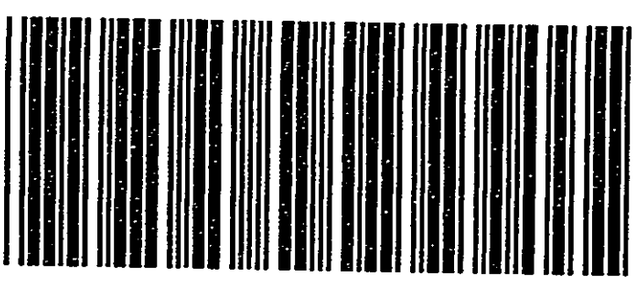
Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War
1DRL/0428

Major
John Arthur Higgon

32nd Battalion



1330411D

32nd Battn.
A.I.F.

HIGGON
Major J.A.

Killed in action 20-7-16.

Relatives have heard that the report of Major Higgon having been killed in action is incorrect, as the Major was seen to write in his note book after he was hit, and his body was not recovered, although many others killed at the same time and place were brought in for burial.

P.I.

France.

A.I.F. 22.

Higgins Major J.A. K. 20.7.16.

I knew Major Higgins he was O.C. of A.Co. He was an Englishman and had formerly belonged to the Pembroke Yeomanry and had only joined us about 8 months previously and was one of the 1st. men I saw killed. I saw him lying dead just on top of our parapet, on the 19.7.16, S. of Armentieres. I followed his Co. over the parapet and he was killed just as he got on the top. He was hit through the head. His helmet fell off as he got over and he was shot between the eyes. I am quite certain of the above facts.

HSO.

References: Pte.J.F. Davis. 472. 8 M.G.C. formerly 22.B.VIII.
5 A.D.B.D.

Staples. 24th.Aug.1916.

P.I.

A.I.F. 32 HICCOX Major J.A. (attached)

K.July 20/1918 Det:

I saw this officer in a splendid brave way, but rather foolhardy all the same, standing on the parapet with his walking stick in his hand, shouting "come on boys", and then I saw him shot dead. It was just after the first wave had gone over and in order to encourage the others I suppose, he stood up and did this. He was a fine brave man. We only held the position that we took 12 hours and the came back for want of ammunition. This was on the 19th July at Fleurbaix. I do not know where or whether he was buried.

Informant: Pte Cocking. 1999.
H.S. "Dieppe".
BOULOGNE. Aug.30/18 EFH

P.1.

32nd A. I. F.

Higgon, Major I.A.

(K. July 20th 1916. Details D & B)

Informant states that "On the night (about 7 p.m.) of 19th July at Pozieres, I was close to Major Higgon, he was shot through the eye, the left one I believe, Major Higgon called out "I am bleeding to death", he spun round, and fell down dead".

Reference: Pte Hedley McFarlane, 149,
32nd A. I. F.,
Brook War Hospital,
Woolwich.

Home address:
Ovingham Avenue,
Adelaide,
N.S.W.

P.1.2.

4th Sept. 1916.
Reginald Brooke.

32nd. Australian Infantry. Higgon, Major J.A.

(K. July 20/16.)

Informant states that on July 20/16. at Fleurbaix Major J. A. Higgon was shot through the head and killed instantly as he was going over the parapet. About 6 in the evening.

Reference:-- Orderly Room Sergt. P. A. Ohlstrom, 416.
32nd Australian Infantry,
Northants War Hospital,
Duston.

Home address:-- Edithburgh,
S. Australia.

Sept: 7th
MacKinnell.

P.1.

A.I.F. 32nd. HIGGON, Maj. J.A.

E. July 20/16.

Sgt. Newstead who is or was in Leicester Hospital told me the Major was blown to pieces with a shell at Fleurbaix.

Informant: Gronow, 943
Ward 36, Harefield Hosp.

D.P. Dickson,
20.9.16.

E.I.

London
25-9-16.

28th Battn.
A.I.F.,

Higgins.
Major.J.A.

Killed July 20th 1916.

I was Signaller to Major Higgins and was close to him in the advance on July 20th. when he was hit - and fell - I had a look at him and he seemed to me dead then - but I had to go on. He was a very nice soldier and a good Officer - I would like to see his relations. [illegible]
Information is very intelligent and a fine type of Australian.

References:- Kelly P.W. 1625
28nd Battn. A.I.F., A.Coy.
Fulham Military Hospt. Ward 8.2

10/9/1916

London
V.Cholmondley,
26/9/16

P.I.

32nd Battn.,
A. I. F.

HIGGON,
Major J.A.

K. 20th July-16. Details.

About 9 p.m. on 19th July at Fleurbaix, Informant saw the Major lying dead in No Man's Land, in front of our barb wire. He was in a half sitting position. Informant does not know if the body was recovered.

Ref; Pte. A. J. S. Dawes, 3079,
32nd. Battn. A. Coy.,
Woodcote Pk. Hosp. 23-10-16.

London,
26-10-16.
P.C.

Off.M.

32nd Batt.
A.I.F.,

HIGGON
Major J.R.

"Killed July 20/16"

Witness states he saw Major Higgon killed instantaneously by an explosive bullet in the head at Fleurbaix 19th July. Does not know where he was buried. Witness was close to Major Higgon going over in the front line in a charge.

Reference:- Sgt. Stolz 17
A.Co. 32nd Batt. A.I.F.,
Perham Downs.
No 1 Command Depot.

Note: Not sent on.

London
22.3.17.
E.A.W.

P.I..

32nd Btn.
A.I.F.
LATE Pembroke Yeo.

HIGGON
Major John Arthur.

"Killed in Action 19.7.16"

No trace Germany
Cert. by Capt. Mills. 10.10.19.

London.
18.10.19.

P.I.

26, Eaton Square,
S.W.

RECEIVED
1 JUL 1916

Killed July 19th

Details wanted

Major J. A. Higgon
Pembroke Yeomanry
attached.
32nd Batt.
17th Inf. Bde.
Australian Imperial Forces

Enquiries Mrs A. B. Higgon
26. Eaton Sqre S.W.

Reg. Mrs J. A. Higgon.
South Broom House
Devizes
Wilts.

Southbroom House
Denizes
Sept 18th 16

RECEIVED
19 SEP 1916

Dear Miss Deakin –

Thank you very much for your letter of the 16th & for all the trouble you have taken –

I hope to go & see

No. 1625 Pte P. W. Kelly
32nd Batt. on Wednesday
or Thursday Sept 2
am writing to the
hospital to find out
the hours they
allow visitors —
Again thanking You.

Yours faithfully
+ Lucline N. Higgan

+ This lady has arranged to call today in me re taking up work in this office.

8858

September 1st 1916.

Mrs. A.B.Higgon,
25, Eaton Square,
S.W.

Dear Mrs Higgon,

We have received a report concerning your brother-in-Law Major J.P. Higgon, 32nd Battalion, which I am afraid confirms his death, but from the particulars, Major Higgon meet his death in the grandest and kindest way possible. No. 472 Private J.F.Davis 8th Machine Gun Company, formerly 32rd Battalion described your brother as having belonged to the Pembroke Yeomanry, and that he had only ~~joined~~ 32rd Battalion, two months, at the attack at Armentieres July 14th 1916. Private Davis followed Major Higgon over the parapet when they reached the top he saw the Major killed instantaneously having been shot between the eyes.

I hope the Glory of his sacrifice and the knowledge that Major Higgon bore no suffering, will be of comfort to you all.

With sympathy in your bereavement.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

8858.

September 7th 1916.

Mrs.A.B.Higgon,
26, Eaton Square
S.W.

Dear Madam,

We have received further details concerning the death of your brother-in-Law Major J.N. Higgon, 32nd Battalion, and they are only a confirmation of what you know already, that his end was sudden and glorious.

No. 1999 Private Cocking ,Hospital Ship "Dieppe",Boulogne reports that he saw Major Higgon standing on the parapet shouting to his men and encouraging them to the attack in a splendid brave way. After the first line had gone over. The informant did not know where he was buried.

We are sure that it will be a comfort to have these additional particulars. At your suggestion we have written to his wife Mrs.J.A.Higgon, South Broome House, Devizes, Wilts. giving her all the information we have sent you.

With sympathy in your bereavement.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

7th September 1916

Mrs A.J.Higgon,
South Broom House,
Devizes,
Wilts.

Dear Madam,

We have received the following details of the circumstances of the death of your husband, Major J.A.Higgon, 23rd Batt. proving that he died in the grandest way possible. No.472.Private J.F.Davis 32nd Bt. 8th Machine Gun Company reports that he followed your husband over the parapet and that when they reached the top he saw the Major killed instantaneously, having been shot between the eyes. No 1999 Pte.Cooking also tells us that on July 19th at Fleurbaix He saw Major Higgon standing on the parapet shouting "Come on boys" and encouraging his men by his brave example. He was then killed instantaneously. He described him as a fine brave man.

We hope that you will derive some comfort from the knowledge that his death was glorious and painless and that he set a splendid example to his men.

With deepest sympathy,

Yours faithfully,

V. D. Peck
Pa 5[illegible]

8358

16th Sept. 1916.

Mrs J. A .Higgon,

South Broom House,

DEVIZES, WILTS.

Dear Madam,

Since writing you on Sept. 7th we have had a report from No. 1625 Pte., P. W. Kelly, 32nd Batn. A.I.F., concerning your husband, Major J.A.Higgon, 32nd Batn.

The informant was signaller to your husband, and was very close to him when he was hit and killed. He describes him as a very fine soldier and a good officer - surely, the highest praise from one soldier of another. He has expressed a wish to see some of the Major's relations and we are sure that he would deem it a kindness if you could go and see him. He is at present a patient in Ward C 1, Fulham Military Hospital, Hammersmith, recovering from wounds received on the same day, July 20th, at Fleurbaix.

Hoping that you will derive some comfort from

these further details, and assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

V.D.
pn F.V.D

Secretary.