  
G.W.

S. Whitmee.  
NO.4. Command Depot  
Hurdcott.

P  
PI



Missing Draft.

20.11.17.

Miss Zoe Perkins

57 Epsomont Place

Brighton

about. 6021 Pte R. A. D. Fowler

16th Batt.

Havre

13th November.1917.

50th AUSTRALIANS

KERNICK, H.P. 2940  
Hepworth, J. 2680

(K. April 2nd.1917. Det. D/B. R. Enq.

Hepworth had ginger coloured hair, about 5ft. 9" in height and about 25 years of age. Kernick was fair, and about 26 or 27 years of age. They were both killed at Moreuil. I heard this in the Battalion from everyone.

Informant: M. O'Sullivan, 2710  
50th Australians, A.Co., III. Bn.  
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

OLT.

Oct.  
20 11. 17

57 Egremont Place  
Brighton  
Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>/17

Officer i/c Records  
Australian Red Cross

Dear Sir

Could you please give me  
any further information of  
6021 Pte R. A. Fowler  
- 16<sup>th</sup> Batt: A. I. I.

Headquarters have reported to me  
that he is "Missing in France since  
Sept 26<sup>th</sup>."

I have been visiting at Hospital  
here hoping to gain news from  
some of the wounded boys but up  
to the present time without success.

I should be most grateful for  
anything you could tell me of him

Yours faithfully  
Joe L. Perkins

57 Egremont Place  
Brighton  
Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>/17

The Secretary  
Australian Red Cross Society

Dear Madam  
I thank you very much  
for your kind letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> inst. &  
of your promise to advise me directly  
you have any news <sup>6/26</sup> of Mr R. A. Fowler.  
Should I hear from him <sup>16/10/17</sup> in  
Germany I will of course let you know  
at once.

Yours faithfully  
Joe Perkins

7th February 1918.

Miss Zoe Perkins  
57 Egremont Place  
Brighton,

Dear Madam,

We have received an unofficial report which confirms the sad news of the death of No. 6021 Pte. R.A.D. Fowler 16th Batt.A.I.F. from 6035 Pte. Leslie 16th Batt. in the 1st Australian Aux. Hospital Harefield, who says that when they went over the top at Ypres, he saw Pte. Fowler lying dead, as he thought, killed by a shell. Five men were lying together, 4 wounded and Pte. Fowler dead. Pte. Leslie did not see him buried, but as they held the line he feels sure it was done. He describes Pte. Fowler as of a fair size, fair complexioned and young, he knew him well, as both belonged to Donnybrook, W. Australia, and came over together in the Mitlaides.

We regret much to have such sad news to send you, but hope it may be some comfort to know that he was killed at once, and spared suffering.

With sincerest sympathy in your great sorrow,

Yours faithfully,

*D.M.B. for R.C.* Secretary.

6021  
Pte R. O. Fowler  
1st Bn  
57 Egremont Place  
Brighton  
Dec 10<sup>th</sup>/18

The Secretary  
Australian Red Cross Society

Dear Madam

Thank you exceedingly  
● for your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup>.  
I greatly appreciate the trouble  
you have taken in the matter &  
am deeply grieved the news is so  
sad.

I have written to Pte Leslie,  
hoping he will be able to give me  
further news of my friend.

● Thanking you for your kind  
sympathy.

Yours sincerely  
Joë Perkins

2nd March 1918

Miss Zoe Perkins  
57 Egremont Place,  
Brighton.

Dear Madam,

With reference to your enquiry concerning - 6021  
Pte R.A.D. Fowler, 16th Bn, A.I.F., we have received the following  
unofficial report from - 2709 Pte H. Rusden, 45th Bn, No. 1  
Command Depot, Sutton Ventry Wilts.

He states that he was one of a party, which assisted  
to bury Pte Fowler on September 26th 1917 and informant sent  
some of his personal belongings to his Mother Mrs. R. Fowler,  
Lowden, Western Australia. Pte Fowler is now officially reported  
Killed in action on 26-9-17 and we are continuing our enquiries  
in the hope of securing further details concerning his death and  
burial.

With our sincere sympathy,

Yours faithfully,

Secretary

KC

57 Egremont Place  
Dreighton  
March 5<sup>th</sup>/18.

The Secretary  
Australian Red Cross Society

Dear Madam

Thank you for your  
letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst, also for your  
kind sympathy.

Should you get any further  
details I should be most grateful  
to you.

Faithfully yours  
Glad Perkins

6021 Pl<sup>te</sup> R. A. Fowler. 16 Bltn



BUNBURY, *West Australia*

FEBY? 1st. 1918. 191

## ARTHUR NORTH,

House, Land, Commission and Insurance Agent.

Telephone 98.



Miss Vera Deakin,  
Secty.  
Red Cross  
LONDON.

*Ans.  
6.4.18*

*[Handwritten signature]*

Dear Miss Deakin,

May I ask the liberty of placing before your excellent society, an enquiry which I think that only your body of workers can solve, viz:-  
Private Robert, Alvin, Draper, Fowler, No. 6021, of the 19<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion, from Australia, who enlisted on Jan. 24th. 1916, left West Australia on Aug. 9th. 1916, for France, has been reported as missing, but I am sorry to say that his pocket book was found beside a ~~corpse~~, who was apparently blown to pieces, and beyond recognition, and his mate who found the pocket book at once decided that the corpse was his, (and perhaps rightly too) but I may state that his companion whose name is Private H.W. Rushden, of the 45th. Battalion, was a complete stranger to Pte. Fowler's, parents and relatives. Still Pte. Rushden thought that it would be quite right to let his people know, and he therefore sent his pocket book home, stating that he buried Pte. Fowler, (who may or may not have been him) but Pte. Fowler has been ~~xxxx~~ missing ever since.

Now this is all the report his parents have had. There has been no official report, to his people of his being killed, and the suspense is terrible to think of.

Now Dear Miss Deakin, do you think your splendid Association, could find out any particulars as to this, that is a confirmation as to his being killed, or if he is a prisoner in Germany.

He has never written home since the news came to hand, of his being missing, ~~xxx~~

I am writing the Commonwealth bank ~~xx~~ at Perth to ascertain if his allotment has been stopped, as that is the institution which collects it. The strange part is that his parents have been notified of his being missing, but not of his being killed. I will write you immediately, on a receipt from the bank as to whether his allotment has been stopped or not.

Thanking you in anticipation, and trusting that you will have a successful issue to this enquiry,

I beg to remain,

Yours fraternally

*Arthur North*

Auctioneer,  
Sworn Valuator,  
House & Land Agent.

The most Reliable  
Agency in the  
South West.

AGENT FOR  
The Alliance Assurance  
Co., Ltd.  
Fire and Marine.

HOUSES AND LAND  
FOR SALE  
on the Best Time-  
payment System  
ever known.

CALL ON ME  
before going elsewhere  
and I will give you  
SATISFACTION.

Don't forget the Address—  
WELLINGTON STREET,  
BUNBURY,  
near Railway Station.



*Reported missing  
Sept. 25. 1917*

25<sup>th</sup> General  
Hospital

France -

8-3-18

Jan

ans.  
13.3.18

slips

Dear Mrs Beed -

Again I am going to

Trouble you -

Could you give me any news  
of my cousin - Pte R A W  
Fowler No 21 16<sup>th</sup> Bath A.I.F reported  
missing - next of Kin - Robt  
Fowler Lowden West Australia.

You will see I have now  
moved on to France.

Sorry to be such a trouble

Yours faithfully

E. G. Russell -

25<sup>th</sup> General Hospital

France

France

Sister E.D. Russell,  
25th General Hospital,  
B. E. F.

14th March, 1918.

Dear Madam,

Your letter of 8th inst., has been handed to us by Mrs. Reed for our attention. With reference to your enquiry for - 6055 Pte. R.A.D. POWLER, 16th Battalion, A.I.F. - We very much regret to inform you that he is now officially reported killed in action on 26-9-17, having previously been reported Missing on that date.

We are forwarding the following unofficial reports given by men of his Battalion, 6055 Pte. R.A. Leslie made the following statement:- "I saw R. Powler lying dead at Ypres when we went over the top, killed I think by a shell."

2709 Pte. H.A. Rusden, states:- "I sent the following extract in a letter to Pte. R.A.D. Powler's mother, "Enclosed you will find a pocket book of your son's who was killed on 26th Sept. I found his body on the Battlefield in Belgium and buried him where he lay and marked his grave with a cross."

We are doing our utmost to obtain further particulars of Pte. Powler's death and burial and will advise you as soon as we succeed.

Regretting we should have to forward such sad news and assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

*M. Ryan*

8th April 1918.

Arthur North, Esq.,  
Wellington Street  
Bunbury,  
West Australia.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your inquiry of - 1-2-18 for, -

6021 Pte R.A.D. Fowler, 16th Btn, A.I.F.,

We much regret to inform you that he is now officially reported killed in action on 26-9-17, having previously been reported "Missing" on that date. There has never been any trace of him as a prisoner of war; from this, as well as from the unofficial reports of men in his battalion, we fear there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the report of his death. All the information we have been able to obtain, concerning Pte Fowler (or any we may yet obtain) is sent to our office in the - National Mutual Buildings, St. Georges Terrace, Perth, with which we are in constant communication both by cable and letter. By applying to this office you will receive all possible news without the delay that application to England necessarily entails.

Regretting we are unable to send you more satisfactory information, and assuring Pte Fowler's people of our deepest sympathy,

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY

*L.B.*  
*Miss Ryan.*

22-4-18

6085 Pte J. Robinson

St. Bearer

C. Coy.

16. A. Y. 7.

6021 R. A. S. Fowler

B. Luf. B. A. H.

A. Y. 7.

14/a. 26/9/17

h. h. c

22-4-18

(20. 1. 18)

L/Cpl F. White

C 2<sup>nd</sup> Balt. H. Q. R. P. 1. 7

B. 1. 7

A. 1. 7

abt.

6333

pt. F. Ritchie

2<sup>nd</sup> Balt. H. Q. R. A. 1. 7

C

K. 1. 11. 17

R

2. 2. 18.  
9. 1. 13.

14th May, 1918.

Sister E.D. Russell,  
25th General Hospital,  
B.E.F.

Dear Madam,

We beg to inform you that we have received another unofficial report respecting - 6021 Pte. R.A.D.FOWLER, 16th Battalion, A.I.F. - which confirms the information already sent you.

2709 Pte.H.W. Ruoden, 45th Battalion, A.I.F. lately at the 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, stated that he did not see Pte. Fowler, killed but saw his dead body next day. Pieces of shrapnel had wounded him in the head, death evidently being instantaneous and Pte. Ruoden collected all his personal belongings and sent them to his Mother in N. Australia. This happened near Zonnebeke on Oct 1917. Pte. Ruoden helped to bury him where he was killed and to mark the grave with a cross bearing his name, unit and number.

We are continuing our enquiries and as soon as further details are obtained we shall advise you. With assurance of our renewed sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

7. J. G.  
SECRETARY.

Sister E.E. Russell,  
26th General Hospital,  
S.E.F.

30th May 1918.

Dear Madam,

We regret to inform you that we have received another unofficial report respecting 6021 Pte. R.A.D. Fowler, 16th. Battalion, A.I.F., which confirms the official report that he was killed in action. 153 Pte. H. E. Eggleston of same unit, recently at No. 4 Command Depot, Hurdcott, stated that he saw Pte. Fowler killed by a machine gun bullet at Polygon Wood. He was buried in a shell hole near where he fell, by a party from the Company and the grave was marked. Pte. Eggleston knew him well in the Company and describes him as about 22, 6ft in height, fair and of medium build.

We have now closed our enquiry as we are unlikely to obtain more definite details, but should any further particulars be received we will at once advise you.

With our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

Miss

Secretary.

*F. J. G.*



Miss Zoe Perkins,  
57 Egremont Place,  
Brighton.

30th May 1918.

Dear Madam,

We regret to inform you that we have received another unofficial report respecting 6021 Pte. R.A.D. Fowler, 16th. Battalion, A.I.F., which confirms the official report that he was killed in action.

155 Pte. H. E. Eggleston, of same unit, recently at No. 4 Command Depot, Hurdott, stated that he saw Pte. Fowler killed by a machine gun bullet at Polygon Wood. He was buried in a shell hole near where he fell, by a party from the Company and the grave was marked. Pte. Eggleston knew him well in the Company, and describes him as about 22, 6ft in height, fair and of medium build.

We have now closed our enquiry as we are unlikely to obtain more definite details but should any further particulars be received we will at once advise you.

With our sincere sympathy,

Yours faithfully,

Miss

Secretary. *F. J. G.*

57 Egremont Place  
Brighton  
May 31<sup>st</sup>/18.

The Secretary  
Australian Red Cross Society

Dear Madam

May I express my  
sincere gratitude for all your  
kindness in the many enquiries  
you have made on behalf of my  
friend Mr. Fowler. 6021. 16<sup>th</sup>

You have been unrepining in  
your efforts and I greatly  
appreciate it.

Again thanking you.  
Faithfully Yours  
J. E. F. Lewis