

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

408 Sergeant
Ira Warren Gunn

8th Battalion



1230605H

A.I.F. 8th Btn

USMC "D.O.M."
Sgt. Ira Warren 408

"WHEREABOUTS"

Killed in action 16-4-18

Cert. by A.I.F. Hqs 9-5-18

LONDON
10-5-18

P.I.

A.I.F.8.

Gunn, D.C.M. Sgt. I.W.408.

K. April 16/18. Det.D/B.

I was close to him when he was hit & saw him carried out. Another man got wounded at the same time, and it was by a shell. There was nothing unusual going on at the time, just ordinary shell fire. They carried Gunn out quick because they did not want his mate to know he was dead. I cannot say about burial. He was a little man-chap, an originalman, a D.C.M. & came from Victoria up country on the Adelaide line. He used to be B.Coy.

Inf. Owen. J. 1373. 8.B.

A.T.No 26.

Calais. 11.6.18.

G.G.P. P.1

A.I.F. 8.

GUNN, DOM, Sgt I.W. 408.

K. April 16th 1918. Data.

On the 17th April at Nieppe Forest he was hit by shell and badly wounded. This was when he was with me in the post about 10 a.m. He was taken away on a stretcher to Coy. Hqs and while there was hit again by another shell and died. I was an eyewitness and this occurred about noon. I believe he was buried the same evening. I have not seen the grave, but I met Sgt M. Rice, of B. Co. at No. 10 Con. Camp about three weeks ago and he told me that Gunn had been buried, at Nieppe Forest near Coy. Hqs. It was not a Mil. Cem. I cannot be certain if there was a cross and name, but it is usual to mark the grave if there is time. There would certainly be a record of the grave in the company. I think he was a farmer from West Australia. Single, 26, 5ft 9, sandy, medium build, got his decoration for the capture of a pill-box in 1917, in B.V.

Inf: Cpl. F.W. Pardy. 806. B.V.

No. 25 Gen Hosp.

BOULOGNE. 4.6.1918.

WG

William Rice 13.6.18

8th Battn.
A.I.F.

GLNN D.C.M.
Sgt. I.W. 409

"KILLED 16-4-18"

He was in same Coy. as I was in, B.Coy., and I saw him wounded near Strazelle, when he was hit by pieces from H.E. shell. He lived about one hour after, being hit, but remained unconscious the whole time. He was in action at the time of casualty, between 8 and 9 o'clock on 16-4-18, being in charge of an outpost at the time. He died on the way back to dressing station, and I saw him lying dead. I was wounded the same morning and cannot give any details of burial. Refer to Lt. Witherton, B.Coy. 8th Battn., who is now in France, for he saw casualty, and may be able to give details of burial.

Informant. Meade. L/Cpl.H. 810
B.Coy. 8th Battn.,
3rd A.A.H.,
DARTFORD.

Note:-

Written Lt. Witherton 17-6-18

W.Oman
1846888

P.I.

8th Batt:

Gunn, D.C.M. Sgt.I.W. 408.

K. 18/4/18.

I saw him killed by a shell through the head. I helped to carry him in.

I do not know where he is buried.

8th Batt:

Lukey, A.C.Cpl. 1157.

13 A. Dartford. 20/6/18.

R.D.B.

P.1
62
full

H.3.

Havre

17th June 1918.

A.I.F. 8.

Gunn (DCM) Sergt. I.W. 408.

X. 16th April 1918. Det D/B.

I knew him well, but don't know where he came from. On the 16th April we were in front of Grosilles holding the front line, the Sergeant being on outpost duty. About 2.30 p.m. a shell came and hit him killing him right out. I was there next to him and saw it. The S/Es carried away the body but I don't know anything about the burial.

Inf:- Pte F.F. Caracolla No. 749 A
A.I.F. 8. B. Vill.
Australian Camp.
Rouelles.

P.1

CASE.

J.F.A.

A.I.F. 8.

GUNN, DON, Sgt I.W. 408.

W. April 16th 1918. Dets.

I knew Gun personally for some months and he was Sgt. in charge of No V platoon, but I was in No VII. On April 16th we were at Hieppe Forest and dug in. My platoon occupied a post about 40 yards from one in charge of Sgt Gunn. In the evening after we had checked the Boche advance we received a request from the Sergeant's post for S/B assistance as he had been badly hit. A S/B was got and he was taken down to a D/S but he was found to be already dead. Though I did not actually see Sgt Gunns body I know these particulars to be perfectly correct, but with regard to his burial I am unable to give any account.

Inf: A.Henderson. 400. B.VII.

No. 53 Gen Hosp.

BOULOGNE. 15.6.1918.

HH

P.1

J.P.A.

8th Battn.
A.I.F.

GUNN D.C.H.
Sgt. J.W. 408

"Killed in Action 16-4-18"

"D.C.H."

I have received a note from a lad in my Battn. named Connelly, asking me if I could send you particulars of how Sgt. Gunn, of the 8th Battn. was killed. Well, as I am the Officer in charge of the Pltn. which Sgt. Gunn was in, I think I can give you all the particulars of his death. On the morning of the 18th of April, Sgt. Gunn along with 6 other men of my Pltn. were working on their position in the front line, everything was going on well, when all of a sudden a shell from a German gun burst directly over the position, killing Sgt. Gunn and wounded 2 of his men. At the time I happened to be about 50 yds. away, attending to another portion of the line. One of the men called out to me that the shell had got some of the boys. I rushed up to see what had happened, but when I got there poor Sgt. Gunn was dead. One of the boys who was wounded by the same shell, told me that the only words he spoke after he was hit was - "I am done boys". A piece of shell hit him in the back, and I think as death was so sudden, must have entered his heart. He was taken out on a stretcher that morning, and was given a respectable burial about a mile and a half behind the line, also a Cross has been erected over his grave. His death was greatly felt by all who knew him in this Battn. and that morning it cast a gloom over the Pltn. He was a fine soldier, and well liked by all, a plucky lad, and always ready to do his duty.

London
27-6-18

Letter from:- Lient. T.H. Witherden ^(high school) P.I.

to Mr. G.M. Jacobs

Plt. Comdr. 8th Battn. 12-6-18

8th Australian Imperial Force

Gunn, Gunner, I.W. D.C.M.
Sgt. 408.

(K. April 16. 18. Dets
D & B).

" I was in the same Coy. as Sgt. Gunn and knew him personally. He had been wounded twice on April 16th, but went on fighting. At last he was being taken away on a stretcher when a shell killed him outright. This was in the afternoon. The body was taken down the line after dark and he was buried next day by Padre Booth of the 8th A.I.F. at Nieupe Forest (R.A. Post?,) His grave was registered. "

Eye Witness - Yes.

Description - " Dummy" Gunn, I think he came from Mill,
Victoria.

Informant :- Pte. T.T. Gunn, 5099
8th Aus Imp. Force
Military Hospital,
Eastbourne.

Home address :-

(Not given).

19. 6. 18.
M.M. Thornton.

P/ea

8th Battn. A.I.F.

D.C.H.
Gunn. Sgt. I.W.
408.

"Killed in Action 16.4.18."

Re Sgt. Gunn 408 W. 8th Batt. C.D.M. He was killed in action Nieupe Wood and we carried him back to Battn. H.Q. he was buried in a Soldiers Cemetery his grave would be registered also 6840 Pte. C.E. Pierpont was killed in action in the same stunt and carried back to the Battn. H.Q. they were both buried by the 8th Battn. Chaplain, this information I am giving is correct, I helped to carry him back myself.

Letter from:- 6599 Pte. W.G. Smitham,
France.

London.
12.7.18.
A.M.H.

P.I.

8th Battn.
A.I.F.

Sgt. I.W.

GUNN.D.C.M.
408.

"Killed in ~~action~~^{April}" 16-4-18.

He was in B. Company but I did not actually see him killed when he was about 100 yards away from me. I saw him dead at Meteren and he had been hit very badly in the body, so badly that death must have been instantaneous. Casualty happened in early morning when he was cut at outpost. He was a very fine chap and everyone loved him. He came from Victoria, but I am not sure of the particular district. I did not see his grave but he was buried in the Nieupe Forest Cem: Refer to S/B Smithan B. Coy, 8th Battn. and now wounded, being probably in England, for he carried him out. Refer also to Chaplain Captain Booth 8th Battn who read burial service.

Informant:- Pte Smith. J.J. 6347.
B. Coy. 8th Battn.
No 3 A.A.H. DARTFORD.

W. Oman.
London.
27-6-18.
W.T. J.E.A.

Include S/B Smithan & Capt Booth 246.2

P I.

8th Battn.
A.I.F.

GUHN. D.C.M.
Sgt.J.W. 408.

"Killed in Action 16-4-18"

Re the above named soldier. He was killed by shell fire on 16-4-18 and was buried at (Map 36.A.) E.21.A6.I. in the Bois d'Aers Military Cemetery. His description is:- Fair hair, sallow complexion, and his face was freckled. I knew him very well, having been in the same company since 1914. This information is rather vague and should you require any further details I shall be too pleased to help you as much as possible.

Letter from:- C/S/M.A.J.Rice.
B.Coy. 8th Battn.A.I.F.
B.E.F.

London.
28-8-18.
N.T.

P I.

28th Battn.
A.I.F.

COBHAM
F.F. 6567

"Killed 20-9-17"

He was in A.Coy. 4th Pltn., and I am S/M of A.Coy., and we proved at the time after full enquiry, that he was by a shell in the advance early in the morning of Sep. 20th in the Ypres stunt. The Pioneers buried him in the Cemetery at Ypres, and a Cross was put up. Full particulars were sent to the Battn. Orderly Room.

Informant. ^{Gunnison?} Gunision S/M. J.H. 4126
A.Coy. 28th Battn.
No. 1 Command Depot,
SUTTON VEVEY.

B.F. German
London
4-5-18

P.I.

General Correspondence

V.L. 11
SHEPHERD

(867) Cpl. H. Gunn

A.M.T.S.

A.T. 7.

Do Royal Hospital Rd

Chelsea

Inquiries for

(408) Sgt. G. W. Gunn D.C.M.

8th Bn

No news 3 months -

I.I.

Havre

5th June 1918.

A.I.F. 8.

Gunn D.O.M. Sergt J.W. 408

Z. 16th April 1918. Det D/B.

I know him well. He came over with me as an original man in the 'Donella' and lived at Ballarat. On the 16th April we were in front of - I forget the name of the village - holding the line. He was hit by a piece of shell in the afternoon and killed at once. He was buried in the open just behind the village.

Inf:- Sergt. J.R. Jorgensen No. 1111.

A.I.F. 8. D. XV.

Aust. Conv. Camp.

Rouelles.

GWEN.

9th Battn.
A.I.F.

GUNN. D.C.H.
Sgt. J.W. 408.

"Killed in April" 16-4-18.

At Ypres Zwartelen. Hit by shell - died in about 2 minutes. He was not conscious. I was close to him at the time. I knew him well. He was in my platoon Sgt. I don't know where they buried him.

Informant:- Goodland,¹³²³ 3323.
W.18. HAREFIELD.

D.P. Dickson.
London.
11-10-18.

P I.

June 14th, 1913.

867 Cpl. F.H. Gunn,
Australian Motor Transport Service,
70. Royal Hospital, Road,
Chelsea, S.W.

Dear Sir,

With further reference to your enquiry for your brother -

408 Sgt. I.H. GUNN, D.C.M. 8th Bn, A.I.F.

We regret to inform you of several unofficial reports of his death which we have now received from men in his unit.

3323 Pte. Goodland, when interviewed recently at the 1st Australia Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, stated that he knew your brother, who was his platoon sergeant, well and was close to him at Ypres, Zwartslan when he was wounded by a shell which rendered him unconscious and he died almost immediately.

This report is confirmed by 1111 Sgt. J.R. Jorgensen who when interviewed recently in France, stated that he came from Australia with your brother who lived at Ballarat. On April 16th, when they were holding the line, he was wounded by a piece of shell and killed instantly, his burial taking place in the open just behind the village the name of which informant could not remember.

806 Cpl. F.W. Pardy when interviewed in Hospital in France

gave some further details, which however do not quite agree with the reports quoted above.

Cpl. Hardy said that your brother who was with him in the post at about 10 a.m. on April 17th at Nieppe Forest and was badly wounded by a shell. He was taken on a stretcher to company Headquarters and whilst there was unfortunately wounded again and died from his wounds.

Informant added that the casualty occurred about noon and he thought the burial took place the same evening. He did not see the grave but was told by Sgt. Rice that it was at Nieppe Forest near the Coy Headquarters. He described your brother as red-haired, of medium build, 5'9" in height, single and aged about 26 and said that he got his decoration for the capture of a pillbox in 1917.

We should be glad to know if this latter description may be applied to your brother as you will observe that the date Cpl. Hardy gives is incorrect. Did your brother come from Western Australia?

We have written to Sgt. Rice and as soon as we receive his reply we will advise you. We are continuing our enquiries and will forward any information which reaches us.

Trusting that the details we have been able to obtain may be of some assistance to you.

Yours faithfully, *Mrs. G. M. F. J.*

408 Sgt I.W. Gunn France

8th Attn

K/A 16-4-18

PI

2 (CA)

30/6/18

ack. P.C. 10.7.18

Dear Miss

I received a
enquire letter as to what become
of Sgt Gunn (408) D.C.M. yes
he was killed in action Kieppe
wood and we carried him back
to Batts H.Q. he was buried in a
Soldiers cemetery his grave would
be registered also 6840 Pte C.E. Pierfort
was killed in action in the same wood
and carried back to the Batts H.Q.
They were both buried by the
8 Batts Chaplain This information
I am giving is correct I helped to
carry them back myself

Yours

Yours Faithfully

6599 Pte W.G. Smitham

8th Battalion. K. APRIL 16/18. SGT GUNN D.C.M.

Writen Lt. Witherton 17.6.18

I.W. 408

~~in discussion~~ ^{was the} ~~in~~ ^{with me} ~~in~~ ^{same} ~~company~~ ^{company} ~~and~~ ^I ~~saw~~ ^{saw} him wounded near Brayelle, when he was hit by pieces from High explosive shell. He lived about one hour after being hit but remained unconscious the whole time. He was in action at the time of casualty between eight and nine o'clock on April 16/18, being in charge of an outpost at the time. He died on the way back to dressing station, and I saw him lying dead. I was wounded the same morning and cannot give any details of burial. Refer to LIEUT. WITHERTON "B" COMPANY 8th BATTALION who is now in France, for he saw casualty and may be able to give details of burial.

WITNESS: L-CPL. MEADE H. 810

Jr. Oman

13.6.18

13.6.18

B Coy. 8th BATTALION.

No 3 A.A.H. DARTFORD.

10th May, 1918.

857 Cpl. W. H. Gunn,
Australian Motor Transport, (Service)
70, Royal Hospital Road,
Chelsea.

Dear Cpl. Gunn,

In answer to your enquiry through Miss Whybrow
for information about your brother -

408 Sgt. J. W. GUNN, D.C.M., 8th Battalion, A.I.F.

We deeply regret to inform you that he was killed in action on
16-4-18.

We have at present no further information but if you wish
us to do so we shall gladly make enquiries for details of his death
and burial.

Awaiting your reply and assuring you of our sincere
sympathy in your great loss.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) Law.

SECRETARY.

Your second inquiry has been received since this was typed
we shall in time apply for a photograph of your brother
which can only be taken if it is officially required.

A.M.T.S.
70 Royal Hospital Road
Chelsea S.W.3

10/5/18

Dear Mrs. Whybrow,

I received your letter this morning informing me of the death of my brother, Capt. W. Gunn, 408, 8th Batt. F.I.E., and also offering to make enquires as to where he was killed and buried. I would be most thankful to you and the Red Cross if you would, and, if it is not too much to ask, would it be possible to get a photograph of his last resting place, just for the sake of his mother? Hoping it is possible for you to oblige.

I remain

yours sincerely
Capt. W. H. Gunn 867
A.M.T.S.

A.I.F.

26. 6. 18.

867. Cpl. W. H. Gunn.

Australian War Transport
To Royal Hospital Rd. ^{Sydney} ~~Section~~ 29.
Chelsea.

Dear Cpl Gunn.

We have received a
further unofficial report
concerning 408. Sgt. J. W.
Gunn D.C. Be. 8th Batta. A.I.F.
from a man of the same
unit. 810 d/Cpl. H. Meade
who is at present at 3rd
Gen. Gen. Hosp. Dartford.
who certifies as follows.

"Gunn was in the same
..... of burial".
We have now written to
him - Witherston will
at once advise you as to

HOSPITAL

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Fill in exactly as List. | SURNAME. | Christian Name. | Regtl.No. |
| | Jennant | Alfred | 313 |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| SURNAME. | Christian Name. | Regtl.No. |
| Jennant | Henry John | 1 |

NOTE.
In all cases state fully what informant says he saw or heard and give DATE AND PLACE of occurrence.

I saw A. J. Jennant yesterday he was killed.
was independent.

I do not remember the exact date; but it was
the place of occurrence. Hebuterne & Co

PLEASE ALSO ANSWER

1. Was Informant Eye-Witness? *Yes*
2. If not, of th
3. Was the ground held or lost? *The ground was held*
4. If Infor (a) was (b) was
5. Did Informant know Christian Name, Initials or No. of man enquired about? *Yes*
6. Was the name
7. Give Informant's description of man enquired about—any nickname, marks, scars, etc. *A. J. Jennant was tall and slight*
8. Searcher's opinion of Informant's accuracy and intelligence *I believe this information is accurate given without hesitation, and in is*

Reports should always be written very clearly in ink, or typewritten.

his reply. o of any
further particulars we
may receive -
with a renewal of our
sympathy. with sincere
good wishes.
Yours etc -

HOSPITAL

Section 5 Extra

| Fill in exactly as List. | INFORMATION | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | SURNAME | Christian Name |
| Indurman | Indurman | Regtl. No. 6408 Rant |
| Indurman | Indurman | Regtl. No. 6408 Rant |
| Indurman | Indurman | Regtl. No. 6408 Rant |

NOTE.
In all cases state fully what informant says he saw or heard and give DATE AND PLACE of occurrence.

I did not see P. f. Indurman killed at Spit Bomb. was do Hill Co. the

about the middle of March. 1948
Place of occurrence. Spit Bomb.

PLEASE ALSO ANSWER

1. Was Informant Eye-Witness? *Yes*
2. If not, of the
3. Was the ground held or lost? *The ground was held*
4. If Informant (a) was (b) was
5. Did Informant know Christian Name, Initials or No. of man enquired about? *Indurman had not Christian name*
6. Was there
7. Give Informant's description of man enquired about—any nickname, marks, scars, etc. *Indurman was nicknamed Sam*
8. Searcher's opinion of Informant's accuracy and intelligence *5' ft. 11 in height, was incl build. lively disposition*

Reports should always be written very clearly in ink, or typewritten.
Please this information to be accurate. The Informant on correct, and give single

20th June 1918.

No. 867 Cpl. W.H. Gunn,
Australian Motor Transport Section,
70, Royal Hospital Rd.,
Chelsea.

Dear Cpl. Gunn,

With reference to your enquiry concerning
No. 408 Sgt. I.W. Gunn, D.C.M. 6th Infantry Batt. A.I.F.
we regret to inform you that we have received the
following unofficial report from No. 1573 Pte. J. Owen
of the same unit.

He states, that he was close to Sgt. Gunn when
he was wounded by shellfire, and that he saw him carried
out. He was taken away quickly, because the others did
not want his mate to know that he was dead. Informant
regrets that he knows nothing of the burial, and
describes Sgt. Gunn as "a little chap" who came from
up country in Victoria."

We regret the above details are so indefinite,
but we are continuing our enquiries, and hope to send you
still further particulars at a later date.

With good wishes,
Yours faithfully,

(Miss)

Secretary.

Rev. B. Owen.

29th June, 1918.

Mrs. Jackson,
Blakenholme,
Mannemead, Plymouth.

Dear Madam,

We wrote to thank you very much for the information you have sent us concerning 408 Sgt. I. W. Gunn, 8th Infantry Batt. A. I. F. We have already received an enquiry for him from his brother 676 Cpl. W. E. Gunn, Australian Motor Transport Section and are sending him a copy of Lieut. Withersons letter in addition to all other information we have received, which we will send to his people in Australia on whose behalf he is enquiring.

We are not allowed to give the address of the nearest kit, but should you still wish to write to Sgt. Gunn's people, we will be very glad to forward the letter if you send it to us to his above address, enclosing Sgt. Gunn's full regimental particulars so that we may identify it.

Yours faithfully,
(Miss)

Secretary.

Blue

867 Cpl. W.H. Gunn,
Australian Motor Transport Service,
70 Royal Hospital Road,
CHICHESTER. S.W. 1.

July 4th, 1918.

Dear Sir,

We beg to inform you that we have had another unofficial report respecting -

408 Sgt. I.W. GUNN, D.C.M. 8th Battalion, A.I.F.
from 6343 Pte. J.J. Smith of the same unit, lately at the 3rd
Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford. He stated that he did
not actually see Sgt. Gunn killed, as they were about 100 yards
apart - but he saw him dead at Heteren, and evidently he must
have been killed instantly. It happened in the early morning
when he must have been out at an outpost. Pte. Smith did not
see his grave, but knew that he was buried in the Nieppe Forest
Cemetery.

He added that "he was a very fine chap and every one
loved him". He referred to Stretcher-bearer Smithan of the
same unit, who carried him out, and to Chaplain Capt Booth of
the same Battalion, who read the burial service.

1157 Cpl. A.C. Lukey of the same unit, also at Dartford
stated that he saw Sgt. Gunn killed by a shell which wounded him

in the head and he helped to carry him out.

Trusting that it will be some consolation to have
this further assurance of his instantaneous death and
assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

(EIBS)

SECRETARY.

7. J. G.

The Secretary Red Cross

July 4. 18

G. D. C. M.
408 Sgt I. W. Dunn
8th Bn

Re 408 Sgt I. W. Dunn

R/A 16-4-18

91 (C)

I know the above sergeant well & saw him when brought down to the aid post. He was killed instantaneously & consequently beyond the aid of our M.O. I buried him in a military cemetery near Harehrook & had a cross made by our provisors. The cemetery is situated in a wood & at the present time is very beautiful although fraught with sad memories. The grave was registered.

In appearance he was of medium height & with fair or dark, clear shaven, usual complexion, bright & cheery in disposition but usually quiet & reserved.

One of his friends has also referred to another letter of yours & possibly augments these few details touching this in what you require.

Yours faithfully

Joseph Booth L.F.

Mr. H. H. H. H.

July 18th, 1918.

867 Cpl. W.H. Gunn,
Australian Motor Transport Service,
70, Royal Hospital Road,
CHELSEA.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your enquiry for -

408 Sgt. I.W. GUNN, D.C.M. 8th Battalion, A.I.F.

who is officially reported Killed in Action on 16-4-18. We
beg to forward the following report sent us by Chaplain
Joseph Booth:-

"Re 408 Sgt. Gunn, 8th Bttn. I knew the above Sgt. Well
and saw him when brought down to the aid post. He was killed
instantly and consequently beyond the aid of a Medical
Officer. I buried him in a Military Cemetery near Hazebrook
and had a cross made by our pioneers. The cemetery is
situated in a wood and at the present time is very
beautiful although fraught with sad memories. The grave
was registered."

We have now closed our enquiries for Sgt. Gunn and hope
the information we have obtained may be of some value to you.

Assuring you of our sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

(MISS) *M. Ryan*
SECRETARY.

To The Secretary
Unrecorded & Missing
Enquiry Bureau.

Feb 27/18
N7

France

21. 8. 18. 408

Sgt J W Gunn DCM
8 Batta

Killed 16. 4. 18

P/ (a)

Re your letter enquiring into the
death and burial of No 408 Sgt J W Gunn
D.C.M. 8th A.I.F.

He was killed by shell fire on 16. 4. 18,
and was buried at (Map. 36 A) E 21. A 6. 1.
in the Bois d'Heul Military Cemetery.

His description is:- Fair Hair, Sallow
complexion and his face was freckled.

I knew him very well, having been
in the same Coy. since 1914.

This information is rather vague and
should you require any further details
I shall only be too pleased to help you
as much as possible.

C.S.M. Affries C

B Coy.

8th A.I.F.

N7