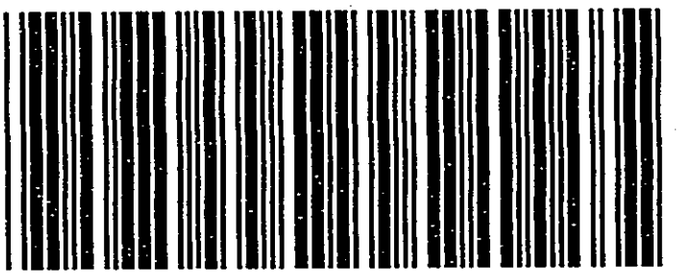
Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War
1DRL/0428

2896 Private
William Russell

33rd Battalion



2380806R

Havre 21st September.1917.

33rd AUSTRALIANS RUSSELL, W. 2698

A. July 16th,1917. Det. D/B.

I knew Pt. William Russell of D. Co., XIV.Pltn.A. He came over with me in the 6th to 33rd reinforcement ~~ex~~ in the "Boltana" in November 1916. He is I think a Scotchman; he is about 23 years of age, short, light build, fair and clean shaven. Pt. Archie Brown of the 33rd Battalion, D.Co., XV.Pltn., told me that Russell had both legs blown off when in his Dugout at Messines in July 1917. He died at the Dressing Station, and I saw his grave in the Military Cemetery at Messines. It has a cross on it. The grave is alongside Pt. Mc.Closka and Pt. W.J. Mitchell both of D.Co.

Informant: Pt. J. Willoughby, 2808
33rd Australians, D.Co., XVI.Pltn.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

Letter Pte Brown D. R.M.
28-9-17

A.I.F. 33. RUSSELL. W. 2896.

K. July 16th 1917. Dets. D/B.

Russell - name William - was killed in our support line at Messines when we had just come out of the front line at Messines in July - about the 20th I think. Fritz strafed us heavily all day and Russell was killed in a dug out by a shell. I helped to get him out. He was buried in the same cemetery as Johnson. There are four or five cemeteries about there. The one he was buried in was near Messines hill, between our front line and the place where the village used to stand. I have seen his grave. Russell was a Scotchman, very fair very ~~stout~~ short age about 20, came from Sydney.

Inf: Pte. S.G. Jacobs 2854. D.XVIII.
55, General Hospital.
BOULOGNE. 16.10.17.

JT.

Havre 24th October.1917.

33rd AUSTRALIANS RUSSELL, W. 2896

K. July 16th.1917. Det. D/B.

I knew him. His people live in the old Country(in Scotland I think). He was a little short chap, medium build with fair complexion. Lt. S.J. Jacobs of the 33rd Batt., attached to D.Co., and now with the Battalion, saw him killed by a shell at Messines in July.

Informant: K.J.Fraser, 2789
33rd Australians, H.Q. Sig.Sec.
H.S."Grantully Castle" Havre.

GLT.

cel Sec'n
B.

33rd Batn
A.I.F.

RUSSELL
W. Pte. 2896

"Killed in Action 16.7.17."

About Pte. W. Russell No 2896. We were chums together and I was close to him when he got wounded. He was very badly wounded with a shell and died as soon as the stretcher bearers got him to the dressing station. He is buried in a soldiers cemetery at Messines and there is a cross up at his grave. He was killed on the 17th of July. He was a chap about 5'4" high, well built and fair hair. He told me he came from Cessnock in Australia and worked in the coal mines.

Letter from:-
Pte. A. Brown
France 8.10.17.

London.
25.10.17

S

Havre 12th September, 1917.

33rd Australians RUSSELL, J. 2096

A. July 16th, 1917. Det. D/B.

He was in A. Co. He came from Wallsend, [illegible] near Newcastle, N.S.W. He was a miner. I had known him for about 18 months. His christian name was William. The number given is his. I saw his grave on Messines Ridge, situated between the Canteen and Cross Avenue French; there are a lot of other men buried there. There is a cross on his grave with his name, number and Battalion on it. I could point out the spot.

Informant: Pt. L.C. Hanse, 2766
33rd Australians, A.Co., IV.Pltn.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

CHR

28-9-17

Pte Archie BROWN.
D. Coy. 33 Battalion
A 3+
B 17.

about
2896
Pte. W. RUSSELL
33rd Batt:
A 3+
K 16-7-17

1-10-17

UV

ack'd
P.C. 16-10-17

2896 W. RUSSELL
33 Bath
K/A 16-7-17 S 3

France
Oct 4th 17.

Dear Sir,

I received your letter enquiring about Pte W. Russell No 2896. We were chums together and I was close to him when he got wounded, he was very badly wounded with a shell and died as soon as the stretcher bearers got him to the dressing station. He is buried in a soldiers cemetery on Messines and there is a cross up at his grave. He was killed on the 14th of July. He was a chap about 5 ft 4 high, well built and fair hair. He told me he came from Bearwood in Berkshire and worked in the coal mines. I am sorry I can't say more, hoping it will supply the information you want but I am very sorry to have to tell you he is dead but he got a decent burial in the soldiers cemetery.

I remain

Your Obedient Servant

(Sd) A. Browne