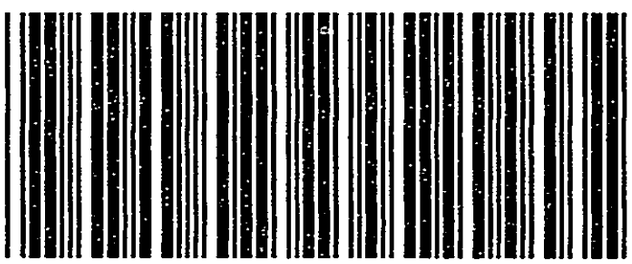
Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War
1DRL/0428

6034 Private
John Alexander Burns

25th Battalion



0641105H

Miss. Deakin. Hon. Secty.
Australian Branch, Red Cross. Society
Inquiry Bureau,
54. Victoria St. S. W.
London
England.

Dear Miss. Deakin

I undertake in sending you a photo of my son 19603 Pte. J.A. Burns late of 24th Batt.n 17th Reinforcements 6th Brigade reported wounded & missing since 3rd. 5. 17 Having been advised by Red Cross that my boy was seen taking to the dressing Station by Stretcher Bearers suffering from Shell Shock. I consider it possible his mind his blank & in some Hospital. assuming this to be correct the enclosed Phato. may assist & expidite in discovering him, I fully realise the burden placed on our valueable red Cross. Societys and at the time trust I am not making same a further burden on my case, & may give ~~only~~ every assistance I can, In forwarding you this photo taken in England I Trust it will assist in a discovery.

I am

19th Nov. 1917

Faithfully yours
Mrs A. Burns.
High. Street.
Waratah
Sydney
(Australia)

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ECHELON. 1766/6/14

C O P Y

Statement made by No.6026 Pte ANDREWS C.V. 24th Btn

re No.6034 Pte BURNS J.A. 24th Btn
Wd and Missing 3.5.17

I can give no definite information concerning the fate of No 6034 Private Burns 24th Btnt I heard from Private A. MORRIS B.Coy, 24th Battalion, that Private Burns was in England suffering from shell shock.

S
2 4th Bn

Written Pte. Morris 30.11.17.

Dated at SUTTON VENY this 12th day of November 1917.

(Sgd) C.V. ANDREWS.

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) R. DOOLEY
Lieut and Adjt
No.1 Command Dept

24th A.I.F. J. A. BURNS, 6034.

W.&M. 3.5.17.

At Bullecourt on May 4th in O.G.1 Trecnh I was with him all day. He got hit by a shrapnel bullet in the back and lay all day long on a stretcher in the trench. They got him back to the D/S at night. I was told by Hourn (Same Bat.) that Burns died at the D/S. and was buried there. This was near Vaux. He was a fair, medium sized man. I knew him well and came over from Australia with him.

Reference: C. Bice, 6168. 24th Bat: A.I.F.

No.6 General, Rouen. 13.11.17.

ABC.

S

Written Pte. Hourn 21.11.17.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ECHELON. 1788/6/14

(COPY)

Statement made by No.6157 Pte Williamson R. 24th Btn

re No.6034 Pte Burns J.A. 24th Btn
Wd &,Missing 3.5.17

I saw No.6034 Pte Burns J.A.,C. Coy 24th Battalion, wounded badly in right side and neck with shrapnel in the barb wire on May 3rd 1917, at Bullecourt. In my opinion he was fatally wounded.

Dated at Verne Citadel this 15th day of October, 1917.

(Sgd) R. Williamson

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) H.F. Arnall.
Major.
2nd Pioneer Btn

Australian Draft. 14.1.18

Mrs A. Burns
High Street
Waratah
Sydney -

about 6034 Pte J.A. Burns
24th Batt.

A.I.F. 24. BURNS, J.A. 6034.

W. & M. May 3rd 1917.

Burns - initials J.A. - got shell shock just before we hopped over at Bullecourt on May 3rd. A shell buried him before we started. I helped to get him out. He was shaking all over. Some of the S/Bs were with him and I do not know what finally became of him. The Capt ordered him to be taken out. Burns came from Armadale on the Northern Line N.S.W. near Maitland, and his number was 6034.

Inf. Pte G.V. Andrews. 6026. D. XIII.
54 Gen. Hosp.
BOULOGNE. 12. 10.17.

JT.

Havre 13th October.1917.

24th AUSTRALIANS BURNS, J.A. 6034

W. & M. May 3rd.1917.

I knew Pt. Jack A. Burns. He came in the 17th to 24th reinforcement with me from Sydney on October 31st,1915 in the "Argyllshire". His people live in Randwick, N.S.W. I was told at the Battalion by a boy who had just come from England (I cannot remember his name) that Burns was in Hospital in England.

Informant: Pt. J. Littlefield, 6085
24th Australians, D.Co., XIV.Fltn.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

..M..

Havre 1st October,1917.

24th AUSTRALIANS BURNS, J.A. 6034

W. & H. May 3rd.1917.

I know him; his initials and number are as stated. I was told about 6 weeks ago by t. Regan, S.J. of the 24th Batt., A.Cc., now with the Battalion, that he saw Burns in a Hospital in England; he did not mention where.

Informant: Corpl. Bennett, C. 6035
24th Australians, C.Co., M.I.Pltn.
Havre Hospital.

L. de D.

Written Pt Regan
12-10-17

Havre 27th August 1917

24th AUSTRALIANS BURNS, J.A. 6034

W/M. 3rd May 1917

Burns was in A. Company. He came across with me in the 17th Reinforcements to the 24th Btn. (transferred from the 19th Btn. in Sydney to the 17th Reinforcements). His name was Jack, and he was a clerk from Kensington, N.S.W. He was wounded on 5th May, 1917, at Bullecourt and sent to Hospital. I have heard that he has written from Hospital in England to one of the boys of the Battalion.

Informant: Pte. A.E.Robinson 6119
24th Australians B. Co. 5th Pltn
Australian Base, Rouelles

RDH

S.

No trace A. Ludia 31.8.17

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ECHELON. 1788/6/14

(COPY)

Statement made by No.6194 Pte McIntosh C.H. 24th Btn

re No.6034 Pte Burns J.A. 24th Btn
Missing & Wd.3.517

I cannot give any definite information re fate of Pte Burns J.A. 24th Btn. I have heard from friends of his that he was killed on 3.5.17

Dated at Perham Downs this 6th day of September 1917.

(Sgd) E.H. McIntosh.

Statement made and signed, before me (Sgd) R. Dooley.

S.

not sent on

24th Battn.
B.Coy.
A.I.F.

Burns.
J. A. 6034

"Wounded & Missing 3.5.17"

I saw him wounded near Zillebeke. He was caught by shell fragments in the stomach and right leg. He was able to speak and asked us to make a stretcher out of our rifles and carry him out.to the dressing station, but there was a heavy barrage on at the time, and we could not possibly get any of our casualties out. The S.Bearers were unable to get to us on account of the snipers, and we had to leave them for the time being. He was badly wounded and had no hope of living. I do not know what became of him and I cannot refer to anyone for particulars. I knew him very well.

Witness:-
Pte.M.M.McMahon 5065
24th Battn.A.Coy.4th Pltn.
3rd Aust.Aux.Hospital.
Dartford.

W.Oman.

London.
2.11.17.

S.

1756/6/14.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ECHELON

C O P Y

Statement made by No. 6168 Pte Bice, C. 24th Bn

re 6034 Pte Burns, J.A. 24th Bn
Wounded and Missing 3.5.17.

I saw 6034 Pte Burns J.A. on 3.5.17. He was wounded then and awaiting the arrival of the stretcher bearers. I saw him taken charge of by the Stretcher Bearers and heard later that he had died, but cannot give definite information as to time or place of death. This occurred during the heavy fighting near Bullecourt.

Dated at 3rd A.A.H. Dartford this 19th day of December, 1917.

(Sgd.) C. Bice, Pte.

Statement made and signed before me.

(Sgd.) T.T. Brown, Mjr.
No. 3. Aust. Aux'ly.Hsp.
Dartford.

A.I.F. 24th Btn

BURNS
John Alex: 6064

"Wded & Missing-"

Killed in action 3-5-17 - previously reported Missing & Wounded

Cert. by A.I.F.Hqrs 8-1-18.

S

London
17-1-18

Havre 3rd November.1917.

24th AUSTRALIANS BURNS, J.A. 6034

W. & H. May 3rd.1917.

I knew Pt. Jack Burns of A.Co. He came from Sydney in the 17th to 24th reinforcement in the "Argyllshire" on November 1st,1916. He was a Motor Mechanic, and came from Kensington, N.S.W. Pt. Wm. Williamson, his chum, in A. Co., told me that Burns was killed at Bullecourt in May,1917. Williamson was wounded after, and went away to Hospital.

Informant: Pt. C.S. Walker, 6153
24th Australians, A.Co., III.Pltn.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

RDK.

Written Pt. Williamson 12.11.17.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ECHELON. / 30.11.17 K 1788/6/14

C O P Y

Statement made by No.5065 Pte McMahon W.M. 24th Btn

re No.6034 Pte BURNS J.A. 24th Btn
Wd and Missing 3.5.17

Private Burns was wounded in the leg and in the stomach during our attack at Bullecourt on 3rd May last I saw him fall into a shell hole, I did not see or hear anything of him after that. We had to retire from the spot where he fell which then became part of No Man's Land I cannot say whether he was seriously wounded or not.

Dated at 3rd A.A.H. DARTFORD this 26th day of November 1917.

(Sgd) W. McMAHON

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) T.T. BROWN.
Major.

C

A.I.F. 24. BURNS, J.A. 6034.

K. May. 3rd 1917. Det. D/B.

J.A.Burns was I believe in C. Coy. but I did not know his pltn. His number was about 6034. He was fair, clean shaven, about 5ft 4 and about 26 and single. I believe he came from Northcote, near Melbourne, I never heard he had been killed on 3rd May. I saw him last on the morning of the 4th of Oct. at Ypres. We went into action that day and I heard he had got wounded. I was told by some of the boys in his coy. that he was in England in hospital and that he was afterwards boarded for Australia. I was told this just before Christmas. I feel sure that Burns could not have been wit the battn. on 3rd May as his reinforcement whose number starts with 6000 did not join us till after that date.

Not sent on.

Inf. E. G. Gladstone, 6315, D. Coy. runner.
No.3. Can. Gen.
BOULOGNE. 15.3.18.

NOTE. In all previous books up to and including the January book J. A. Burns is shown AGL as W. & M. May 3rd, 1917. In Feb. & March books he is shown as killed on that date.

AGL

Notrace H.I. 4 cept Burns - 277 24th Batt. ad. Cambridge Hospital a

Absentist - 29-10-17

J.S.W. Thigh. dis. Fulbury 20-11-17.

A.I.F. 24th Btn

BURNS
J.A. 6034

"WOUNDED"

Previously repirted wounded 3-5-17 now Missing and wounded 3-5-17
Cent. by A.I.F. Headquarters 21-6-17.

S.

London
2-7-18

24th Battn.
D. Coy.
A. I. F.

Burns.
J. A. 6034

"Wounded & Missing 3.5.17"

I saw him being taken to the dressing station at Bullecourt with shell shock, which was about a ½ a mile away, but could not say if they reached there as the Germans were shelling very heavily. Despite the heavy shelling no ground was lost. I knew him well, by his Christian name, which was Jack. He was the only one by the name of Burns in our Battn. I also knew him by his number. Do not know of anyone who could supply further information.

Witness:-
Pte. C.H.McIntosh 6194
24th Battn. D.Coy. 15th Pl.
3rd Aust.Aux.Hospital.
Dartford.

W.Oman.

London.
13.8.17.

S.

24th Batt. A.I.F.

BURNS J.A. 6034.
"C" Coy., No 9 Platoon.

" W & M. May 3rd.,'17. "

" I saw Burns badly wounded in the neck and body, by shrapnel, just as we reached the barb wire of the German front line at Bullecourt, on May 3rd. He was very badly wounded, and I do not think he could live very long. In fact, I have since heard from others, that he was afterwards seen lying dead. He came from Armidale, N.S.W. and came over on the S.S. Argylle shire. He was related to me. "

Description. Hgt 5ftIO. Dark complexion. Slight build.

Witness. Williamson A. 6I57.
24th Batt. "C" Coy.

Taken at Verne Citadel.
Portland. S.W.
September 2Ist.,'I7.

S. Whitmee.
No 4 Command Depot,
Codford.

S

12-10-17

Pte S. J. REGAN

A. Coy. 24 Batt

A I F

B.E.F.

about

6034 Pte J. A BURNS

24 Batt A I F

W/M 3-5-17

13.10.17
A.T.B.

(12. 11. 17)

Pte. W. Williamson

D

C A' Coy.

24th Baltn. A.I.F.

No. 2 Commonwealth Depot ~~B. F. F.~~
mounty video camp
Weymouth

abt.

6034 Pte. J. A. Burns

24th Baltn. A.I.F.

C W/M. 3-5-17

12.11.17
a.n.B.

(21. 11. 17.

Pte. Hourn

O 24th Battn. A. 9. 7.

B. 9. 7.

E

art.

6034 Pte. J. A. Burns

24th Battn. A. 9. 7.

C W/M. 3-5-17.

22. 11. 17.
A. 2. B.

30.11.17.

Pte. A. Morris
O/B Coy.
24th Battn. A.I.F.

6034 Pte. J. A. Burns
24th Battn. A.I.F.
W/M. 3-5-17
C.

UV
8-12-17
A.I.B.

No 3. A. G. H.
B. E. F.
Dec. 13' France

Dear Miss Deakin -

I have been asked to make enquiries for Pte. J. A. Burns. No 6834. "W" 24th Battalion. A. I. F. Bc. nH. reported wounded and missing on May 3rd last. I had a heart broken letter from his mother in Australia saying that she had enquired through the Red X out there -

but could hear nothing -
She had got it firmly
fixed into her head that
the boy is in hospital somewhere
suffering from loss of
memory -
The Mothers address is
Mrs A Burns.
High Street.
Waratah.
Newcastle.
Australia -
She enclosed her sons
photo which I could forward
if it is of any use.
Thank you so much for the
arrests about Rathbone - I
was able to have it on to
his friend - Sorry to
have to bother you yet
again -
Yours sincerely
Nancy Bridwood

Harnett Street—
Waratah, Newcastle
N. S. W. Australia
Oct. 26, 1918.

Dear Miss Chorley.

Could you please make enquiries for me to see if my son Pte. J. A. Burns No. 6034. 24. Battalion is a prisoner of war in Germany. Pte Burns was reported wounded and missing at Bullecourt on May the 3. 1917. and after being reported wounded and missing for nearly twelve months was then reported killed in action. Pte Ballenger being a prisoner of war in Camp ep 9. O. 32. No. 63680. had a group of boys photo taken the camps was Friedrichsfeld Germany he sent the photo out to his Father and asked him to have it published so other parents might recognise their Boys and to try assist my son.

2

was one on the men, there was 42. photagraphed ~~alth~~ all together, but of course he may have been removed to a different Camp by the time this reaches you, I was speaking to L. C. Owen now returned to Sydney. he said he was captured in the first Battle. of Bullecourt. he gave me you name and said you would do all you possible could for me. I do hope and trust you will have good news to send to me, I now remain your sincerly. Mrs. A Burns

Harriett street
Waratah
Newcastle
N.S.W.
Australia

December 18th. 1917.

Miss Nancy Birdwood,
No. 3. A.G.H.
B.E.F. France.

Dear Madam,

In answer to your enquiry for 6034, Pte. J.A.Burns 24th. Battn. who is reported wounded and missing 3.5.17. We have some unofficial information from members of the unit.

6157 Pte. A. Williamson, 24th. Battn. says," I saw Burns badly wounded in the neck and body, by shrapnel, just as we reached the last wire of the German Front Line at Bullecourt, on May 3rd. He was badly wounded and I do not think he could live long. In fact, I have since heard from others, that he was afterwards seen lying dead. He came from Arundale N.S.W. and came over on the S.S. "Argileshire". He was related to me".

In a statement made by 6026 Pte. G.V.Andrews, he says:" Burns J.A. got shell shock just before we hopped over at Bullecourt on May 3rd. A shell buried him before we started. I helped to get him out. He was shaking all over. Some of the Stretcher Bearers were with him and I don't know what finally became of him. The Capt. ordered him to be taken out. Burns came from Armadale on the Northern Line, N.S.W. near Maitland."

Another man, 3066 Pte. H.H. Mc.Mahon, 24th. Battn. says:" I saw him wounded near Zillebeke. He was caught by shell fragments in the stomach and right leg. He was able to speak and asked us to make a stretcher out of our rifles and carry him out to the dressing Station, but there was a heavy barrage on at the time, and we could not possibly get any of our casualties out. The Stretcher Bearers were unable to get to us on account of the snipers and we had to leave them for thetime being. He was badly wounded and had no hope of living.

I do not know what became of him and I cannot refer to any one for particulars. I knew him very well."

6168, Pte. C. Bice, 24th. Battn. A.I.F. reports "At Bullecourt on May 4th. in O.G. 1 Trench. I was with him all day. He got hit by a shrapnel bullet in the back and lay all day long on a stretcher in the trench. They got him back to the Dressing Station at night. I was told by Hourn, same Battalion that Burns died at the Dressing Station and was buried there. This was near Vaux. I knew him well and came over from Australia with him. We have written to Pte. Hourn and directly we get his reply will send the news on to you. All this news has been sent to his Mother through our Sydney Office and we are still continuing our enquiries though we fear we may get little more at this late date.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

CB.

6034 Pte J.A. Burns
24 Bn.

Harriett street
Waratah Newcastle
N.S.W Australia
Feb 3, 1919

Dear Miss Deakin

Just received your welcome letter.
Thanks very much for the trouble and interest you have taken in trying to trace my missing son Pte J. A. Burns. I feel as if I cannot thank the red cross enought for what they have done for me. I am a worker for the Waratah red cross rise turn out a lot of work but feel we cannot do enought. Dear Friend I have made no mistake in the photo it is my son. I have compared it with others I have too of his mates Pte, McIntosh & Pte Pountney are hear staying with me both recognised him they are both in the 24 Battalion but I must not trouble you any more. only wait now and trust in God to heal my broken heart. Again thanking you & remain yours truly Mrs. A Burns
Waratah,