

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

**903 Sapper
Frederick Hill**

**2nd Division Signal Company
Engineers**



1330814K

M E D

2 Div. Sig. Co. 4. 7. E.
3rd Section Australian Imperial Force,
Hill F., 903,

K/A 27.8.15 Frederick Sig. Co.

Informant states that on or about Aug. 27th after landing at Suvla Bay the general impression was that above must have been killed by shell fire. Informant stated that our men were not within near enough distance of enemy to have been taken prisoner, but they were exposed to terrific fire of shrapnel and high explosive.

Reference: W. Dansford Beahan, 48981,

4^R Northern General Hosp. Lincoln
Wellington V.A.D. Hospital,

Home address:

c/o Mrs. King,

10 Smith Terrace, Chelsea.

London,
Nov. 29th 1915,
W.W. Robinson.

M.

Asst. Engineer
3rd Sect. Sig. Coy

M E D

M. Aug. 29/15 F. Hill

Unoff. P.

Govt K/A 27.8.15 Frederick 903

About August 28 in Australia Valley - on the extreme left of the Australian line a witness sent him and Pto W. Heap together about 4 15 p.m. to 'connect up' with Col. Adams of 14 A.I.F. by telephone. but Col. Adams sent them out with first line of the charge. They were never found again, but the telephone wire they were carrying was traced right up to the Turkish trench. They then "cut out" all lines except this one and could hear someone's voice at the end of it, but could not distinguish the words. About 5 ft 9 - 19 years - clean shaven - dark - came from Melbourne. Heap was in same signal section but came from Western Australia.

Cpl. J. Drain 652

4 Brigade Head Quarter Staff

MALTA

St. Elmo

6.1.16.

R.S.O.

1.

A.F.E.
2 Div. Sig. Co.

HILL
Sig. F. 903.

M. 20.8.15.

Fredrick

Witness says Hill and he were in the same section, and that there was only one man named Hill in the section. On 27.8.15 there was a charge from Herring's Post, and witness was in the observation trench, acting as orderly to General Monash. Two signallers were detailed, to go with the 14th Battn and keep up communication. Witness ^{Hill} saw ~~both~~ pass through the observation trench on his way to Herring's Post to report, and after that he never saw him. The charge was practically a failure, owing to the whole ground being enfiladed by machine guns.

Ref:- Sap, L.G.Selwood, 646, 3 Bridging Section, 2 D.S.C.
14.1.16. 1st Stat. Hosp. Ismailia, Egypt. M.
W.J.Isbister,

A.F.E.
2nd Div. Sig. Co.

HILL
Spr F. 903.

M. 27/8/15.

Hedrick

Witness went with Hill and Heap as far as the headquarters of the 14th Btn, Australia Gully, on Aug 27. They joined up with the 14th Btn and went out in the first line of charge. Both Hill & Heap were carrying field telephones with wires attached. They would make an excellent mark for bullets. They were never seen again. They are the only two men missing from the company. Everybody in the coy believes they were killed, though no direct evidence has yet been secured to show that.

Ref:- Cpl H. Pyman, 661,
2nd Div. Sig. Co.,
O/S Base, Giza, CAIRO.

S.A.
15/8/16.

M.

*Cable
on S. K.*

M E D

Ans. list

2nd Signal Company,
Australian Force, *Frederick*
Hill, Sapper F., 903

(Reported Missing July 27th 1915)
now K/A 27.8.15.

Informant states "I was orderly attached to the 2nd Signal Company, 4th Brigade, Headquarters for 16th Batt. H.Q. from August 5th to 3rd September. I was alternating duty with Heap and Hill up to about the third week in August and saw them last when they were sent out to lay wires about 16th or 17th Aug in Australian Gully. They went out during the advance towards Hill 971 at Anzac and never returned. When we got to the Turkish trenches the wires had been laid but there was no trace of Heap or Hill or telephones. Date should be amended to 17th August. For all I know they may be prisoners but they were certainly not missing 27th July." Informant was not an eye-witness.

Reference: Signaller W.H. Otley, 2249,
16th Aust. Headquarters,
orderly to 4th Brigade H.Q.,
Harefield Hospital, Middlesex.

London, Home address:
6th April '16, 1, Brierley Road, Leytonstone, Essex.
J. Burnett

2nd Div. Sig.
Coy. Engrs.

HILL,
Spr. F. No. 903.

Hederick

Reported Missing, August.

no K/A 27.8.15

Informant states that the above casualty with Spr. W. Heap, was attached to the 4th Bgde. H. Q's Signallers' Section at Australia Gully, Anzac on the 22nd August. Informant was in charge of the section and on the 22nd August, sent these two men to report to Colonel Adams to connect up communications with H. Q's, as the Colonel was taking up new ground. Informant further states that the casualties were sent on with the troops into the firing line instead of remaining back with Colonel Adams. About 7 o'clock informant report to General Monash that the casualties were missing, and sent out men to search for them, and they reported that the telephone wires they had taken out to run, ran straight through to a Turkish trench. Informant is therefore strongly of opinion that they are prisoners. Informant reported what had happened to General Monash, whereupon the General instructed the informant to cut the wires to prevent information going to the enemy. which informant accordingly did. All the officers thought that the Turks had taken our men into the trench with the telephone wires in order to secure

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS INFORMATION BUREAU-MELBOURNE.

Cd

2nd Div. Sig.
Coy. Engrs.

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HILL, *Hederick*
Spr. F. No. 903.

communication with our trenches. Informant is more convinced that the casualties were both taken prisoners, owing to the fact that the casualty Hill was dressed in a bizarre manner with short knicks and a shirt display. They searched the intervening ground with a periscope and saw all the dead lying in front of the trench, but could see nothing of the casualty Hill, whose body would have been noticed owing to his peculiar dress, so they came to the conclusion that both casualties were taken prisoners.

Private address,
87 Cecil Street,
South Melbourne.

Ref:- Cpl. W. Graham,
No. 652, 2nd Div. Sig. Coy.
Attached to the 4th Bgde. H.Q.

H.A.B.
27/4/16.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS INFORMATION BUREAU-MELBOURNE.

A.I.F. 2nd Div. Sig. Co. Engineers

HILL
Frederick 903

Believed killed

Killed in action 27/8/15 no burial
Cert. by A.I.F. Hdqrs 1st 15/9/19

London
15/10/19

11

Inquiry Dept.
B.R.C.S.

A.P.O. 811.

B.E.F.

France

Aug 13. 1916

Dear Lady Barker

I enclose a list of missing
New Zealanders which has
just reached me from New
Zealand, via Switzerland. Would
it be possible to have them
put on the list if they are not
already included.

Also could anything be
done in regard to a man who was
on our Australian list &
cancelled some time ago. His
people are convinced that he
is a prisoner in Turkey & the
evidence seems to give some
ground for the belief.

His name, etc is: Frederick

Sapper F. Hill, 903,

3rd Section, 2 Div. Signal Co.

att 14th ~~Div~~ Batt. A.I.F.

Could you do anything through Constantinople, I have been empowered to pay any special expenses. I enclose a copy of the evidence his people have had to date. Probably it would be wise to have his name put on our list as a renewed enquiry, in addition to special enquiry through prisoners' agencies.

With kindest regards

Yours Sincerely

Paul H. Addison

C O P Y.

Address of returned soldier.

M. Drain (late Corporal)

Engineers & Signallers Section,

Base Records Office,

St. Kilda Road.

Frederick

Sapper F. Hill - No. 903,

3rd Section,

2nd Div. Sig. Co.,

Attached to 14th Battallion,

4th Infantry Brigade.

Commanded by General Monash.

Taken out by Col. Adams.

Officially reported missing August 27th/15.

Have also received similar reports from Y.M.C.A., British
Red Cross and Salvation Army.

C O P Y.

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
AGENCE INTERNATIONAL DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

Please refer to
A.5306.

Mrs. F. A. Hill

Geneve, 12th Jan. 1916.

Dear Madam,

We greatly regret that at present we are unable to give you any news regarding your son, Sapper No.903 F.Hill. *haderick*

The lists of the Red Crescent Society, which we have received up to date, do not bear his name; neither does a list, sent us by the American Embassy at Constantinople.

As the Turkish Government does not issue any lists, these are for the present our only sources of information.

You may be assured however, that, should anything definite about your son reach us, we shall let you know without delay.

Yours very faithfully,

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE,
Geneve K.L.

Agence Des Prisonniers de Guerre.

We have sent 4 line condensed copies of the enclosed letters to Sapper Hill, this being the allowed length. We return the originals Postcards of 4 lines unstamped - unstamped are preferable for writing to Turkey.

C O P Y.

MUDROS WEST,

23.9.15.

Dear Mrs. & Mr. Hill,

It is with great regret that I find it my duty to send you these few lines. Your son Fred was sent out on the 26th of last month with another lad named Walter Heap, to lay a telephone line to the trenches, and I am sorry to say neither of them returned, I have searched everywhere and sent to different hospitals to see if I could find any trace of them. but unfortunately up to now I have not discovered any. There was a fair number of men killed that day, and I am almost sure that your boy was not amongst them, after the battle was quiet I sent a party out to look for them, and also to see if they were amongst the dead, alas not a sign of them could be seen, it is my firm opinion that they were both captured, and if that be the case they will be far safer as prisoners than at the front. I will still keep my search up and any thing that turns up I will let you know at once, at present the Bde are away on holidays so cannot do much for a while, hoping your boy is safe I will close this note

From

Sgt. A. F. Day,

2nd Div. Sig. Coy.,

4th Inf. Bde.

C O P Y.

INFORMATION BUREAU,

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY,

Victorian Division,

MELBOURNE, March 3rd, 1916.

Mr. F. T. Hill,

"Plym",

Wills St. K E W.

Dear Sir,

Helewick
Re Sapper F. Hill, No. 903, 2nd Div. Sig. Coy. Engrs.-

Referring to your inquiry in this matter about this soldier, a cable was sent by us to our Egyptian Agents on the 4th November, but we have not yet received their final report on the matter. We have, however, received statements by fellow soldiers which we send to you for what they are worth, but they are not to be considered as conclusive of the matter.-

W. Dunsford Beahan No. 48981, 4th Northern General Hospital, Lincoln, on the 29th November, stated that on or about August 27th, after landing at Suvla Bay, the general impression was that your son must have been killed by shell fire. Informant stated that our men were not within enough distance of enemy to have been taken prisoners but they were exposed to terrific fire of shrapnel and high explosive shells.

Sapper L.G. Selwood, No. 646, 3rd Bridging Section, 2nd Div. Signallers' Coy., on the 14th Jan, stated that your son and he were in the same section and there was no other man of the name of Hill in that Section. On the 27th Aug. there was a charge from Herring's Post and informant was in the observation trench, acting as orderly to General Menash. Two signallers were detailed to go with the 14th Battalion and keep up communication. Informant saw Hill pass through the observation trench on his way to Herring's Post to report, and after that he did not see him again. The charge was practically a failure, owing to the whole ground being enfiladed by machine guns.

Cpl. W. Drain, No. 652, 4th Bgde. H.Q. Staff, states that about August 28th, in Australia Valley, on the extreme left of the Australian line, witness sent him and Pte. W. Heap together about 4.15 p.m. to connect up with Col. Adams of 14th Btn. by telephone,

March 3rd, 1916

Mr. F. T. Hill.

but Col. Adams sent them out with first line of charge. They were never found again, but the telephone wire they were carrying was traced right up to the Turkish trench. They then "cut out" all lines except this one and could hear someone's voice at the end of it, but could not distinguish the words.

Cpl. Drain describes Sapper Hill as about 5' 9", 19 years, clean shaven, dark, came from Melbourne. Heap was in the same signal section but came from W. Australia.

Yours faithfully,

J. BEACHAM KIDDLE,

Hon. Secretary.

C O P Y.

INFORMATION BUREAU,

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY,

VICTORIAN DIVISION,

MELBOURNE, 15th May, 1916.

Mr. F. T. Hill,
"Plym",
Wills Street,
K E W.

Dear Sir,

Indirect
re Spr. F. Hill, No. 903, 2nd Div. Sig. Coy. Engrs.

Since writing you on the 19th March, we have obtained the under mentioned report from a returned soldier named Cpl. W. Drain, No. 652, 2nd Div. Sig. Coy. and whose private address is 87 Cecil Street, South Melbourne.

Informant states that the above casualty with Spr. W. Heap, was attached to the 4th Bgde. H. Q's Signallers' Section at Australia Gully, Anzac on the 22nd August. Informant was in charge of the section and on the 22nd August, sent these two men to report to Colonel Adams to connect up communications with H. Q's, as the Colonel was taking up new ground. Informant further states that the casualties were sent on with the troops into the firing line instead of remaining back with Colonel Adams. About 7 o'clock informant reported to General Monash that the casualties were missing, and sent out men to search for them, and they reported that the telephone wires they had taken out to run, ran straight through to a Turkish trench. Informant is therefore strongly of opinion that they are prisoners. Informant reported what had happened to General Monash, whereupon the General instructed the informant to cut the wires to prevent information going to the enemy, which informant accordingly did. All the officers thought that the Turks had taken our men into the trench with the telephone wires in order to secure communication with our trenches. Informant is more convinced that the casualties were both taken prisoners, owing to the fact that the casualty Hill was dressed in a bizarre manner with short knicks and a short display. They searched the intervening ground with a periscope and saw all the dead lying in front of the trench, but could see nothing of the casualty Hill, whose body would have been noticed owing to ~~the~~ his peculiar dress, so they came to the conclusion that both casualties were taken prisoners.

You will understand that the above is a statement by a fellow soldier and we do not vouch for its accuracy but send same to you for what it is worth.

Yours faithfully, J. Beacham Kiddle,
Hon. Secretary.

Aug. 17, 1916.

Dear Mr. Addison,

Thank you for sending lists of New Zealand enquiries, which I have passed on to the Secretary who deals with them here. I am afraid, however, that most of the cases are too old for there to be much hope for obtaining information about them now.

The New Zealanders have long been talking of establishing their own Red Cross Enquiry Bureau, but the concern is not yet in running, and in the meantime the British Office does what it can for them.

Federick

As to the case of Sapper H. Hill, 903,
3rd Section, 2 Div., Signal Co.,
Att. 14th Batt., A.I.F.

to which you refer, I talked this over with Miss Deakin yesterday, and we find that a good deal of information has been sent through since the letter referred to was written to you. I am afraid at the present time there is practically nothing more that we can do, and it is no use keeping his name any longer on the list for general enquiry, as all evidence that is likely to be obtainable is already in her hands.

We believe that we have received from Constantinople the lists of all prisoners, who were taken in Gallipoli, and so far as

(2)

we know, there is no difficulty in their communicating direct with their own friends, though this ^{is} a slow process.

I fear (between ourselves) that there is very little hope indeed, if any, of our ever hearing of more Australian prisoners taken in Gallipoli than those we already know of. At the same-time, as you are probably aware, the system in vogue at the Enquiry Bureau keeps a "Missing" man's name always on the list of possible prisoners, though it is taken off the ^{the} private list for enquiries amongst soldiers, who have never been themselves prisoners; as really after all this time, and after the usual information has been collected, there is no object in blocking the searcher's list with obsolete names.

Yours sincerely,

RAF3

Enquiry Dept
P.R.C.S.
A.P.O. 511
B.E.F.

Dear Miss Deakin

The following enquiry has reached me:

/ Sap. 7 Hill, 903, No 3 Sect, 2nd Div. Sig. Co. A.I. 7.
Missing since Aug 1915. ✓

Enquirer

Miss H. King, 182 Collins St, Melbourne
Victoria Australia C.P.

Dn't expect many reports from us. There
are practically no Australians here. We are
taking in reports of the hundred, but all are
the British. Australians are being sent to
England. Hope searching work is being
concentrated on there.

Kind regards to you & Miss Johnson,
from the bike & me

Yours sincerely

Stanly. Atkinson Victoria St