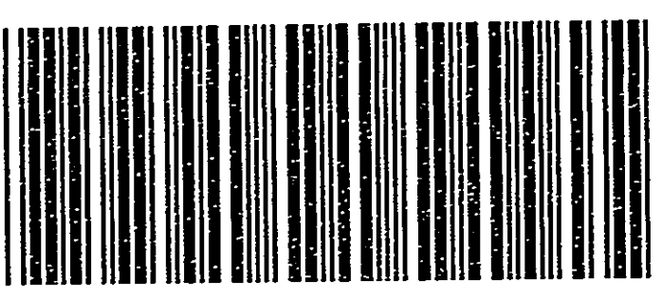
Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War
1DRL/0428

Captain
Walter Richard
Gilchrist

6th Field Company Engineers



1160606K

6th AUST. ENGRS. Capt. W. R. GILCHRIST.

K. 5.5.17. Det. D & B.

He was killed by a shell in front of Reincourt. I was about 20^{0} yards away from him at the time. I saw a cross made for his grave, but I know no more.

Reference: Cpl. A. J. Quin, 2035.

No.1 Australian, Rouen. 14.6.17.

FS.

AUST. ENGINEERS. 6 Fld.Coy. GILCHRIST.Capt.W.R

E. May 5th, 1917.

I saw him fighting with a revolver without hat or tunic out in the open to the right of Bullecourt. All the odds were against him. Then I saw him hit by a shell and killed outright. The top of his head was blown off. I believe he was brought in and buried in a new graveyard at Lagnicourt. The grave would be marked.

RDA.

References:- Palmer. 14540.
No. 18 Gen. Hosp.

Etaples
4.6.17.

A.I.F. 6th Fd.Co. Engrs. Capt.W. GILCHRIST

Killed 3.5.17. Det.D/B.

On the 3rd May/17 at Bullecourt, Capt.Gilchrist volunteered to lead an Infantry Battn. across to the Hindenberg line as all their Officers had been killed or wounded. I saw him start off early in the morning, he never came back and we were told afterwards that he had been killed by a shell and that it was impossible to get to him as the ground where he fell were simply churned by shells. He was the Adjutant of our Coy. and was a specially fine soldier who did not know what fear was. I have heard that, had he lived, he would probably have got the "V.C.".

Reference: Sapper W.Fairley, 14945, 6th Fd.Co.

No.9 General, Rouen, 11.7.17.

WEMR.

S.

th Field Coy. Engineers,
A. I. F.

Captain W. [illegible]christ.

"Killed 3.5.17"

I saw him killed at a hop over near Noreuil. His head was blown off by a shell early that morning. I never saw his grave, but told by several he was buried at Noreuil with another Officer same day as casualty. He was buried in a new Cemetery there, his grave was marked with a cross, number, name and battalion. He was very popular. I cannot refer to anyone for further information.

Witness:-
Sapper J. Palmer 14540
6th Fld.Coy.Engineers
3rd Aust.Aux.Hospital.
Dartford.

W.Oman.

London.
4.8.17.

S.

Eng. A. I. F.

Gilchrist, Cpt W., R
6th Field Coy Eng.,

(K. May 3/17. Det D & B)

"I know nothing of his actual death, but I hear that when leading the 5th Brigade over at Bullecourt he was killed by a bullet through the head and a cross was made to put on his grave, which was near Bullecourt. Informantion could be got from Major Harris, O.C. of the 6th Field Coy."

Eye-witness: No

Description: The Snag

Informant: Pte S. Sutton, 12221,
6th Field Co. Eng. A.I.F.,
1st Birmingham War Hospital,
Rubery.

Home address:
Ashton,
South Australia.

6d

15th Aug. 1917.
E.W. Silk.

6th Field Co. Engineers,
A.I.F.

GILCHRIST.
Capt. W.R.

"Killed in Action 5.5.17."

Captain Gilchrist was the only officer of that name in 6th Field Co. Engineers and was in command of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Sections. He was killed outright on 4th or 5th May 1917 at Noreuil by a bomb or shell which struck him in the head. I did not actually see it but was told about it at the time by men who did see it, and they were certain he was killed outright. He was, I believe, buried between Noreuil and the Railway line. I was gassed the evening of the day on which he was killed.

Informant: Sapper J. Palmer, No. 14540
6th Field Co. Engineers, 1st Section.

Home address: Wilgar Street, Bondi.

H.S.O.
22.3.18.
No. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

A.I.F.
6th FIELD COMPANY ENGINEERS.

GILCHRIST, Captain,
Walter R. - M.C.

"KILLED IN ACTION 3/5/17."

In answer to your letter of enquiry re the death and burial of the late Captain W.R. Gilchrist, 6th Field Engineers. I beg to state that Captain Gilchrist was killed in action on May 3rd, 1917, during operations against the Hindenberg line at Bullecourt, and was buried on the field. He was leading the 20th Battalion, who had suffered a slight reverse and the Battalion was rallied by Captain Gilchrist and a Signal Officer, who led the Battalion into action the second time, the Battalion having lost their Officers. I cannot state exactly the place Captain Gilchrist was buried, as it was near the enemy trenches which we captured. His death was instantaneous.

Letter from - Sapper A. Owens,
6th Field Company Engineers.
Home Address - 34 Cawthorn Street,
Southwark,
Adelaide, S. AUSTRALIA.

10/10/18.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

6th Fld. Coy. Eng.
A.I.F.

GILCHRIS T.
Capt. Walter Richard.

"Killed in Action 5.5.17"

Bib trace Germany

Cert. by Capt. Mills. 10.10.19.

Name	Unit	Casualty	Cause of Cancels
London. 24.10.19.		S.	

6th Aust. Engrs.

GILCHRIST, MC.

Capt. F.R.

Killed 3/5/17

Buried Isolated Grave about 20 yards S.S.E. of Pozieres, 1 mile N. of Contaimaison.

Extracted from Capt. Spedding's List of 16/10/19

Melbourne

23/12/19