

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

3806 Private
Wilton Campbell
Gamack

19th Battalion



1130801E

A.I.F. 19.

GAMACK, W.^C. 3806.

M. Nov. 6th 1917.

Informant said Gamack's initials were W.C. He recognised his number 3806 saying he was in the 9th reinforcement and came he thought from Sydney where he used to be a clerk in a bank. On Nov. 6th he was with a transport and was leading a pack horse with ammunition. Cpl. E. B. Nixon 18 of the same battn. was with him in front. A shell came and burst close to them and when Nixon looked round there was no sign of man or horse. These details were given to informant by Cpl. Nixon by letter and it happened informant believes on the ~~X~~ Zonnebeke Road near Passchendaele Ridge. All 3 of them were chums together

Inf: Sert. C. Dunn. 14. D. Coy.
No. 1, Aust. Gen. Hosp.
ROUEN. 19.1.18.

DIF.

Written Cpl. Nixon 9.2.18.

A.I.F. 19.

M
H. 6.11.17.

GAMACK, W.C.
GAMACK W.O. 3806.

Gamack was in the Bn. Transport Section. I knew him quite well at the IBD. at Staples where he was Pay Sgt. On 6th. Nov. he was one of a ration party carrying rations up to the line on a corduroy track running from Menin Road over Bellewaerde Ridge. It was dark, at night. I was in the line at the time but afterwards Pte. Weller who was with Gamack in the ration party told me that a shell fell close to Gamack. They shortly afterwards hunted round but could find no trace of him.

FJ.

Reference: Cpl. F.F. James. 4449.
St. John's Hpl.

Staples.
24.1.18.

S

Written Pte. Weller 9.2.18.

19th Battn
AIF

GAMACK
W.C. 3806

"Missing Nov 6th 1917"

Gamack was in transport section Sgt. C. Dunn Sgt of transport section 19th told me that Gamack was blown to pieces. Either Dunne of Lieut. J. Gray also transport section 19th Battn, both with Company could give information.

Witness:-

Sgt. J.S. Randall 2468
19th Battn
Hut 11
Westham

W.A.Rand
London,
24.1.18

Note written ^{Dunn} Gamack 23.1.18

letter returned marked "Hospital" ^S ^S no trace. #.1. 5-3-18.

19th Australian Imperial Force

Gamack, Pte. W.C. 3806
B Coy. 8th Pltn.

(M. Nov. 6. 1917).

" I was told by several men of his platoon who went over with him that Pte. Gamack was probably taken prisoner in the German 1st Line Trench at Bullecourt, several others were taken at that same time. "

Eye Witness - No. Cpl. Langmead told him.

Description - He used to be Sgt. but lost his stripes on joining that Battalion. Came from New Sth Wales.

Informant :- Pte. Walter Smith, 3252
19th Aus. Imp Force B Coy. 8th Pltn.

Home address :-
106, Bowmont St,
Pierremont,
New South Wales.
Craigleith Hospital,
Edinburgh.

4.2.17.
J.A.Blair.

not sent for

S

Hayze

4th February 1918.

19th A.I.F.

Gasmack W.C. No. 3806.

N. 6th November 1917.

I knew Gasmack for 9 months; he was medium height, well built, dark, about 26, very athletic, and a fine fellow. We were in the transport section of the Battalion together. His home was in Sydney N.S. Wales.

On the 16th November we were on a Ration Party leading mules at 20 yards intervals. Gasmack was behind me when a shell fell just where he was, and, looking for him after the explosion, no trace of man or mule could be found. The hole made by the shell was very large. It happened at 4.45 p.m. just as it got dusk. A party of three of us had a look round the following day but could find nothing.

Inf:- Driver T. F. Forrester No. 1082.
19th A.I.F. Transport Section,
Australian Camp,
Bouelles.

PH.

S

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

Gamack.
W.C. 3806

"Missing 6.11.17"

re 3806 Pte. W.C. Gamack. He and I were mates and were generally out together but on the night of the 6.11.17 I was not out so passed your letter on to Pte. W. Hopes who was next man to him and am enclosing his letter. A short description of Pte. Gamack is - Height 5'8 or 9", weight 11½ to 12 stone, dark hair and complexion rather broad forehead full face and a cyst high up on left cheek bone. No. 3806 Pte. W.C. (Bill) Gamack was greatly liked by all in this section and is sadly missed because of his cheery nature.

Letter from:- Pte. Wm. Weller
France 14.2.18.

London.
4.3.18.

S.

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

Gamsack.
W.C. 3806

"Missing 6.11.17"

Pte. W. Waller of 19th Battn. is in receipt of a letter from you making enquiries for an old friend of us both to wit No. 3806 Pte. W.C. Gamsack of same unit. As I am one of the most likely to be able to throw any light on matter Pte. Waller has referred the matter to me. Thus my writing to you. On night of 6.11.17 Pte. W.C. Gamsack with 13 others of same unit were detailed to proceed, each leading a pack horse laden with rations to a spot near front line. We were proceeding in single file I being leader of last horse. Pte. W.C. Gamsack being leader of horse in front of me. We were within about one and half miles of our destination when a shell landed on Corduroy Road cutting me off from rest of party, as it tore road from one side to the other with a depth of 8 or 10 feet on one side and tapering off towards the other. I was much shaken and bespattered with mud and was not long before I saw that further progress was impossible for me, so I started on my backward journey but not before I had a good look round to try and find any trace of whether any of my mates had been hit. But found no trace of man or horse, so thought then that I was only one affected by explosion. On my backward journey I called at a dressing station about 150 yards distant from place where shell burst. I told attendants - of said station - of my experiences and advised them if possible to make a thorough search of spot. Before leaving dressing station mentioned I met party returning and

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

-2-

Gamack.
W.C. 3806

then learned Pte. W.C. Gamack was missing. From where I found myself after recovering from effects of explosion, and taking into consideration that horse and man in front of Pte. W.C. Gamack had returned safely, I concluded that shell burst on spot where W.C. Gamack was at that time. These are facts as I know them. I also know there was a search made of spot that night by Sgt. in charge of our party, and also one in early hours of morning, but no trace of poor Bill Gamack was found. You will see by distance we were from front line at the time of the unfortunate incident there is no chance of his being wounded and prisoner in enemy hands.

London.

4.3.18.

Letter from:- 5927 Pte. W. Hops.

France 13.2.18.

S.

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

Gamack.
W.C. 3806

"Missing 6.11.17"

Re No. 3806 W.C. Gamack. He was attached to the Transport Section 19th Battn. On the night of 6.11.17 he was one of a party of 15 whose duties were to convey, by Pack Horses, rations to our battalion who were in the line on the Ypres front. On this particular night the enemy were shelling very heavily especially at a point, Westhoek Ridge, we were obliged to pass. A big shell burst where Pte. Gamack was. The N.C.O. in charge of the party when he discovered a man was missing, made a search but could find no trace of the man nor horse. As it was a very dark night, it was thought advisable to make another search next morning which was done thoroughly but with the same result. Enquiries were made at the different dressing stations but without success. There is no doubt in the minds of the Sgt. of the party and those who were with him, that he was blown to pieces. He was a thick set man about 5'8" in height, dark complexion, full face, between the eye and the ear on the cheek bone he had a lump, I think on the left side of the face. Letter from:- Cpl. E.B. Dickson.
London. France

4.3.18.

16.2.18.

S.

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

GAMACK,
W.C. 3806

"Missing 6.11.17."

Cpl. Nixon of 19th Battn, Transport Sect, was in charge of the ration party of pack horses going into front line when Gamack was blown up. He told me they could find no trace of him or his horse though they searched. Nixon is now with unit. I had a letter from him a few days ago.

Informant:- Belford, S. 170
19th Battn.

L.P.J.

Southall

London.

4.3.18.

S.

19th Battn.
A.I.F.

GAMACK,
W.C. 3806

"Missing 6.11.17."

Gamsack was in transport and a chap in the transports was up with him when he and his mule were blown to pieces: it was in Ypres sector but I am not quite sure where. Capt. Harrison O.C. Transports Coy. 19th, now with Coy would get information.

Informant:- D.R. Todd, 3937,
19th Battn. A.Coy.
Edt 9
Westham.

W.A. Rand.

London.
4.3.18.

S.

C O P Y

Statement made by No. 14 Sgt Dunn O. 19th Batta.Re No. 3806 Pte Gamsack W.C. 19th Btn.
Killing 5.11.17.

I knew Private Gamsack W.C. personally. I received a letter from Cpl E.B. Nixon, 19th Battalion saying that Private Gamsack had been killed whilst he was leading a pack mule towards the line, a shell burst, killed both Private Gamsack and the mule. I do not know anything more, and what I have stated is only hearsay.

Out Loud on

Dated at Verne Citadel this 18th day of March 1918.

(SGT) C. Dunn.

Statement made and signed before me

(SGT) J.S. Boylan.

Captain.

NOTE. E.B. Nicksor. - B.E.F. No. 8

*Belk
225*

19th Battalion,
A.I.F.

GAMACK.
Pte. W.C. No. 3806.

"Missing 6.11.17."

Informant described Gamack as about 5 ft 7 inches high, stout build, inclined to dark complexion, aged about 23. Worked in the Railway Audit Office Sydney.

Informant states that they both belonged to the 19th Battalion Transport. On or about 6.11.17 the Battalion was at Ypres holding the line. Gamack and others were engaged in bringing up rations with pack-horses. At the time shells were falling around and it is supposed that one hit Gamack and killed him and his horse at once. There was not the slightest chance of him being taken prisoner as they were well behind the lines.

Informant added that the opinion held of Gamack was that he was a thorough good fellow and a gentleman; and he and Informant were particular friends.

Informant: Driver J. Devlin, No. 832.
Transports 19th Battalion.

Home address: Coolahie, N.S.W.

E.G.
2.4.18.

No. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK.

file K S d b v
SYDNEY BUREAU.

A.I.F. 19th Battn.

GAYACK
Winton Campbell
3808 (H.Q.)
not 19874.

Missing 6/8/17

Killed in Action 6/11/17 I. B. 813.
Cert. by A.I.F. Hqrs 1/7/18.

London
4/7/18.

S

9C
GAMER

5927 Pte. Hopes,
19th Infantry Battalion,
Australian Imperial Force,
Abroad.

February 28th, 1918.

Dear Sir,

We thank you very much for your reply to our enquiry concerning 3806 W.O. GAMER, addressed to Pte. Weller. It was very good to you to write and the information you have sent us will be of much assistance to us, and of value to our enquirers.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.

OS

3806
W. C. GAMACK
19 Battalion
In 6-11-17

Ack: P. 6
26.2.18.

France
14-2-18.

Dear Miss Deakin,

19th

I am in receipt of your letter of 9-2-18 enquiring for No 3806 Pte W. C. Gamack. He and I were mates and were generally out together but on the night of the 6-11-17 I was not out, so passed your letter on to Pte W. Hopes who was next man to him and am enclosing his letter.

A short description of Pte W. C. Gamack is height 5ft 8 or 9 weight 11 1/2 to 12 stone dark hair and complexion rather broad forehead full face and a cyst high up on left cheekbone.

No 3806 Pte W. C. (Bill) Gamack, was greatly liked by all in this section, and is sadly missed because of his cheery nature.

Trusting this short description of Pte Gamack will be of use to you for identification purposes believe me to be

Yours Faithfully
Pte William Keller.

Act. P. 6. 8.
23. 2. 1918
3804

W. C. GAMACK
19th Bn.

France

16. 2. 18.

M. 6-11-17

S

4

Secretary

British Branch. I.C.S.

London.

Dear Secretary,

Your letter dated 9-2-18. Re No 3804

Re W. C. Gamack. 19th Bn.

He was attached to the

Standard Section 19th Battalion.

On the night of 6-11-17 he was one of a party of 15, whose duties were to accompany the pack horses, relations to the Battalion who were in the line on the opposite front.

On this particular night the enemy were shelling very heavily, especially at a point - West Wood. Ridge - we were obliged to pass. A big shell burst where W. C. Gamack was. He fell in charge of the party. When he discovered a man was missing, made a search but could

found no trace of the man nor horse.

As it was a very dark night, it was
thought advisable to make another search
next morning which was done thoroughly,
but with the same result.

Inquiries were made at the different
stations, but without success.
There is no doubt on the minds of the
left of the party & those who were with
them, that he was blown to pieces.

He was a thick set man about 5' 8" in
height, dark complexion, full face.

Between the eye & ear on the right side
he had a bump.

I think on the left side of the head.
Remitting I am unable to give you
more hopeful news.

Yours sincerely,
(CPT) E. B. Johnson

4-2-18

Ph Weller

19th Inf. Batta. G. I. 7

Abroad

alt

3806

Ph W. C. Gamack

19th Batta. G. I. 7

M 6-11-17

9-2-18
0-18

9-2-18

C

Cpl Nixon

19th Inf. Ballt. A. I. F.
Abroad

alt

3806

Pvt. W. C. Gamack

19th Inf. Ballt. A. I. F.

M 6-11-17

9-2-18
A. I. F.

at
25/2/14

3806 W. C. GAMACK

France,

19 Batt

13/2/14

Miss V. Deakin,

72. 6-11-17

"Secretary"

Australian Branch, B.R. & C.

Dear Miss Deakin,

Pte W. Keller of 19th Bat.

is in receipt of a letter from you
making enquiries for an old friend
of us both to wit (No 3806

Pte W. C. Gamack) of same unit.

As I am one most likely to be
able to throw any light on matter
Pte Keller has referred matter to me
thus my writing to you.

On night of 6/11/14. Pte W. C. Gamack
with 13 others of same unit were
detailed to proceed each leading
a pack horse laden with rations -
to a spot near front line.

We were proceeding in single file
I (the undermentioned) being leader
of last horse. Pte W. C. Gamack
being leader of horse in front
of me.

(2.)

We were within about one and half mls. of our destination when a shell landed on (C) cordoroy, road cutting me off from rest of party, as it tore road from one side to the other with a depth of 5 or 10 ft on one side and tapering off towards the other.

I was much shaken and bespattered with mud (but was not long in regaining my equilibrium) and was not long before I saw that further progress was impossible for me, so I started on my backward journey but not before I had a good look round to try to find any trace of whether any of my mates had been hit. But found no trace of man or horse, so thought then that I was only one affected by explosion. On my backward journey

(3.)

I called at a dressing station about 150 yards distant from place where shell burst. I told attendants - of said station of my experience, and advised them (if possible) to make a thorough search of spot.

Before leaving dressing station mentioned I met party returning and then learned Pte W. C. Gamaek was missing.

From where I found myself after recovering from effects of explosion, and taking into consideration that horse of man in front of Pte W. C. Gamaek had returned safe I concluded that shell burst on spot where W. C. Gamaek was at that time. These are facts as I know them. I also know there was a search made of spot that night by Sgt. in Charge of our party and also one in early hours of morning.

(4)

but no trace of Poor Bill Gamaack was found.

You will see by distance we were from front line at the time of the unfortunate incident there is no chance of his being wounded and prisoner in enemy hands.

Trusting this information will be of use to you.

Believe me

Yours Truly,

5924 Pte W. Hoopes