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

619 Lance Corporal
Charles Guest
Campion

4th Battalion
4th AUSTRALIANS

OCTAVEN, L/Cpl Q. 3 619

Missing 16th April 1917

I saw L/Cpl C. J. Campion, who was an original man, and, I think, in B. Co., killed at Flers, hit by high explosive shell. We were in our front line trench. I do not know where he was buried. He had a brother, an officer in the 1st Bn. A.I.F.

I am not sure of the date he was killed, but certain it was his body that I saw.

Informant: Pte. W. J. Moss 2706
4th Australians R.F.
Australian Camp, Rouelles

RIM
4th A. I. F.                      Campion, L/Cpl C.C. 619.
(M. Apr 15th/17)

Informant states that "I heard from Pte Stevenson, 1761 of
the battalion that L/Cpl Campion was buried by flamethrower.
He was in a shell hole on outpost duty, and the flame passed
over the shell hole in which he was. He never returned. I
also heard that H.S. Crawford, 2557 was with him at the time and
also was burnt. I heard this on returning to duty after being
wounded."

Eye-witness:

Description:

Informant: Cpl F. Bourke, 2254,
4th A.I.F.,
West Ham & Stratford General Hospital

6th Sept. 1917.
A.E. Randell.
All these were in B. Coy. and were part of the garrison of an outpost near Veal captured by the Germans on the morning of the 15th April. I saw 4 men H.B. Crawford, G. Sears, Sjt Atkinson and Cull-gar, going across as prisoners, but I cannot say for a fact that Campion, Oswald and Rosser were taken prisoners as I saw nothing of them. The Germans stopped on the post for 4 or 5 hours and when we got into it again we did not find the bodies of any of our men. I think myself that these three were also made prisoners.

Inf: Pte J.E. Parry, 1078. 4, B.VII.S/B.
No. 2 Army Rest Camp.
BOULOGNE. 7.9.18.

Note Crawford, Atkinson & Gallagher are P/W.
"Campion was on outpost duty with a number of others, and was in an advance post just near Lagnicourt, when they were seen to be completely surrounded by Germans. They must have been taken prisoners, as we captured the ground later on, and I made a special point of going across to the advance post. There was no sign of any bodies. We knew each other quite well, and were in the same Coy."

Witness: Murray W. 538.
"B" Coy., 4th Batt.

Taken at Verne Citadel, Portland,
September 21st., '17. F.G.H.
S. Whitmore.
No 4 Command Depot,
Cafard.
4th Battn.

Missing 15/4/17.

In answer to your letter of the 17th May, I can give you the following information. Your brother Lance-Corporal Campion was a member of a post of an outpost line. This post was overrun by the enemy, who attacked in force. It was subsequently recovered by a counter attack, but no indication as to the fate of the garrison remained. In my opinion your brother is a prisoner of war, as the post was swamped by a horde of Germans, and had no chance of fighting for long, moreover the Hun was cut for prisoners on this occasion.

Informant - D. R. Brown, Major, Officer in Command of "B" Co., 4th Battalion, A.I.F.

25/5/17.
4th Battn.

CAMPION, C.G. No. 619.
1/Grp.

Missing, 15/4/17.

Sir,

I have not been able to go over to the 4th Battalion to inquire at the Orderly Room concerning your brother, but I have met several from the Battalion, who knew him, and they seem to think he was taken prisoner, as they think they brought back all who were killed.

I will try and find out more about the affair, and I will go over to the Battalion, and make inquiries at the Orderly Room, the first opportunity.

Copy of letter from H. Peak, Sgt.,
Australian Forces.

France,
6/6/17.
I belong to the 4th Battalion, and I happen to know Corporal C. Campion. I was in his section, so I was pretty well acquainted with him. I am sorry to tell you he is a Prisoner of War, since the 16/4/17. No. 5324, Private Murray. Corporal of the 3rd Battalion was making this afternoon if anyone knew him, so I said that we were together, and he asked me to write to you, and tell you what happened to him. He was a very nice young fellow; all his men were very sorry to lose him.

Copy of a letter from No. 6213, Private V.R. Collins, 4th Battalion, A.I.F., 1st Southern, General Hospital, Birmingham, 13/6/17.
A.I.F. 4th Bty H.Coy.

CAPTAIN
L/Cpl Chas. Guest. 619

"MISSING"

Killed in action 13-4-17 - previously reported Missing
Cert by A.I.F. Ehrs 17-12-17

London
21-12-17
AUSTRALIANS 4.

CAMPION, L/C P.G. 619.

M. April 15th 1917.

The company has had a letter from him written from Germany where he is a P/W. He was captured whilst in an advanced post and is unwounded.

Inf: L/C J. Durham, 6480. 4.B.
No. 7 C.C.
BOULOUGNE. 20.11.17.

FD

[Signature]

written Adj 11.18
April 16th, 1917.

He was with a party that was taken prisoner at Hermios on April 15th. Sgt L.C. Atkinson, 282, H Coy, was with the same party and is known to be a P/W. He has had letters from him. There is every reason to hope that Campion is also a P/W.

SA.


Name, number &c. checked from Batta records. P1

Etaples 7.12.17.

[Signature]

"Killed in Action 15.4.17"

Battalion records show this man as "Reported Missing 15.4.17" and later "Killed in Action 15.4.17" I have no knowledge of him as a "Prisoner of War".

Letters from:— The Adjt.
4th Battn.
Belgium. 10.1.18.

London.
22.1.18.

S. P.I.

4th Battn. A.I.F. Campion. L/Cpl.C.G. 619

Oswald L/Cpl.T.F. 3876
Rosser L/Cpl.W. 5766
Seers Geo. 2831

"Killed in Action 15.4.17."

Please inform Miss Deckin that 3876 L/Cpl. Oswald was killed on the 15.4.17. No knowledge of the other three.

Post card dated 10.1.18 to
Prisoners of War Dept.
from 283 Sgt.L.C. Atkinson
4th Battn. A.I.F.
P/W at Soltau.

London.
1.3.18.

P.I.
S.
Campion was in B Coy, VI Platoon. He was about 5ft 10inches, medium to fair complexion and had been a policeman in New South Wales. He was on outpost at Morwell, on 15.4.17, and it was my duty to visit these outposts, which were from 220/250 yards in advance of our support line. These outposts took the place of a front line. The Germans attacked in great force, and none of the men on this outpost were returned. The Germans captured this position of outposts and held it for 4/5 hours, and were then driven back and were subsequently held the position. Word has been received that several of the men, on some of the outposts were prisoners, e.g. Privates L.L. Hannen and Taylor. I have since heard from Hannen from Hamburg. I think Hannen was on the same post as Campion. I am positive that, unless Campion is a prisoner, he must be dead.

I last saw Campion on his post between 2 and 3 a.m. on 15.4.17. The bombardment did not affect the line of outposts to any great extent, although it was very heavy on the support line, and when I subsequently got to this outpost line after we had retaken it, I found very little damage from shell fire, and if Campion had been killed there we would have found his body, as we held this line after reoccupation. I feel therefore, that Campion must have been wounded.

4th Battalion, C Coy, A.I.F. -2-
L/Cpl C. G. CAMPION.
619.

[Handwritten note: ]
Cannanis and taken Prisoner. Hannen's letter did not mention Campion but said that Hannen was being well treated by the Germans. No trace was ever found of Campion.

INFORMANT: Sergeant G. M. O'Connor, 811,
4th Battalion, C. Coy, VII Platoon,
No. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK.

Home address: Villier's Street,
Grafton.

A careful, reliable witness.

A.S.I.O.
19.2.18.

SYDNEY BUREAUP
"Killed in Action 15.4.17"

"I have no knowledge of L/Cpl. Champion."

Extract from postcard dated 14.2.18
from: 232 Sgt. L.C. Atkinson
4th Bn. A.I.F.
P/W interned at Soltau 23010

London.
5.4.18.

S.
P.I.
4th Battn.  
B.Coy.  

CAMPION C.G.L/Cpl.  
619

"Killed 15-4-17"

Informant states that L/Cpl. Campion relieved him on Saturday evening May 14th 1917 at an advanced post about ½ mile from Coy. headquarters near Doignon. On Sunday morning the Germans began a bombardment and came over and captured the post where Campion was. Of the men in the post, 2 were killed and others were taken prisoners. On Sunday evening we counter attacked and drove them back from this post. On the following Tuesday informant was sent out to collect pay books from the dead. He visited this post and saw some dead lying there but did not see Campion.

Informant: Durham L/Cpl. J.  
6480 4th Battn. B.Coy.  
M.Ward  
Randwick

C.B.W.  
7-8-18

SYDNEY BUREAU

[Stamp: [cancel]]
A.I.P. 4th Bn.

CAMPION L/Cpl.

Charles Guest 619

Killed in Action 15.4.17.

No trace in Germany.


London.
17.10.19.

F.I. & S.
331B Bullman Rd
Birmingham
August 27, 17.

Secretary,
Australian Red Cross Society,
London

Sirs-
I am writing to ask, having been advised by an M. Australian Soldier to do so, whether your Society has received any information as to No. 6129 B C 4th Bat. Australian by Lance Corp. P. Campion, missing in France since April 15th last. M. Leeper.
To my brother and co.

Your mother and brothers at home in the country have been in great anxiety as to his fate whether killed or a prisoner. If your noble organization can furnish us with any information we shall be most grateful.

Yours respectfully,

J. J. Sampson
August 1st, 1917.

T. J. Campion, Esq.,
331, Bollborn Rd.,
Birmingham.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your enquiry for your brother

619 L/Cpl. C. G. Campion,
4th Battalion,
A.I.F.

officially reported missing on April 15th, 1917.

We very much regret that we have no news to give you. The only news we have of him was received on 30.6.17 in an unofficial report from 2708 Pte.

W. J. Moss, 4th Battalion, Head Quarters, A.I.F.
Pte. Moss made the following statement:-

"I saw L/Cpl. C. G. Campion, who was an original man, and I think in B. Coy, killed at Flers, hit by a high explosive shell. We were in our front line trench. I do not know where he was buried. He had a brother, an officer in the 1st Battalion, A.I.F. I am not sure of the date he was killed, but on certain it was his body that I saw".
We should be glad to know if you have another brother an Officer in the 1st Battalion, A.I.F. and if you think the above purely unofficial information refers to your brother.

Any further information which we receive will be forwarded to you at once, in the meantime may we assure you of our sincere sympathy in your great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.
334 B新陈 Rd.
Birmingham.
27/9/17.

To the Secretary,
Australian Red Cross
Society.
54 Victoria Pr.
London S.W.

Yr.
Mr H. C. G. Cumpson
619 BE 4th Barton
A J.

I am very thankful
for the information
given in your letter of
3rd July.

My brother C. G. Cumpson
was an original member.
of the R.F.T. He was also on B.C. with Barton but he had no
brother an officer in the
17th Australians.

I am afraid the information given by Mr
Moss is only too true. I have
been hoping that my brother
was a prisoner, but if he
were alive and allowed to
do so he could have
informed his friends. He
is missing nearly 6 months
and I presume that the
Germans would allow a
prisoner to write once in that
time.

My brother Regt. Sergt Major
G. Campbell R.F.T's Chatham
has sent a copy of your letter.
To the Left of my Brothers Co. on the 12th Batt. A.I.F. He had been previously informed that my Brother where placed was on duty at an outpost, and nothing could be traced of him since then.

I am afraid I can have little reason to hope for any good news, but I thank you very much for the information, and would if able send you a donation but I am only a poor man. I think my Sister Miss Campion of Yorke, N.S.W. has collected on a "War Day" $10 for the Australian troops, comforts or Red Cross funds.

I should be very glad of any further information if any comes to hand.

Yours respectfully,

[Signature]
September 26th, 1917.

T. J. Campion, Esq.,
33d, Bellhein Rd.,
Birmingham.

Dear Sir,

We deeply regret to inform you of another unofficial report about your brother

No 619 L/Cpl. G. G. Campion,
21st Battalion,
A.I.F.

from which we fear that there is little hope of his being alive.

Informant No 2334 Cpl. F. Burke, of the same unit when in the West Ham and Stratford General Hospital, state that he was told by No 2751 Pte. Stevenson, of the same unit that L/Cpl. Campion, was in a shell hole on out-post duty on April 15th and as he never returned it was presumed that he had been killed and buried in the shell hole.

While emphasising the purely unofficial character of this report we feel that your brother must have been killed for five months have now passed without any news of him and he would surely
have written had he been a prisoner.

We are continuing our inquiries and you may rest assured that as soon as we obtain any news we shall let you know.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy in your great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

SECRETARY.
I have received a letter from Miss Clara Champion, 6 Harp Terrace, Prenton, S. Wales, with the following information:

On the 13th April 1917, he was on outport duty at Falmouth, and during an enemy attack the subject was supposed to have been captured. Since then, no news of him has been received. I have been advised to forward the matter over to your Society for investigation, so feel sure that you will do all that is possible to let the people know the result.

Yours Truly,

Miss F. L. Champion

26.3.18
November 28th, 1917.

282 Sg.t. L. O. Atkinson,
4th Australian Infantry Battalion,
British Prisoner of War,
Gefangenenlager, Solln 75016,
Germany.

Dear Sg.t. Atkinson,

We have been requested by our Sydney Bureau to make enquiries concerning several men of B. Coy, of your unit, and we should be very grateful, for the sake of our enquirers, for any information you could send us concerning:

613 L/Cpl. G. C. CANBELL
3876 L/Cpl. T. F. CUMMINS
5766 L/Cpl. J. R. STER
2831 Geo. SCRIBB

all "Reported Missing 15.4.17"

Do not trouble to write a separate letter, if you include the information on the acknowledgment post-card to Miss Cholmey, we shall receive it.

We trust your parcels reach you regularly and that you are pleased to note, as are the Australian ladies who pack your parcels, that they contain so many goods from Australia. The ladies tell us they are such excellent parcels, and the Christmas ones which have just been despatched to you are very nice indeed.

We hope you will receive one of the real Australian Plum puddings.

With all good wishes for as cheery a time as possible at Christmas.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.
November 26th, 1917.

2587 Pte. H. S. Crawford,
2/5th Australian Infantry Battalion,
British Prisoner of War,
Gefangenenlager, Bulman,
GERMANY.

Dear Pte. Crawford,

We have been requested by our Sydney Bureau to make enquiries concerning several men of B. Coy. of your unit, and we should be very grateful, for the sake of our enquirers, for any information you could send us concerning

612 L/Cpl. C. G. Campion,
3876 L/Cpl. T. F. Cawood,
5766 L/Cpl. W. Howard,
2851 Cor. Sear.

all "Reported Missing 15.4.17".

Do not trouble to write a separate letter, if you include the information on the acknowledgment post-card to Miss Chorley, we shall receive it.

We trust your parcels reach you regularly and that you are pleased to note, as are the Australian ladies who pack your parcels, that they contain so many goods from Australia. The ladies tell us they are such excellent parcels, and the Christmas ones which have just been despatched to you are very nice indeed.

We hope you will receive one of the real Australian Plum puddings.

With all good wishes for as cheery a time as possible at Christmas.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

SECRETARY.
Madam,

Ref your inquiry concerning the debt of M. de C. on account of the Bank. Ratcliff's records show the note as settled pending legal action. Ratcliff's action (15 July).

I have no knowledge of this as at Present.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Yelp C. G. Champion

See under

Yelp T. E. Gebaut, etc.

11/11/17
T.J. Campion, Esq.,
334, Bolehain Rd.,
Birmingham.

Re 619 L/Cpl. CHAS. GUSTV CAMPION, 4th Bntn, A.I.F.

January 11th, 1916.

Dear Sir,

We deeply regret to inform you that the above soldier who was previously reported Missing is now reported Killed in Action on 15th. 17.

We are making further enquiries in the hope of learning full details of his death and will immediately forward to you any information that we receive.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy in your loss.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

SECRETARY.
26th March, 1918.

Miss Clare Campion,
4, Mary Terrace,
Brecon, S. WALES.

Dear Madam,

With reference to your enquiry for 619 L/Cpl. C.G. CAMPION, 6th Battalion, A.I.F. - (which we have received through 5924 Pte. R.M. Purse, 6th Bty, A.I.F. - we very much regret to inform you that he is now officially reported killed in action on 16-4-17, having previously been reported missing on that date.

In spite of our efforts to do so we have never been able to obtain definite particulars of his death and burial, and we fear there is little hope of further information being received now, so long after the engagement in which he fell.

We forward two unofficial reports made by men of his Bn. 2706 Pte. J. Moss states "I saw L/Cpl. C.G. Campion, (who was an original Battalion man and I think in B Coy) killed instantly at Flers by a high explosive shell. We were in our front line trench. I do not know where he was buried. I am not sure of the date on which he was killed but I am certain it was his body I saw."

2334 Cpl. F. Bowerke made the following statement: "I heard from 2713 Pte. Stevenson that L/Cpl. Campion was last seen in a shell hole on outpost duty. He never returned."

Regretting that we should have to forward such sad news and assuring you of our deepest sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

SECRETARY.
10th April, 1918.

Miss Clara Campion,
4, Harp Terrace,
Brecon, S. Wales.

Dear Madam,

We regret to inform you that we have received an unofficial report respecting 619 L/Cpl. CHARLES GUEST, CAUTION, 4th Battalion, A.I.F. - from 282 Sgt. L.W. Atkinson of the same unit, a prisoner of war interned at Soltau - who states "I have no knowledge of L/Cpl. Campion."

This was in reply to a letter of enquiry from us as to whether your brother was a prisoner; we deeply regret that we have not been obliged to close our enquiry but will advise you at once if any further information should be obtained as we realise how very anxious you must be.

With sincere sympathy in your anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

F. J. George
SECRETARY.
26.9.19.

Final draft to:

The Clara Campion
4 Hay Terrace
Bristol
S. Wales.

about

619 S. Chapel C. Campion
4 1/2d.
Information obtained locally (if any) or from letters.

Enquiry included in M.N.M. Cable
Enquiry included in Deferred Cable
Name and Address of Enquirer

No. of
No. of

6th. June 18

Mr. Turnell
Esplanade Hotel
Perth

Relation of Enquirer to Enquirer.

(father)

State if next-of-kine.

On card: Henry Geo

m. R.S.

Secretary.
J.T. Campion Esq.

354, Bellahain Road.

Birmingham.

Miss Clara Campion,

4, Harp Terrace.

Brecon, Wales.

October 2nd 1919.

Dear

With reference to your enquiry for 619 L/Cpl Chas. Guest Campion, 4th Bttn A.I.F., we beg to inform you that he is now reported to be buried in Boursies Cemetery. We trust this information may be of value to you.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss.)

SECRETARY.
17 Nadlton St.

14 Oct 1919.

Dear Ma'am,

Your letter of the 2nd inst has just reached me, forwarded on from Brecon. I am grateful for the information that my brother, LIEUT. C. C. Cantion - 619 - 14th Battalion, 4th Reserves - is now known to be buried at Bourgeois. This is the first information we have had since he was reported missing in April 1917, so you can well imagine how thankful we are to know even this news. Would I be troubling you too much to ask if you can suggest anything that we might do to get further information about his death and burial? Thanking you, I remain

(Mrs) Clare Blair