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

3245 Private
John Alfred Bickford
(Harold Ascot)

4th Pioneer Battalion



0370904N

Havre

2st April 1918.

4th Aust. Pioneers.

Bickford J.A. No. 3245

K. 29th Septr 1917. Det D/B.

He was in A. Co. II Pltn. I know him very well, we had been together since 1916. He came from S. Australia, where he was a butcher. On the 29th Septr we were on Anzac Ridge and he and I were S/Bs. We were waiting in a shell hole - a shell dropped clean on his back - smashing him up. We buried him about ten yards away in the open; a few others were buried around; a rough cross was put up to him. I could find the place.

Inf:- Pte C. Cavanagh. No.1934. S/B.
4th Aust. Pioneers.
Havre Hospital.

HPG.

A

[redacted]

A.I.F. 4th Pioneers (HQ)
not 60th Battn

BICKFORD (HQ)
J.A. 3245

"Wounded-July-Aug"

No report
Cert. by A.I.F.Headquarters 29-8-16 - 9-10-16 - 1-11-16 & 24-1-17

Well - with unit
Cert. by letter from Adj: 4th Pion: Btn 26-3-17

H.

London
30-3-17

Havre 11th March 1918.

4th Aust. Pioneers, Bickford J.A. No. ~~3345~~ 3245

K. 29th Septr 1917. Det D/S.

I knew Bickford since August 1916; he was medium height, stout, fair going grey, about 40, and was a S/B. On the 29th Septr the Battn was at Ypres, and on fatigue, fixing the road at Anzac dugout. About 12 o'clock at night heavy shelling was on, and I saw Bickford hit. Death was instantaneous. I saw him carried out, and saw him buried about 10 yards from where he was killed between Carters Point and Anzac Blockhouse. I was [redacted] put on another sector, and did not see the grave.

Inf:- Sgt Geo. Watt No.1750.
4th Aust. Pioneers. A.Co.
Australian Camp.
Rouelles.

EM.

A

[redacted]

AUST. PIONEERS. 4. BICKFORD, J.A. 3245.

K. September 29th, 1917.

I saw him killed by a shell which landed on the Menin Road when he was marching up with No. II pl. to relieve us who were in No. I. He was killed outright and his body was taken back and buried behind the main D/S at Menin Road. Sgt. ~~Shearing~~ took his paybook. I have seen his grave and ~~there~~ is a cross up over him. He was short, about 5 ft ~~5-1/2~~, 5-1/2, middle aged with a slight grey moustache.

CGP.

Reference:- H.G.Keane. 1883.
"Stad Antwerpen".

Calais
5.4.18.

Walter Shearing
16-4-18

BICKFORD.
J.A. 3245.

A.I.F. 4. Pioneers
late 10th. Btn.

Wrongly verified in March 1917 in mistake for 3245. Bicket, Matthew Dunlop. 60th. Bn. late 6th.Bn. 11 Rifts.

Confusion added to 1) by identical numbers.
2) by Bickett been entered by A.H.Qrs. as Beckett on I.B. lists supplied to this office. As this mistake occurred on the I.B's it is probable the verification card at this stage was incorrect.

A.M.W.B
27.9.19.

[redacted]

4th Pioneers,
A.I.F. late 10 Bde

BICKFORD,
J.A. 3245

"Killed in Action 22.9.17."

Re 3245 Pte.J.A.Bickford. With regrets have to inform you this man was killed on date as stated. Buried by members of his own Coy. on the field also erecting a cross to mark the grave. Map location of grave was forwarded to the Wounded and Missing bureau. by the Batt Burial Officer . Next of kin also was communicated with by O.C. of his Coy notifying them of his death .

Letter from:- Sgt. J.Shearing,
4th S. Batn.
22.4.18.

London.
1.5.18.

A.

3243

J. A. Bickford

4 Pioneers

Killed 1918
30-4-18
22

4

O/C's reply 26.3.17. Inquiry sent in error owing to confusion of 3245 Bickett 60 Bttn "wounded July 1916" with 3245 Bickford 4 Pioneers ✓

Pte. J. A. Bickford 3245-

see under Pioneers

Pte. P. M. Alton. 3466.

Pioneers

[redacted]

to O/C. 4 Pioneers ✓

Inquiry sent in error owing to confusion of
3245 Bickett 60 Bttn wounded July 1916 with
3245 Bickford 4 Pioneers

Pte J. A. Bickford 3245 4th Pioneers

see under

Pte Percy Giles Alton 3466 4th Pioneers

17.3.17 } Correct date
19.3.17 }

9c.

Sgt. SHEARING

4 Aust. Pioneers

B.E.F.

about

3245

J.A. BICKFORD

4 Aust. Pioneer Batt.

K 29.9.18

Glv.
16-4-18

13th February -7.

No. 3245.
Pte. J. A. Bickford.
4th Australian Pioneers.
B. E.F.

Dear Sir,

We have received a cable from our Melbourne Office inquiring about you. There is no official report that you are ill or a casualty so we hope that you are well and with your unit. Will you please write at your earliest convenience and let us know if this is so? We shall then cable a reply to Australia giving information about you and how you are.

With all good wishes.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary. PM for AC