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

958 Sergeant
William James Best

33rd Battalion



0370104F

33rd Battn.
A.I.F.

BEST.
W.J. 958.

"Killed in Action 10-8-18"

He belonged to C.Company. in which he was very popular. He was a big fellow over 6 feet high, a farmer by occupation and he came from N.S.Wales. (Tambar Springs.I think) On the morning of the 10th August 1918 we were marching up to relieve those in the line when a shell came over and got Best and Harrison, both were killed instantly. Harrison was a Lancashire man but his mother lives at Maly.N.S.Wales. I don' know his number. I was told that both were buried in the same grave, next day, at Francourt. I know of no one who actually saw the burial.

Informant:- Pte.E.C.Rodgers.3371.
33rd Battn.C.Co. 11 Pl.
Ward B.19.DARTFORD.

J.V.M.Kennedy.
London.
12-10-18.
M.I.S.

S.

[redacted]

33rd Battn.
A.I.F.

BEST.
W.J. 956.

"Killed in Action 10-8-18"

He was in C.Company. I knew him well. There was no other Best in our Company. He was fair and about 5ft 10 in height, but I cannot say how old. We were near Villers Bretonneux, on our way up to the stunt at about 11.p.m. when a shell killed Best and Harrison. I do not know the latter's number. I was one of a party told off to bury them at Francourt where the casualty occurred. It was not a regular cemetery but just in the open beside the road. We placed his rifle at his head in each case, and on it being the identification disc. That was all we had time to do.

Informant:- W.J.Boyle. 1790.
33rd Battn. C. 3/B.
Ward B.31.DARTFORD.

J.V.M.Kennedy.
London.
16-10-18.
M.I.S.

S.

33rd Battn.
A.I.F.

BEST
W.J. 958

"Killed 10-8-18"

On the night of the 11th August,1918, near the village of Proyart, Best was hit in the back of the head by a lump of shell and killed instantly. He was buried just outside Proyart, on the field, and a head stone was put over his grave, about 17-9-18. His christian names were William, John. He was a Sgt. in C.Coy., and was my Pltn. Sgt. 11th Pltn. Ground was held.

Eye-witness:- Yes.
Description:- Tall, about 6', about 22 years, light hair, clean shaven.

Informant. Burke. Lt.Francis J. (accurate)
33rd Battn., C.Coy. 11th Pltn.
3rd London Gen.Hpl.,
WANDSWORTH.

E.Liddell
14-10-18
London
23-10-18

S.

[redacted]

33rd Bttn..
A.I.F.

BEST.
W.J. 958.

"Killed 10-8-18."

He was in C.Coy, 11th Pltn, I knew him well. There was no other "Best" in C.Coy. He was about 5'11", fair, and 24 years of age. On Aug. 10th I was, we were going up to relieve at 10 p.m. at a little place called Proyart which is near Grancourt when Best was killed by a shell - the wound was in the head. He died instantly. I know nothing of the burial personally but we heard at the time that he was buried with others by the road side close by and that crosses were erected. No reference.

Informant:- 5025 G.H.Green,
33rd Bttn. C.Coy,
12th Pltn. A.I.F.
Aldwych. 14-10-17.

W.H.L.
London.
26-10-18.
J.T.W.

S.

Havre. 24th. October. 1918.

33rd. Australians. Best, W. J. 958.

K. August. 10/1918. Dets. D/B.

I knew Sergeant Bill Best, C. 11 ?. he was an original man. I was about five yards from him on August 10th. 1918, dark, about midnight, when he was killed instantly by shell; his body was taken back for burial. Private. R. G. McLachlan, Clerk in C. Company's Orderly Room, has the Map Reference of the Grave.

Inf:- Private. E. B. Jolly. 453.
33rd. Australians. B. (att. to C at the time)
Australian Conv. Camp.
Rouelles.

RDM.

CP.

A.I.F. 33rd Battn. BEST
W.J. 958

"Killed 10/8/18."

Best was Sergeant in C. Coy, his number was 958. At 11.25 p.m. on the 11th August in front of Bray south of the river. I saw him killed outright, hit by shrapnel head and body. He was next to me. The ground was held and there would be opportunity for burial. I was wounded by the same shell which killed him. Sergt. Best came from the borders of Queensland and New South Wales, The ground was held. Description:- about 28 - single - fair. Bald.

Informant:- 2048 P.C. Corsie,
33rd A.I.F.
C. Coy,
11 Platoon,
University Hospital,
Southampton.

Home address:-
Bellavista,
Mount Druid,
Sydney.

G.R.B.
13.10.18.
London
11.11.18.
H.G.

S.

A.I.F.33rd Bttn.
C.Coy.

BEST.
William James.958

Killed in Action.10.8.18.

Buried Memorial Plot Heath Cemetery. Sheet 62D.Q29.d.6.4. Plot 8.
Row K. Grave 1~~2~~0.
Cert by Captain Spedding's List.23.7.19. Sheet 134.

London.
29.7.19.

S.