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

7004 Private
Thomas John Higgs

13th Battalion



1330508K

A.I.F. 13th Btn

J.T.J HIGGS 7004

"K/Action"

Killed in action 17-10-17
ert. by A.I.F.Hqrs 11st 9-3-18.

London
11-3-18

S

A.I.F. 13. HIGGS, T.J. 7004.

K. Oct 17th 1917.

I can only call to mind one man of this name with the Battalion a private who was killed Oct at Passchendaele. I believe information concerning him could be got from Pte Pender, still with the Battalion and also Pte Penberthy still with us. The man I refer to was tall, thin, clean shave reddish hair, aged about 21, thin face, good features.

Inf: Sgt J.A.Sawyer. 30/A831. D.Co.
Billets,
BOULOGNE. 24.5.1918.

ARD

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Written Pte Pender + Penberthy 31. 5-18

13th Battn.
A.I.F.

HIGGS
R.J. 7004

"Killed in Action 17-10-17"

Re Pte.Higgs R.J. 7004. He came from Adelong, N.S.W. On the night of Wednesday 17th Oct. 1917 he was attached temporarily to the M.Gunners of D.Coy. We went up to front line that night. When we reached our objective poor Higgs was missing. He was found by the Pioneers of our Battn. on the following morning. His death was caused by shell fire. He was buried by our Pioneers in the field near Zonnebeke onthe same morning. We were all very sorry as Tom was such a quiet unassuming young chap and a splendid soldier.

Letter from:- Pender. Alf.W.,
D.Coy. 13th Battn.,
10-6-18

London
17-6-18

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13th Battalion A.I.F.

HIGGS T. J. Pte.
No. 7004.

"Killed 17/10/17"

Informant states that Higgs was killed on 17th Oct 1917 at Zonnebeke by a shell and Higgs was in Informant's Coy and the Coy was going up to the front line at the time. Informant did not see Higgs killed, and did not see his dead body after he was killed at the time he was killed and was told about it about 1/4 of an hour afterwards by other men in the Coy who said Higgs had been killed and two men wounded by the same shell.

Informant: JONES Pte A.J. No. 6543, 13th Battalion
No 4 Australian General Hospital,
RANDWICK.

Home address:
Lower Fort Street,
DAWES POINT.

20/6/18.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

A.I.F.
13th Battn.

HIGGS, T.J.
7004. Pte.

KILLED. 12/10/17.

I knew Higgs well - he was in D. Company with me. He was ginger-headed, a solid and well built man.

We were just going into the line on the Ypres front on the above date. He was carrying Machine Gun Panniers with Corporal George Davies. A shell came over when he was on the duck board and killed him instantly. He was placed aside in a Sunken Road to be buried, but I can't say where he was buried as we had to go on.

INFORMANT:- PIGGOTT, J.A., L/Cpl., 3423,
D. Co., 13th Battalion,
No.4 Aust.General Hospital,
RANDWICK.

W.M.J.
26/6/18.

Private address:
Sloane Street,
GOULBURN, N.S.W.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

"Killed 17/10/17"

Higgs was killed at Zonnebeke just near the big gas tank between 10 p.m. and midnight, by a shell, being badly blown to pieces so must have been killed instantaneously. He was next to me when we were going in to the line. I did not see the body but the other fellows went back the next morning and saw it. He was in my Company and was in the machine gun crew at the time. I dont know anything about his burial. He was a ginger complexioned chap about 5' 9" and I think he was the only man of the name in the Company.

Informant:- Sgt. J. Osborn 1590,
13th Battn., D Coy.,
Sutton Veny.

H.E.H.

London
27/6/18
J.E.A.

S

A. I. F. 13th Bn. HIGGS, T. J. 7004.

Killed Oct.17th/17.

Higgs was killed by a shell as the Unit was coming out of Polygon Wood. It was not noticed at the time and it was only when we got to the Belgian Barracks at Ypres that he was found to be missing. A party was made up to go back on the route to search for him. He was found in a position well off the line we had come down on, showing that after he had been wounded he had wandered about. His identity disc was taken off his neck and brought in. The body was left. There were wounded men who had to be left there because we could not get them in at that time. I was not with the search party but was present when they returned with the disc. It was about 3.0 o/c in the morning when we marched out and we were just changing over. He was in the same Coy. as myself but was marching in the rear. It was dark when he was hit but light when he was found dead.

Reference: Pte.O'Toole, W.J. 2647,
No.1 Aust.General, Rouen, 6.7.18.

GPO.

A.I.F. 13. HIGGS, T.J. 7004.

K.Oct.17/17. Det. D/B.

Higgs is a specially thin, tall man, wiry, dark brown hair, aged 30 or 21. Pte. A.W.Pinder, now att. to H.Q. as the Padre's batman, told me that he had seen Higgs hit and killed at Passchendaele. He could give full details of his death.

Reference: Sgt.J.A.Sawyer, 1831. D. 13.

No.12 General, Rouen. 10.7.18.

JWA.

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A. I. F. 13th Bn. HIGGS, T. J. 7004.

Killed Oct.17/17. Det.D/B.

We had just got through Zonnebeke that night marching into the line and Fritz was shelling the road. One of the shells fell at the left of Higgs (we were marching in single file) and he was killed instantly. I was leading the Plat. and he was the 4th or 5 th man behind me. The shell also wounded 2 other men. The wounded men were taken out and I think Higgs must have been removed also, because we were not far from Battn. H.Q. We went past the spot next morning on fatigue and his body was not there. I did not hear any more about him but I have no doubt whatever that he was buried. He was fairly tall and inclined to be ruddy. He was from the country somewhere in N.S.W. but I do not know exactly where. I did not know much about him as he had only recently been transferred to our Plat.

Reference: Sergt.F.Brandt, 5337, D.XV. late XIII.

No.1 Aust.General, Rouen, 17.7.18.

GPO.

Havre

30th July 1918.

A.I.F. 13.

Higgs T.J. No. 7004.

K. 17th Octr 1917. Dat D/B.

He came from Adelaide, N.S.Wales, single. He was first reported missing when we got to our objective at Passchendaele, and then ~~on the~~ about a week later we were positively assured that he had been buried by the Pioneers, but I do not know where.

Inf:- Pte A.W.Pender No. 30/1814.
A.I.F. 13. D.
Amb. Train. No. 21.

RBS.

PP.

13th Batt. A.I.F. Higgs. T. J. Pte. 7004.

(K. Oct. 17/17) Dets. D/B.

"Higgs was killed at Zonnebeke. He was carrying rations. He was killed instantly by a shell. I was going along with him. He would be buried in a shell hole".

Eyewitness:

Description:

Informant: Porter, [redacted] 5167.
13th Bn. A.I.F.,
1st Southern General Hqspital,
Stourbridge.

Home address:
St. Clair, Wardale Road, Merrick Wells, Sydney.

H. N. Collis.

9th Aug. 1918.

13th Battalion, A.I.F. HIGGS, P.J. Pte. No. 7004.

"Killed In Action, 17/10/17."

Private P. J. Higgs was in "D" Company of the 13th Battalion with me. He was a friend of mine, and came from Adaminaby, New South Wales. I am a native of Adaminaby, and I knew him well. We were boys together. On or about the above mentioned date, 17/10/17, we were being moved from the front line to the support trenches, in the neighborhood of Passchendale. Another mate of mine called out to me, "Your mate Higgs is gone, a shell burst and killed him outright." My address is Adaminaby.

Informant - W. T. Shinn (Private) No. 6303,
13th Battalion.
Home Address - Adaminaby,
New South Wales.
Present Address - Randwick Hospital,

W.C.E.
No. 4 Australian General Hospital.
SYDNEY.
22/1/19.

S. Thicd Staff

SYDNEY BUREAU.

Acted Pte 14.6.18 [illegible]

7004
S. J. Higgs
B Batty
Kui A 17.10.17

D. Co 13th Bath
a 37
June 10/18

Dear Miss Deakin

Re your enquiry relating to Pte Higgs 7004. He came from Adelong N.S.W. On the night of Wednesday 17th Oct 1917 he was attached temporarily to the Machine Gunners of D Co; we went up to front line that night, when we reached our Objective poor T Higgs was missing, he was found by the Pioneers of our bath on the following morning, his death was caused by Shell fire, he was buried by our Pioneers in the field near Zonabeke on the same morning. We were all very sorry as Tom was such a quiet unassuming young chap & a splendid soldier. With kindest regards from yours

Sincerely

Alf W Pender (Bt)