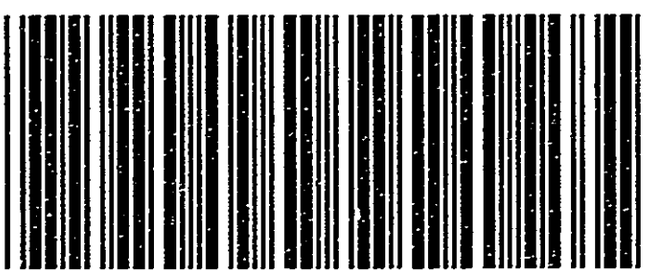
Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War
1DRL/0428

2500 Private
James William Levis

26th Battalion



1590706S

A.I.F. 26th Bttn.

LEVIS.
James William 2500.

Killed in Action. 29.7.16.

No report of burial.
Cert by A.I.F. Hdqrs. 17.7.19.

London.
6.10.19.

H.

1st March, 1918.

81330 Pte. A. Graham,
10th Canadian Battalion,
Military Convalescent Hospital,
Epsom, Surrey.

Dear Sir,

Attached you will find a copy of a letter written by you or by 435,308 L/Sgt. A.Graham, 10th Canadian Battalion who died 16-4-17 in France.

This letter was received by the Father of the soldier mentioned therein who lives in Tasmania. If you are the Canadian soldier who wrote the letter, can you now tell us what led you to believe that the grave was that of

2500 Pte. J.W. LEVIS, 26th Battalion, A.I.F.

His relatives are most anxious to know this. We are very sorry to trboule you again, when you have already been so very good in forwarding Pte. Levis's belongings, and writing to his Father.

We are sorry to learn that you are in Hospital, and trust that you will soon be well again.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.

Copy.

Oct 12th 1916.

From the Battle Field of the Somme

Dear Sir,

By your fallen Son's request, on the first page of this diary, I have fuid it my duty to forward his belongings to you. It was on the battle field of the Somme I found your fallen Son's diary, near Pozières. I am sorry that I cannot give you much information about your Son because the Australians had gone from the part of the Country about a week before we came. I found his diary on his grave. I expect you will have got more information from his more fortunate Comrades. I can only say we did our best to convey any information that was in our power to perform.

Yours truly
Pte A. Graham
A. Coy. 10th Battalion
Canadian Expeditionary Force
12th Division.

HOSPITAL Clandon Park Guildford **FRONT** France

E.D.R.—V. 1357.

INFORMATION AS TO

Fill in exactly as List.	SURNAME.	Christian Name.	Regtl. No.	Rank	Battalion and Regiment.	Co.	Platoon	Casualty.
	Barnes	G. H.	3118		51st Batt. A.I.F	A		Killed Aug 26th 1917

GIVEN BY

SURNAME	Christian Name.	Regtl. No.	Rank.	Battalion and Regiment.	Co.	Platoon	Home Address.
Edwards	E	3151		51st Batt: A.I.F			

STATEMENT OF INFORMANT.

(to be taken in first person).

NOTE. *In all cases state fully what informant says he saw or heard and give DATE AND PLACE of occurrence.*

It was mid-day on a Sunday when a shell burst killing 9 men of whom Barnes was one. I was not more than 100yds off. I was at the funeral on the same evening in a cemetery about 1 mile from Bessine Ridge. There is a cross to mark the grave.

PLEASE ALSO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1. **Was Informant Eye-Witness?**
2. **If not,** give name, number, etc., of the man who told him.
3. Was the ground held or lost?
4. If Informant says a man was killed.
   (a) was death instantaneous?
   (b) was the body buried, & if so where?
5. Did Informant know Christian Name, Initials or No. of man enquired about?
6. Was there any other man of same name in Co. or Battalion?
7. Give Informant's description of man enquired about—any nicknames, marks, scars, etc.
8. *Searcher's opinion of Informant's accuracy and intelligence* Good

RECEIVED
6 FEB 1918
PETON HOUSE

Signature of Searcher Katharine Wood

Date of Report Feb: 22nd 1918

Reports should always be written very clearly in ink, or typewritten.

File under
2500 J. W. LEVIS
26 Batt

January 28th, 1918.

The Secretary,
Information Depot,
Canadian Red Cross Society,
14/16, Cockspur Street, S.W.1.

Dear Madam,

We have been advised by our Perth bureau that

Pte.A.GRAHAM, A.Coy, 10th Battn, Canadian Exped.Force.

can give information about a missing Australian soldier whom he is reported to have buried.

We are sorry not to be able to quote Pte.Graham's regimental number, but we know he was in the Somme area in October 1916.

With these particulars we would probably be able to trace an Australian in our records, and are hopping therefore that it will be possible for you to tell us whether Pte.Graham, is still with his battalion, and if so let us have his correct address, or if he has since become a Casualty.

With apologies for troubling you.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.

TELEPHONE:
GERRARD 2118.

CANADIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.
14/16, COCKSPUR STREET.
LONDON, S.W. 1.

2500 J. W. LEVIS
26 Delt—

WOUNDED AND MISSING DEPT. 29.1.16.

re - Pte.A.Graham,A.Coy, 10th Batt. Canadians.

Dear Madam,

In reply to your letter of the 28th January, we are sorry to say that it is exceedingly difficult to trace in our files without regimental number or other particulars, but we fear that your enquiry must refer to 435,308,L/Sgt. A. Graham of the 10th Canadians. If so, we regret to see that he died of wounds on the 16th April last at No.32 Stationary Hospital, Wimereux.

It is quite possible, however, that there may be other soldiers of this name and initial in the 10th Battalion and we are, therefore, writing to our Record Office to ask them if that is the case. We will let you know as soon as we have a reply.

Yours faithfully,

Florence A. Ellerson (Miss)

The Secretary,
Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau,
Australian Red Cross Society.

March 9th
ack'g letter
o.s. 11-3-18

Pte A Graham 81330
10th Batt Canadians
4th Canadian G. Hosp.
Basingstoke
Hants,

2500
J. W. LEVIS
26 Batt
R/A 29-7-16
H (C)
3

To-

Australian Red Cross Society.

Dear Sir.

This morning I received a copy of my letter which I sent (enclosed with a diary belonging to 2500 Pte J.W. Levis, 26th Battalion A.I.F.) to Mr Y Levis 81 Lansdowne Cresent, Hobart, Tasmania,
Since it is the desire of Mr Levis to receive more information about his Son, which I thought he would have received from his Son's comrades,
I will do my best to explain how it became of me getting his Son's diary.
On or about 22nd Sept 1916 we (our unit) moved up to Pozieres which was the reserve of the line at that time, fighting had been very severe in that locality at that time and cover for troops was very poor, We had to dig ourselves in to protect ourselves and it was during that

period that I descovered the diary of Pte Lewis
I was digging in when I struck a corpse, and
through circumstances I was forced to remove
the body to bury it in a place more out
of the way. I took possession of a diary and
some letters which I found in the pockets.
It was too dark to examine them at the
time, so I looked them over the next morning.
and read the request of the owner on the
first page of the diary,
I then thought it my duty to forward them
to the mentioned adress.
I did not care to mention all this to Mrs Lewis
I only told him that I found the diary on
his Son's grave, but I will leave it in
your power to forward this information
to him,
I may also mention that I am recovering
from my wound,

Yours Faithfully

A Graham

A.I.F. 48th Btn

LEVIS
James William 2500

"E/A. 29-7-16"

No trace Germany
Cert. by Capt. Mills 10-10-19.

H

London
20-10-19

A. I. F. 26. C.XI. LEVIS, J.W. 2500.

M/July 29th.1916.

He was in C. XI pl. We none of us know what happened, but he was a particularly fine chap. He would do any mortal thing for the men, always full of fun and good cheer, and was intensely popular. He came from Hobart.

Reference: Cpl.P.S.Dillon, 1080,XI.C.,
No. 7 Canadian General.

Staples.
10.3.17.
FSP.

26th Battn.
A. I. F.

Levis.
J. W. 2500.

"Missing 29.7.16."

Note to Hobart.

We are forwarding a copy of the official reply to our letter to C.O. 26th Battn., written after we received your letter of 30th March re above. It might have assisted us more if you had mentioned whether Mrs. Levis considered the handwriting of the letter at all similar to that of her son, whether it was the kind of letter he has been in the habit of writing, and whether the references to his relatives (?) were correct. We are afraid it will be impossible for us to further investigate this case - as at the request of the B.R.C.S. all the casualties which occured during July and August last year are being cancelled from our current list.

London.
13.6.17.

H.

26th Battn.
A. I. F.

Levis.
J. W. 2500.

"Missing 29.7.16."

Your letter dated 24.5.17. addressed to the C.O. 26th Battn. has been passed to this Section for reply. According to records here, Pte. J. W. Lewis has been posted "Missing 29.7.16" and the C.O. 26th Battn has been unable to vary this report. It is impossible to say from whom the letter, to which you refer, has been received and of course you will realize that from the data supplied, it would be quite impossible for a Commanding Officer to investigate a matter of this kind.

Letter from:-
Lieut. V. T. Lukin.
Officer i/c Records,
Anzac Section 3rd Echelon G.H.Q.
B. E. F. 7.6.17.

Note 3rd Echelon give the name as "Lewis".

London.
13.6.17.

H.

NOTE TO HOBART.

Re your communication 25.4.17 concerning - 2500 Pte.J.W.Levis - 26th Battalion. A.I.F. -

The Canadian Red Cross Society inform that there were two soldiers A.Graham, of the 10th Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force fighting in the Somme area on the date when above soldier was missing 29.7.16. They were 435308 L/Sgt.A.Graham 10th Canadians who died of wounds 16.4.17, and 81330 Pte.A.Graham 10th Battalion who was admitted to the Military Convalescent Hospital Epsom, Surrey 20.12.17. We have therefore written to this latter soldier at that address, and his reply will be forwarded to you when received by us.

London.
1.3.18.

H.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY
TASMANIAN DIVISION

File No.317.

... INFORMATION BUREAU ...

Hobart,

April 25th, 1917.

Secretary.,
Wounded Missing Enquiry Bureau.,
54 Victoria Street.

Dear Sir,

No. 2500 Pte. J.W. Levis, Missing Casualty List 221, Page. 35

This soldier's father received a letter from Pte. A. Graham, (no number given) A. Co. 10th Battn. Canadian Expeditionary Force, copy of which we enclose.

Can you ascertain from Graham what let him to believe it was Pte. Levis's grave?

Yours faithfully,

A.V. Fiblin
Hon. Secretary.,

Written Canadian Bureau 25-1-18. Written Pte Graham 28-2-18

C O P Y.

Oct. 1st 1916.

From the Battle Field of the Somme,

Dear Sir,

By your fallen son's request, on the first page of this diary, I now find it my duty to forward his belongings to you. It was on the battle field of the Somme, I found your fallen son's diary near Pozieres. I am sorry that I cannot give you much information about your son because the Australians had gone from the part of the countryabout aweek before we came. I found his diary on his grave. I expect you will have got more information from his more fortunate comrades. I can only say we did our best to convey any information that was in our power to perform.

Yours truly,
Pte. A. Graham,
A. Coy. 10th Battn.,
Caradian Exped. Force,
1st Division.

A.I.F. 26th Btn

LEVIS
J.W. 2500

"MISSING"

Killed in Action 29-7-16 - previously reported Missing
Cert. by A.I.F.Hqrs 31-7-17.

H

London
7-8-17

26th Battn
A.I.F.

LEVIS,
J.W.2500

"Killed in Action 29.7.16."

This morning I received a copy of my letter which I sent (enclosed with a diary belonging to 2500 Pte. J.W.Levis, 26th Battn A.I.F.) to Mr Y.Levis, 81 Lansdown Crescent, Hobart, Tasmania. Since it is the desire of Mr Levis to receive more information about his son, which I thought he would have received from his son's comrades. I will do my best to explain how it becameof me getting his son's diary. On or about 22nd Sept. 1916, we (our unit) moved up to Pozieres which was the reserve of the line at that time, fighting had been very severe in that locality at that time and cover for troops was very poor. We had to dig ourselves in to protect ourselves and it was during that period that I discovered the diary of Pte. Levis. I was digging in when I struck a corpse, and through circumstances I was forced to remove the body to bury it in a place more out of the way. I took possession of a diary and some letters which I found in the pockets. It was too dark to examine them at the time, so I looked them over the next morning and read the request of the owner on the first page

of the diary. I then thought it my duty to forward them to the mentioned address. I did not care to mention all this to Mr Levis, I only told him that I found the diary on his son's grave, but I will leave it in your power to forward this information to him.

Letter from:- A.Graham. 81339,
10th Batt Canadians,
4th Canadian G. Hpl.
Basingstoke, Hants.

London.
13.3.18.

H.

G.C. 2500 J. W. LEVIS
2/ Batt.
K/A 27-7

Wrote to Canadian
Bureau 25.1.18.
Wrong address
of Pte A. Graham,
A Coy - 10 Batt. C.E.F.
As ref. for
Levis J.W. 2500
Missing Source
See other Slips

vell / **FRONT** Flanders

K.D.S.—Y. 12498

ON AS TO	Battalion and Regiment.	Co.	Platoon	Casualty.
nk	24th Aust			K May 3/17 DD
N BY	**Battalion and Regiment.**	**Co.**	**Platoon**	**Home Address.**
ank.	24th Aust	D.		Toorak Victoria and

IF INFORMANT (if not in last person).

old me that Lieu Harris (Harris) was hit by a morning and he tried to fetch him in Logincourt /

RECEIVED 22 JAN. 1918 CARLTON HOUSE

ER THE FOLLOWING :—

, give name, number, etc., of the man who told him.	see above
nformant says a man was killed, death instantaneous, and was body buried, and if so where?	Instantaneous
there any other man of same me in Co. or Battalion?	

Signature of Searcher A Reynolds

Date of Report 19th Jan 18

2500 Pte J. W LEWIS. (not Lewis)
26 Batt

24.5.17.

The O.C.,
26th Battn. A.I.F.
B.E.F.

Dear Sir,

We would be most grateful if you could give us any information concerning

2500. Pte. J.W. Lewis 26th Battn. A.I.F.

We enclose a copy of a statement which was given at our office in Hobart by the father of the above named soldier who is officially reported as missing since last July.

"Pte. James Lewis 26th Batt . A.I.F. son of Mr Lewis, 81 Lansdowne Crescent Hobart, was reported missing since last July, since then nothing has been heard of him, but by the last mail(received March 14th 1917) a letter arrived from France, purporting to be written by him but not in his handwriting."

Can information be obtained as to whether this letter is from him or whether someone else is impersonating him so as to secure any parcels which may be addressed to him? Our representative went to H.Q's and compared the handwriting in the letter referred to, which is in our possession to that on

P.S. Lewis's attestation papers and the handwritings are not similar as far as an inexpert eye can judge.

If you can spare the time to investigate the matter for us we should be grateful, both on our own and the Father's account.

Yours faithfully

V. D

Secretary.

By

In reply please quote AUS.....

ANZAC SECTION 3RD ECHELON G.H.Q.,
British Expeditionary Force.
7th June 1917.

The Secretary,
Wounded & Missing Enquiry Bureau,
Australian Red Cross Society,
54 Victoria Street,
LONDON. S.W. 1.

LEWIS

2500 Pte J.W.Lewis 26th Bn A.I.F.

Your letter dated 24/5/17 addressed to the C.O., 26th Battalion, has been passed to this Section for reply.

According to records here, Pte J.W.Lewis has been posted "Missing 29/7/16" and the C.O., 26th Battalion has been unable to vary this report.

It is impossible to say from whom the letter, to which you refer, has been received and of course you will realize that from the data supplied, it would be quite impossible for a Commanding Officer to investigate a matter of this kind.

LEWIS Jnr Lewis

2500 J.W.LEWIS
26 Batt^n A.I.F

M 29.7.16

H.
3

W.F. Lutein Lieut.,
Officer i/c Records.

Gen. Corres.
Under
Levis f. W. 2500. 24 Batt

The Secretary,
Wounded & Missing Dept.
Canadian Red Cross Society,
14/16 Cockspur St, S.W.1.

February 26th, 1918.

Dear Madam,

We have to thank you very much for your letter of 4th Feb, about 81330 Pte. A. GRAHAM, 10th Canadian Bttn - We are most grateful for the trouble you have taken to trace him, when we could supply such meagre details.

We shall at once write to him at the Military Convalescent Hospital, Epsom, and trust he will be able to furnish the information which our enquirers in Australia are so anxious to obtain.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.

TELEPHONE:
GERRARD 2118.

CANADIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.
14.16, COCKSPUR STREET.
LONDON, S.W. 1.

1500 J. W. LEVIS 26 Bde

WOUNDED AND MISSING DEPT.

4th February, 1918

Dear Madam,

Pte. A. GRAHAM, A. Coy, 10th Battn, Canadian Ex.Force

With further reference to your enquiries regarding the above soldier, we are now able to say that there is still another Private. A. Graham in the 10th Battalion, his number being 81330, Pte. Andrew Graham, whose next-of-kin is given as Mrs. Graham (Sister), 79, James Street West, Brockville, Ontario, Canada.

If this is the soldier with whom you wish to get into touch, we hear that he was admitted to the Military Convalescent Hospital at Epsom, Surrey, on 20th December last. We have not yet heard of his discharge.

We very much hope that this is the Private Graham for whom you are enquiring and not No. 435,308, Lance Sergt. A. Graham who died of wounds on 16th April last and whose particulars we gave you in a previous letter.

Hoping that we have been able to help you in this matter,

Yours faithfully,

Florence A. Ellerson

The Hon. Secretary,
Australian Red Cross Society,

81330 Pte.A.Graham,
10th Battn (Canadians)
4th Canadian General Hospital,
Basingstoke, Hants.

12th March, 1918.

Dear Pte. Graham,

We wish to thank you very much for your letter of 9th inst., referring yo an Australian soldier.

2500 Pte.J.W.LEWIS, 26th Battalion, A.I.F.

It is extremely good of you to supply us with such a clear and detailed account of what happened so long ago, especially as none of his comrades who were left were able to furnish the information which you have done.

Your letter will be typed in full and sent out to Tasmania, but you may be assured that our Office there will exercise their discretion in just how much they tell the relatives of the late soldier.

We are very glad to learn that you are recovering and trust you will soon be well again.

With repeated thanks, and all good wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully,

SECRETARY.