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

2529 Private
Harold Stanley Butler

35th Battalion



0660508P

35th Battn.
A. Coy.
A. I. F.

Butler.
H. S. 2529.

"Killed 25.5.17"

I saw his grave the day he was buried marked with a cross, his name number and battalion at Ploegstreet Wood. He was killed the first day he was in the line. I did not see the casualty, but was told he was killed by a shell, death instantaneous. Cannot refer to anyone for further information.

Witness:-
Pte. E. P. Holland. 2597.
35th Battn. D.Coy.
3rd Aust. Aux. Hospital.
Dartford.

W, Oman.

London.
26.7.17.

S.

Havre 25th July, 1917.

35th AUSTRALIANS BUTLER, H.S. 2829

K. 25.8.17. Det. D/B.

I knew him well. He was in our Co. His number is as stated but I am not sure of the initials. He came from Newcastle in N.S.W. He was attached to the Engineers at the time of his death, and thirteen of them were going up into the front line about the 23rd May, when a shell killed him and five others. I was told this by my mates who buried him the next day behind Hill 63 with several others. I know nothing further.

Informant: Pte. H. McKinnon, 2631
35th Australians, A Co., 1st Plm.;
Amb. Train, Havre.

L de D.

35th Battn.
A.Coy.
A. I. F.

Butler,
H. S. 2329.

"Killed 25.6.17"

I saw him killed with a Minenwefer shell burst in the trench killing him instantly. I was within 10 yards of him at the time. Casualty at the Only Way Trench Ploegstreet Wood. He was buried near Waverly Dump I saw his grave two days after burial, it was marked with a cross, his name, number and battalion.

Witness:-
Pte. F.J.Nicholls 152.
35th Battn. A.Coy.
2nd Aust. Inf. Hospital,
Dartford.

W, Cmsn.

London.
26.7.17.

2.

Havre 4th August.1917.

35th AUSTRALIANS BUTLER, H.S. 2529

K. May 25th. 1917. Det. D/S.

He was in A. Co., XI. Pltn. He came from N.S.W. I had only known him two or three days as he had just come to the Company from the Base. He came with the 5th reinforcement to the 35th Battalion. There was no other man of this name in the Company. He was a married man. I saw his grave in Plugstreet Wood between Regent Street and Harley Street. There is a Cross with his name, number and battalion on it. I could point out the place.

Informant: Pt. F.T. Harvey 107
35th Australians, A.Co., II.Pltn
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

CHR.

S

35th A. I. F.

Butler, H.S. 2529,
A. Company

(K. May 25/17.)

"On May 23rd/17 at Ploogsteert Wood, about a fortnight before the big advance on June 7, a big shell burst and killed Butler, Forster, who had been a schoolmaster, Leeson (a dairy cart driver) also Bob Bates and Edgar Smith. They had shortly returned from Hospital inEngland and had missed some of the training the others had had, so a Pioneer Officer was sent round with them and one shell came and fetched the lot. This was seen by Pte 2576, Ewing, George who was wounded on June 7th and to whom I have talked today in Ward B. 1. (he mentioned Butler especially "6 or 7 others") they were buried the same day and a small cross was put up to each replaced by big proper ones later. I have seen the graves and helped to bury them, there was a clergyman there."

Eye-witness: Yes Description:

Informant: Robt Love, 2626,
35th A.I.F., A.Coy,
Fulham Military Hospital, Ward A. 3.

7th August 1917.
Amy Urlin.

Written Pte Ewing George 18.8.17.

35th A. I. F.

H. S. BUTLER, 2529.
S. I. FORSTER, 1384.
N. M. LEESON, 2347

Killed 25.5.17.Det.D/B.

These men were with me on a working party on the way up "The Only Way" Trench at Ploegsteert towards the end of May. We were on the way to fix the front line for the "hop over" and were about 100 yards from it at the time. A shell burst right amongst us. It gave me a shaking up and I had seven days laid up with it. I saw at the time, a mangled mess of the killed. An hour after, the Sergt. called the Roll. I was quite well enough to notice this Roll Call. Seven failed to answer including these three. I had seen them in my vicinity just before the shell came. They must have been killed instantly. Butler came from Adamstown, Newcastle, and his address was C/o. Mrs.J.Shearer, Railway St. Merryweather. Forster was a school-teacher on the Hawkesbury River. Leeson came from Sydney- he went round with a milk cart. He was about 18. I have seen all their graves with crosses over them bearing their names. They are in a Military Cemetery for Australians near Ploegsteert towards Hill 63.

Reference: W.Cummings, 2302,
No.11 Con.Camp, Buchy nr. Rouen, 9.8.17.

FEP.

35th A. I. F.

H. S. BUTLER, 2529.
S. I. FORSTER, 1384.
N. M. LEESON, 2347.

K.25.5.17. Det.D/B.

I saw them killed at Ploegsteert about the date named. We were attached at the time to the 10th Fd.Co. Engineers and were going up "The Only Way" Trench into the front line to repair the trench. Half way up the "only way" the enemy lobbed a shell right among us. It killed several besides these three. I was not more than 20 yards away at the time. Forster was killed by shock- I saw no wound on him. Butler and Leeson were considerably knocked about but of course none of them knew anything about it- they were killed instantaneously. I understand they were buried right foot of Ploegsteert Wood. Forster came from Sydney and was a school teacher, his people lived in the country. He was aged about 24/25. He came with me in the Ascanias leaving Australia on Oct.25th/16. Leeson was a recent Reinforcement. He had not been with us long when this happened.

Reference: Pte.W.Johnston, 1407.

No.11 Con.Camp, Buchy nr. Rouen, 10.8.17.

FEP.

FRANCE

35th BATT. A.I.F. BUTLER. H.S. 2529.

K.May 25th 1917. Det D/B.

He was attached to A.Coy at the time and had only lately come to us. He was a great pal of mine. He was left to work with the Engineers in Ploegsteert Wood sector when we left for Le Toquet. He had not had sufficient training to go up with us. When we returned and camped in the wood I asked for him and was told that he had been killed with others, by a minenwerfer, while working. I saw his grave in Ploegsteert Cemetery. A mate of mine, H.G.Kemp, who knew Butler's wife, wrote giving particulars. The wife's address is C/O Mrs J.Shearer. Railway Street, Mereweather, Newcastle, Australia. Our O.C. Capt Cadell, with the Batt. now, would I am sure, furnish you with all particulars

WSI

Ref ---Pte L.C.Murray. 2629, A. IV.
No 47 Gen. Hospital.

Le Treport. August 14th.1917

Havre 3rd Sept. 1917.

35th AUSTRALIANS BUTLER, H.S. 2529
Forster, S.J. 2384

K. 25.3.17. Dot. D/S.

They had just arrived with reinforcements and were attached to the Engineers temporarily on the 25th May, 1917, when they were killed at St. Ives. They are buried in the Plugstreet Wood Cemetery. I saw their graves. There is an a cross on each.

Informant: Pte. T.L. Murray, 2629
35th Australians, A Co., 4th Pltn.,
Australian Camp, Romelles.

RDM

35th Batt. A.I.F. BUTLER H.S. 2529.

"K. May 25th., '17. Det D & B".

" I saw Butler's grave in the Plug St., Wood cemetery, near Armentieres. It had a cross erected over the grave, bearing his name, number, and battalion. It will be easily traceable".

Witness. Christensen C.C. 2552.
35th Batt. "C" Coy.,

Taken at No 3 Command Depot,
Hurdcott.
September Ist., '17.
S.W.

S. Whitmee.
No 4 Command Depot,
Codford.

17. 8. 17

2596
Pte EWING GEORGE.
35th Batt A.I.F.
Ward B.1.
Military Hospital
Fulham S.W.

for
2599
Pte H.S. BUTLER,
35th Batt A.I.F.

N. 25. 5. 17.

21.8.17
L.A.

35th Batn
A.I.F.

BUTLER
H.S. 2529

"Killed in Action 25.5.17."

Re Pte. H.S. Butler 2529 35th Batn. Pte. Butler was killed on 25.5.17. and is buried in the Soldiers Cemetery at rear of PloegStreet Wood near Hanpack Dump. He was about 5'6" in height fair hair, and sharp featured face. He came over with the 5th Reinforcements from Australia and was sick in Hospital for some time while in England.

Letter from:-

Pte. G.H. Ewing 2576
35th Batn A.I.F.
Dartford Aux. Hpl.
Ward B/21.
24.8.17.

London.
4.10.17.

S

35th Batn
A.I.F.

BUTLER
H.S. 2529

"Killed in Action 25.5.17."

Near Hill 63 in trench called "The only Way" killed by shell with 7 others Lesson 2347 Williams, Bates,-and-Smith and others all buried in cemetery near PloegStreet Wood New dressing station. I was with him when killed he was my mate at Larkhill together I saw his grave and about 6 buried together.

Hill. 2429
Ward 24,
Harefield.

D. P. Dickson,
London.
4.10.17.

S

Pte. 2nd Bn. S.L.I. 2529 H.S. BUTLER 35 Batt. A.I.F.

Hartford Aux. Hospital
Ward B/21
24/8/17

K.A. 25.5.17

S.3 (d)

The Secretary

[redacted]

Your letter of 21st inst. & corresponding
=re
particulars of Pte H.S. Butler (2529) 35th Batt.

Pte Butler was killed on 25/5/17 and is buried in
the Cabaret Annetey at rear of Clay Trench
near Kemmel Dump. He was about 5'-6" in height
fair hair and sharp features. He came
over with the 5th Reinforcements from the Scots
and was with me in hospital. Has some fun
while in England. = Trusting this may be
with added [illegible] in your good work.

Yours truly
[illegible]
[illegible]