

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

**3496 Lance Corporal
Andrew John Forbes**

53rd Battalion



1080804L

53rd Battn.
A. I. F.

L/Cpl. A. J. Forbes.
3496.

"Wounded & Missing 31.5.17."

I was out on patrol with L/Cpl Forbes in front of Le Transloy (after taking it) on 30th March last when he was hit in two places, through the leg and in the stomach. This was about 3.a.m. He called out for help, but we could not do anything. Lieut. Smith of A.Coy was the officer with us. I was wounded a little later. Forbes could possibly have been taken prisoner, but it is not likely.

Eye-witness:

Description: Was in A.Coy. tall, with moustache, rather gingery complexion.

Informant:

Pte. Thomas W. Buchanan, 5654.
A. Coy. 11 Pltn.
53rd Battn. A.I.F.

Home Address:

Princes St.,
Corrimal, New South Wales.
P. L. Waterhouse. (Seemed accurate)
12.5.17.

Off.M.

Note Written Lieut. Smith 30.5.17.

London. 6.6.17.

53rd A. I. F.,

Forbes, L/Cpl. A.J., 3496,
A. Company,

W. & M. March 31st 1917.

Informant states that "On Saturday 30th March 1917, we were out on patrol when Forbes was shot on the stomach and we left him for dead. Cummins and Leister also of the same Coy., were with me, but I cannot say what became of them."

Eye Witness: Yes.

Description: Game-away Called "Andy" tall, dark.

Informant:-- L/Cpl. John Grier, 1918,
53rd A. I. F., A. Coy., 3 Pltn.,
"Summerlea" Hosp:
East Finchley.

Home address:-- 341, Brighton Rd.,
S. Croydon, Surrey.

1.6.17.
H.M. Hewson.

off M.

53rd. Australians.

Forbes, L/cpl. ^{A.9} ~~H.F.~~ 3496.

(W. & M. Mar. 31/17.)

" There was a L/cpl. Forbes in A Co who was shot in the stomach by a rifle or machine gun bullet about Mar. 31st., close to the village of Danguess(?). Pte. Bogen of the 53rd Australians, A Co., tried to bring Forbes in but he was too heavy for him. Owing to heavy shell fire he had to be left near the German lines. Forbes was about 5'11", thick-set, fair hair & moustache & about 34 yrs. of age."

Eyewitness:-

Description:-

Informant:- Pte. William Plummer, 2470.
53rd. Australians, A Co., -II Plat.
Tooting.

Home address:- Long Creek, Via Mudgee, N.S.W.

6/6/17.
W. Inglis-Jones.

*Written for Bogen 7.7.17
Taken from S/P's*

09/11/17

(COPY)

Statement made by No. 2470a Pte Plummer W.H. 53rd Bn
 31.8.17 C.A. 3
 re No. 4396 L/C Forde A.J. 53rd Bn
 Killed & Missing 31.3.17

I have no personal knowledge of the fate of 3496 L/C
 Forbes A.J. 2506 Pte G.H. Williams A. Coy 53rd Bn saw him wounded
 near Doigalies 31.3.17 Williams has now been returned
 to Australia. Williams stated to me that he saw Forbes
 lying in No Man's Land and thought he was shot through the
 stomach. They could not retain the position and he did not
 see any more of Forbes.

Dated at Westham this 17th day of August 1917.

(Sgd) W.H. Plummer

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) D. Graat.

P. J. A.

53rd A.I.F.

L/Cpl. A. J. FORBES. 38/46. ^{Hg}

W & M. 31.3.17.

Informant states that Forbes was sent out on a night patrol on March 31st. Informant was also one of the party which consisted of 20 men. 3 men were wounded, one of them being Forbes. Unfortunately he had to be left where he fell, and two days afterwards, when our men advanced over this ground, no trace of him whatever could be found.

Reference: Sgt Lorking, 3373.

No.11 Con.Camp Buchy Nr.Rouen. 9.6.17.

GJS.

04/4/17

53rd A. I. F.,

Forbes, L/Cpl. A.J., ³⁹⁹⁶~~3996~~

W. & M. March 31st 1917.

"L/Cpl. Greer of A. Coy., (53rd A.I.F.) told me that Forbes was shot in the stomach and was left lying against the German wire as he was unable to stand the pain of being lifted. This was on a patrol near Mourdries ? at about the end of March or beginning of April. Greer is now wounded in England, and will be able to give further details."

Eye Witness: No, told by L/Cpl. Greer, A.Coy., 53rd A.I.F.

Description: A well built Irishman, about 6ft. high, with fair moustache.

Informant:-- Pte. A. R. Bell, 2030,
53rd A. I. F., A. Coy., I Plth.,
Richmond Military Hospital,
Grove Road.

Home address:--

A.G. Campbell.
19.6.17.

See L/C Greer's report

off. Ma.

Havre

16th July, 1917.

53rd AUSTRALIANS

FORBES; L/Cpl. A.J. 3496

W & M. 3.3.17.

He was in A Co., 1st Platoon. He was living in New South Wales but his home was in the North of Ireland. I think he had been on the trams and he also spoke about farming. His christian name was Andrew. His number as given is about correct. He came over with the 11th Reinforcements to the 4th battalion. A number of the men were transferred to the 53rd battalion. I was in the same platoon with him and saw him regularly. I was told by L/Cpl. J. Grogan of A Co., 1st Pltn. that he had seen Forbes very severely wounded about the stomach when out on Fighting Patrol and that they had to leave him behind. This was about three miles directly in front of Bapaume. I saw the patrol go out, and both the men were in it under the command of Lieut. Smith of A Co., 2nd Pltn.

Informant: Pte. H. Wood, 3469
53rd Australians, A Co., 1st Pltn.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

Pif A.

P.I. H. Wood B. 2
CMR

53rd Battn.
A. I.

Forbes.
L/Cpl. A. J. 3493.

"Wounded & Missing 31.5.17"

In the early hours of the morning of March the 30th I took out a specially selected fighting patrol on a special mission. L/Cpl. Forbes was one of the party. We had a smart scrap with the enemy, during which L/Cpl. Forbes was wounded in the stomach. Eventually we were forced to retire and I detailed a man off to bring Forbes back. He afterwards reports that Forbes had died of wounds and that he had been able to get him back on account of the intense rifle fire. Several days afterwards when the enemy retired, the post was visited by an officer, who reported that there were no graves, and no bodies lying about. Height 6'1" Complexion fair, clean shaven, thin, blue eyes.

Letter from:-

Capt. W. E. Smith.

France. 29.6.17.

Off.M.

London.
24.7.17.

53rd Batn
A.I.F. A Coy

FORBES
L/Cpl. A.J. 3496

Wounded and Missing"

Killed in Action 31.3.17. prev. reported wounded and
Missing
Cert. by A.I.F. HQrs 10.12.17.

P.I. Off. M.

London.
19.12.17.

51Q
Statement made by No. 1918 L/C Grier J. 53rd Btn

re No. 2496 L/C Forbes A.J. 53rd Btn
Wounded & Missing 31.3.17

L/Cpl Forbes and myself were out on patrol and were shot
L/Cpl Forbes was shot in the stomach, some 20 yards away,
I crawled as best I could over them, he was groaning but too
in pain to make any statement further a few minutes dead.
7 within dead

Dated at Pinchley this 1st day of August 1917.

(Sgd) J. Grier L/C

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) H.N. Shehe Capt.

*6d off clb-
PI
Pif a*

3 copies

L/cpl. A. J. Forbes. 3496.
53 Batt.

See under.

Pvt. S. M. Clifford 523.
44 Batt.

S. J. 17.

Lt. A. J. Forbes. 3496. 53 B.A.
see under.

Pte. S. M. Clifford 523. 44 B.A.

1-8. 17.

Leut. SMITH / AC

30.5.17

53 Batt AIF

BEE

for Lepl

£ 3496 A. J. FORBES

53 Batt AIF

W & M. 31. 3. 17

S
M. 12.6.17

Section FRONT France

AS TO		Battalion and Regiment.		Co.	Pla- toon	Casualty.
		49 Australian I.F.				M. Sept. 3/15.

BY		Battalion and Regiment.		Co.	Pla- toon	Home Address.
		49 Australian I.F.		B.	L.G.S.	at 15 Gradwell St. Stockport.

INFORMANT

(first person).

~~George Rolfs (49.C) is a prisoner of war
an officer whose name I forget. He was
wounded.~~

RECEIVED

CARLTON HOUSE

THE FOLLOWING:

ve name, number, etc.,
man who told him.

ant says a man was killed,
th instantaneous, and was
buried, and if so where?

any other man of same
Co. or Battalion?

in his speech, light curly hair, used to write poetry.
"Big George" was one of the most popular men in the battalion.

know a
reliable.

Signature of
Searcher

Tanet M. Payne

Date of Report

April 24. 1917.

ack
FM 527.17

France
29/6/17

Re memo concerning 3496. L/Cpl. Forbes

3496 L/Cpl A. J. ~~FORBES~~ In the early hours of the morning of march the 30th. I took out a specially selected fighting patrol, on a special mission. L/Cpl Forbes was one of the party.

W.M. 31.8.19 53 Batt
O.H.M.
4

We had a smart snap with the enemy, during which, L/Cpl. Forbes was wounded in the stomach.

Eventually we were forced to retire, and I detailed a man off to bring Forbes back.

He afterwards reports that Forbes had died of wounds, and that he had been unable to get him back on account of the intense rifle fire.

Several days afterwards, when the enemy retired, the post was visited by an officer, who reported that there were no graves, and

and no bodies lying about:

Description.

Height: 6'-1"

Complexion fair

Face clean shaven, thin

Eyes blue.

W. G. Smith Capt.

July 9th, 1917.

Capt. W. E. Smith.
53rd Battn. A.I.F.
B. E. F.

Dear Sir,

We have to thank you very much for your letter of June 29th in answer to our enquiry concerning:

3496 L/Cpl. A. J. FORBES, 53rd Battalion, A.I.F.

The clear and detailed information you have given will be of much assistance to us and of value to our enquirers.

Yours faithfully,

V.D

Secretary.

He.

Rt. BOGEN

AC

53 BATT AIF

BEE

for

3496 Lt. A. J. FORBES

53 BATT AIF

W. M. 31 3. 17

EW.

10.7.17

FRONT

France

ON AS TO		Battalion and Regiment.		Co.	Pla- toon	Casualty.
Rank		2nd A.S. Y.	B.	-		D/H Dec 23/1916
BY		Battalion and Regiment.		Co.	Pla- toon	Home Address.
Rank		2nd A.S. Y.	C	9		

OF INFORMANT

(in first person).

1917. 2nd A.S. Y. B.C. attached to my
back to the Chalk Pit - in the

lieve he placed him among others

of him afterwards but would

at 2/31. acting as company Clerk at

D. Crossman was acting as a

OF THE FOLLOWING:

give name, number, etc.,
the man who told him.

See above

Informant says a man was killed,
death instantaneous, and was
body buried, and if so where?

Were any other man of same
in Co. or Battalion?

RECEIVED

20 MAY 1917

CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE.

Signature of
Searcher

Arthur Allen

Date of Report

12 May 1917

Do not correspond on spaces below, only answer the questions!!!

Already listed



Enquiry Department for Wounded, Missing and Prisoners of War.

BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY,

51 Dawson Street, DUBLIN.

Please make the following enquiry, and include name in printed list:—

Rank Capt Full Name St. J. Forbes
Number 3496 Regiment Australian Imperial Force Battalion 53rd
Company (this is essential) St. Platoon 14th Brigade

Where was he fighting? France Date of last letter? _____

Has any official notification been received—if so, what, and from whom? (date of casualty essential) "W. & M. since 31st March 1917"

RECEIVED

21 JUL 1917

CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE

If any envelopes addressed to him have been returned, how are they marked and dated?

Have you enquired at any other office of the Society or taken other steps to investigate? _____

Was he a good correspondent? _____

Enquirer's name (~~Miss~~ Miss) Jane Forbes

Address c/o BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY,
CO. DUBLIN BRANCH.

Relationship of Enquirer to man On behalf of Mother Date of Enquiry 20/7/17

REMARKS: Please send copies of any reports you
may have received.

Inf. files
in files

N.B.—You will greatly assist our difficult work if you will kindly inform us directly you get any further definite news from sources other than this office.

[For further remarks see over

September 17th, 1917.

Miss Jase Forbes,
C/o B.R.C.S.,
C/o Dublin Branch,
51, Dawson St, DUBLIN.

Dear Madam,

We are very sorry to inform you of a further
unofficial report sent through Head Quarters about

No 3496 L/Cpl. A.J. Forbes
53rd Battalion,
A.I.F.

confirming the evidence already sent you and strengthening
our worst fears as to his fate.

No 1918 L/Cpl. J. Gurr, of the same unit, gave evidence
to the effect that he was out on patrol with L/Cpl. Forbes when
he was badly wounded in the stomach, some seventy yards distant
from him. Informant who was also wounded crawled to him but
found that he was too seriously wounded to speak and within a
very few minutes his death took place.

We are sincerely sorry to send you these reports but we
fear that there is very little hope of his being alive, should
we obtain any further news you may rest assured that we shall
send it to you as we know how terribly hard it is to endure

silence and suspense.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy in your
great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.

A M for L A W.

24th December, 1917.

Miss Jane Forbes,
C/o British Red Cross Society,
51 Dawson Street,
D u b l i n.

Dear Madam,

Re L/Cpl. A. J. FORBES : 496, 53rd Batn. A. Coy. A. I. F.

We deeply regret to inform you that the above soldier who was previously reported wounded and missing is now reported killed in action on the 31st March, 1917.

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,

SECRETARY.

*P M for
LAW*