

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

**2261 Lance Corporal  
Harry Perce Sampson**

**37th Battalion**



2410104C

A.I.F. 37th Btn

SAMPSON  
L/cpt H.P. 2261 (HQ)  
2152

"MISSING"

Killed in Action 27-2-17 - previously reported Missing  
Cert. by A.I.F. Headquarters 30-6-17.

London  
4-7-17

A.I.F.  
37th. Battn.,

SAMPSON. 2261.  
L/Cpl. Harry Percy.

"Killed in Action 27.2.17".

No trace Germany.

Cert. by Capt. Mills. 10.10.19.

London.  
22.10.19.

A.

A.I.F. 37th Btn  
late 43rd Btn.

SAMPSON  
I/Cpl. H.P. ~~2152~~ 2261 (H. Q.)

Missing

No trace of 2152 • 2261 L/Cpl Sampson (Henry Percy) 37th Btn,  
late 43rd Btn. Missing 27-2-17  
Cert. by A.I.F. Headquarters 4-4-17.

A.

London  
17-4-17

A. I. F. 37.

SAMPSON, L/Cpl. H.P. 2261

M. February 27th, 1917.

I was out in the raid with him at Armentieres on the night of February 27th. He was in the front line of the party with the wires. He was missing afterwards. I was wounded and was taken to the D/S. Sgt. J.S. Oakley, XII pl. C.Coy. was in charge of the party to which Sampson was attached and could I understand supply information as to Sampson's fate. I knew Sampson pretty well. We trained together for the raid. He was a Victorian and belonged to C.Coy. I think he belonged to XI plat.

Reference:- Pte. T. Orr. 2126. C.Coy.37.  
No. 3 A.D.B.D.

Etaples  
27.4.17.

*Note* Our slip 17.4.17  
in correcting the typing "or" has inserted between  
the regimental numbers in error. Either "but" or a  
full stop would have been correct.

SA. written by J.S. Oakley  
3.5.17  
A

37th A.I.F.

Sampson L/Cpl. H.P. 2261.

(M. Feb. 27/17)

"I saw Sampson in a shell hole, and, badly blown about by shrapnel.

Eye-witness: Yes

Description:

Informant: Pte. R. Christie 2043,  
43rd A.I.F.,  
Military Hospt.,  
Eastbourne.

*incorrect  
be Christie's  
letter*

*Letter Pte Christie 18.5.17*

*cf.*

May 6th 1917,  
M.H. Thornton.

37th Battn.  
A. I. F.

Sampson.  
L.Cpl. H. P. 2261.

"Missing 27.2.17."

In a raid at Armentieres we were formed into a Composite Battn. viz: 2 Coys of 37th, 2 Coys of 38th. We got into Fritz's front line trench about 1.a.m. 27.2.1917. Sampson and I were in a demolition party. He was beside me and I said to him, "You had better follow me" as we had got a bit mixed up. He was the last man I spoke to before I got hit and I did not see him again. When I was in the Middlesex Hospital a man of the 37th came up to see me and told me that Sampson had been killed that night. "Sammy" as we called him had been a jockey in S.A. and originally joined the Light Horse. He was a bright cheery boy and very popular.

Witness:-

Pte. W. A. B. Francis 2064.  
37th Battn. B.Coy. A.  
Southall.

P.C.

London.  
17.5.17.

37th Battn.  
A. I. F.

Sampson.  
L.Cpl. H.P. 2261.

"Missing 27.2.17."

re No 2261 L/Cpl H. P. Sampson of my Coy. I am awfully sorry to tell you that I cannot throw any light on this disappearance but I will relate all I know. On the date he is posted as missing he took part in a raid in France and was last seen in the Front German Lines prior to us returning to our own trenches. The Germans were shelling No Man's Land fairly heavily at the time and it is possible he may have been wounded and taken prisoner (which I very much doubt) or he may have been killed. Two of our Sergts thought that they spoke to him in our own trenches after we returned, but as we had blackened faces, and the morning was dark (it was about 2.a.m.) they could not be sure. Next day a Roll Call was made and he was discovered as officially missing as none of the Dressing Stations had admitted him. In the A.I.F. Cemetery Fort Mahieu Erquinghem Lys Nord France there is a grave of an unknown soldier bearing the date that L/Cpl. Sampson has been missing from. It is rather a peculiar circumstance. On the other hand I am told it takes about 3 months for prisoners of war to be reported, so if such



37th Battn.  
A.I.F.

-2-

Jampson.  
L.Cpl. H.P. 2261.

is the case there is perhaps some small hope to be held out still.  
Description. Height. About 5 feet 5 ins. Weight. About 10 stone  
Disposition. Very lively and pleasant and always laughing and  
singing. Eyes dark, hair dark. This is unfortunately all I  
can tell you.

Letter from:-

Sidney H. Oakly. 968.

Platoon Sgt.

Belgium. 7.5.17.

London.  
23.5.17.

A.

Sampson.  
L/Cnl. H. P. 2261.

re 2261 L/Cpl. H. P. Sampson, 37th Battn. A.I.F. reported missing 27.2.17. It was during a divisional raid of the 26.2.17 that he took part in that he was reported missing. It was about four days later that I was at the divisional baths at Armentieres that I met his personal friends Pte. H. Buttfield and Pte. H. V. Buttfield whose photos I enclose, and we were talking about the raid and they told me that 2261 L/Cpl H. P. Sampson had been found in a shell hole and was brought in. The above named men were in the same Battn. as Sampson L/Cpl. and are at present in the 37th Battn. in France, although I do not know their official number, if you could get into communication with them no doubt they would be able to give you full particulars. I became acquainted with 2261 L/Cpl. H. P. Sampson during my training at Mitchin Camp, South Australia, at that time he was acting Coy Q.M.S. to the 3rd Reinforcements of the 43rd Battn., also during our voyage to England on the S.S. Anchisis belonging to the Blue Funnel Line which left Australia on the 28th Aug. 1916. he was acting Q.M.S. On his arrival at Salisbury Plain he was transferred to the 37th Battn.

-2-

L/Cr1. H. F. 2261. Sampson.

as L/Cpl. I then lost sight of him until I met him in Armentieres he was then L/Cpl. in the 37th Battn., 11th Bgde A.I.F. His personal description is as follows. Height about 5 feet, 7 ins., Complexion fresh, hair black, very jovial and well built. As far as my recollection takes me back, he belongs to Norwood, Adelaide, but as to his occupation previous to enlistment I cannot say.

Letter from:-

2043 Ste. R. Christie.

45rd Battn.

• • •

Central Military Hq.  
Eastbourne.

London.  
29.5.17.

Note Written Pte. B. V. Buttfield. 21.5.17.  
" " H " "  
25.5.17.

A.

M. Feb 27th 1917.

He was a mate of mine and we both came from S.Aust. We were both in the same raid north of Armentieres and I am possitive he was killed. There were 33 missing from this raid and patrols failed to find any of them. He was killed by a shell well inside Fritz' wire. He was one of the best and his widow lives at Endunda, S.Aust.

1st VP1. G.H. Gallagher. 1347  
Dublin 83 General  
BOULOGNE, 9.6.17.

WF

A

Havre

15th June, 1917

37th AUSTRALIANS

SAMPSON, L/Opl. H.P. 2261

H. 27.2.17.

He was in the 11th platoon, C Co. and was out with me on a raid on February 27th at Houplines. We were in the German trenches and just retiring when a shell came and hit us. Sampson was about the fourth man behind me and all were wounded. I was lifted up but managed to get back, and the others were taken back on stretchers. That is the last I have heard of Sampson. I do not think it probable he could have been taken a prisoner of war as we got as far as the 3rd line and this happened on our return in the 1st line.

Informant: L/Opl. W. Mathven, 740  
37th Australians, C Co.,  
H. S. Basequibo.

RBS

37th Battn.  
A. I. F.

Sampson.  
L/Cpl. H. P. 2261.

"Missing 27.2.17."

I have been handed a letter addressed to Pte. H. Buttfield of the 37th Battn. from your Society regarding L/Cpl. H.P. Sampson of this Battn. L/Cpl. Sampson was a member of my party that night (we were making a raid on the German lines) and was with me up to the time we were preparing to return. I lost trace of him then, but when we were back in our own trenches someone came up and shook hands with me and a Sgt. who was speaking to me at the time. We were pretty sure it was Sampson but of course everyone was more or less excited and in the darkness mistakes may be made. I felt so sure myself that it was he that when we got back to the billet I did not go to his bed to see if he was home. A few days later I heard that the body of an Aust. soldier had been found on the route my party had decided to take going home. This body could not be identified as so was buried as "Unknown". Sampson was of small stature about 5' 1" in height, dark hair and sharp features. His voice was rather high pitched and he had one leg showing marks of an old injury which had been operated on by a surgeon.

Letter from:-

London.  
3.7.17.

2nd Lieut. H. Barbour  
37th Battn. A.I.F.  
France. 17.6.17.

A.

Sgt. J. S. Oakley  
C. Co 37 Bells AIF

for 2261 4/cpl.

H. P. SAMPSON

37 Bells AIF

M. 27:2:17.

3.5.19  
8 m.

Rec Hilary BUTTFIELD (Filing copy)

+ 37 Batt A.I.F  
Rt. B.V. BUTTFIELD B E F  
" "

Sgt

2061 Lcpl H.P. SAMPSON

37 Batt A.I.F

M. 27. 2. 17

FM

25. 5. 17  
✓

2043  
P.C.

R. CHRISTIE

18.6.17  
20.5.17

43 BATT AIF

Kitchener's Hospital  
Brighton Sussex

Dear Mr Christie

We have been  
making inquiries for our Adelaide  
Bureau Concerning

2261. Lt Col H.P. SAMPSON

M. 27.2.17. 43 BATT AIF

I have been recd the information  
given by you to the effect  
that you had seen Lt Col Sampson  
in a shell hole dead -

Yours is the only  
report we have had of his  
death - all the others  
considered him as Missing



For the sake of the relatives, we  
shd be most grateful if you  
w<sup>d</sup>. give us a few more  
details concerning him.

Cd. you send us a personal  
description of Capt Sampson or  
tell us anything concerning his  
~~Civil life~~ occupation & <sup>place of</sup> residence  
before enlistment in order  
that ~~the relatives~~ <sup>this people</sup> might  
be satisfied that the  
Sampson you are speaking  
of was indeed their relative.

We trust you are making  
good progress & will  
soon be able to supply us  
further with best wishes  
Yrs truly

C 2261 / cpl H. P. SAMPSON  
37 Batt

M. 27.2.17.

A.  
3

Ack F.M. 1857

Belgium

The Secretary

7/5/17

Australian Red Cross Society

54 Victoria St

London D.W.

England

Dear Madam Referring to your inquiry  
re N° 2261 I/Lt H. R. Sampson of my  
Company I am awfully sorry to tell  
you that I cannot throw any light on  
his disappearance but I will relate all I  
know - On the <sup>date he is listed as missing</sup> ~~day~~ of this year he  
took part in a Raid in France and ~~was~~  
was seen in the Front German lines prior  
to us returning to our own Trenches - The  
Germans were shelling NO MANS LAND fairly  
heavily at the time and it is possible he  
may have been wounded and taken  
prisoner (which I very much doubt) or  
he may have been killed - Two of our  
Sergeants thought that they spoke to  
him in our own Trenches after we returned  
but as we had blackened faces and the  
~~morning~~ was dark (it was about 2 AM) they could  
not be sure - Next day a Roll Call was  
made and he was discovered as Officially

(2)

missing as none of the Dressing Stations  
had admitted him - In the ~~the~~  
~~the~~ A.I.F. cemetery Fort Mahieu  
Cochinchina-Lux Nord France there  
is a grave of an Unknown Soldier  
bearing the date that 2nd Lt Sampson  
has been missing from - It is rather  
a peculiar circumstance - On the  
other hand I am told that it takes  
about 3 months for prisoners of  
War to be reported as if such is the  
case there is perhaps some SMALL hope  
to be held out still -

### DESCRIPTION

HEIGHT About 5 ft. 5 in

WEIGHT " 10 stone

DISPOSITION - very lively and pleasant and  
always laughing and singing

EYES - Dark

HAIR - Dark

This is all unfortunately I can tell you  
Sincerely yours

No 968 Sidney B. Oakley  
Platoon Sgt

21.5.17.

S.

968. Sgt. E. Oakley  
37. Battn. A.I.F.  
B.E.F.

Dear Sgt. Oakley,

Very many thanks for your letter of May 7th in answer to our enquiry concerning

2261 L/Cpl. H.P. Sampson. 37th. Battn. A.I.F.

So far his name has never appeared on any of our lists of prisoners of war to date, but it usually is a very long time before they are officially notified from Germany. The description and information you have given will be of much assistance.

With best wishes

Yours faithfully

V. D.

Flu.

ACK  
FM. 25.5.17

2043. Pte. R. Christie  
43<sup>rd</sup> Batta A.I.F.  
A. 1. Ward.  
Central Military Hospital.  
Eastbourne  
21.5.17.

Dear Madam.

With reference to your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> inst re 2261. L. Gpl. H. P. Sampson. 37<sup>th</sup> Batta. A.I.F. reported missing 27.2.17. It was during a divisional raid of the 26.2.17. that he took part in that he was reported missing. It was about four days later that I was at the divisional baths at Armetiers that I met his personal friends Pte H. Buttfield & Pte B. V. Buttfield whose photos I enclose & we were talking about the raid & they told me that 2261. L. Gpl. H. P. Sampson had been found in a shell hole & was brought in. The above named men were in the same Batta as L. Gpl. Sampson and are at present in the 37<sup>th</sup> Batta in France although I do not know their official numbers if you could get into communication with them no doubt they may be able to give you full particulars. I became acquainted with 2261. L. Gpl. H. P. Sampson during my training at Mitchem Camp. South Australia at that time he was acting Coy Q.M.S. to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Batta also during our voyage to England on the S.S. Anchisis being to the Blue Funnel Line which left Australia on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1916 he was acting Q.M.S. On his arrival at Salisbury Plain he was transferred to the 37<sup>th</sup> Batta as L. Gpl. I then lost sight of him until I met him in Armetiers he was then L. Gpl. in the 37<sup>th</sup> Batta A.I.F. The personal description is as follows. Height about 5'7". Complexion Fresh. Hair Black. very jovial & well built. As far as my recollection takes me back, he belongs to Norwood. Adelaide, but as to his occupation previous to enlistment I cannot say. Trusting that the above particulars may be of help to you.

I remain

Yours Respectfully  
2043. Pte. R. Christie  
43<sup>rd</sup> Batta A.I.F.

2261. Lcpl H. P. SAMPSON 37 Batt AIF

M. 27.2.17

A<sub>3</sub>

Note written by B.V. Bullfield  
H " " } 25.5.17

25.517

2403. Pte. R. Christie  
43. Batta. A.I.F.  
A.I. Ward.  
Central Military Hospt.  
Eastbourne.

Dear Pte. Christie

Very many thanks for your letter of May 21st in answer to  
our enquiry concerning

2261. L/Cpl. H.P. Sampson 37. Batta. A.I.F.

The detailed information you have sent will be of great  
assistance, and we thank you for supplying the names of his  
friends, the Pts. Buttfield, to whom we are writing to ask for all  
details for his relatives.

We are returning the photos you so kindly sent and trust they  
will reach you safely.

We hope you are continuing to make good progress and are  
able to enjoy the lovely spring weather we are having.

Yours faithfully

V.D.  
Secretary

*[Handwritten signature]*



ack.

FM 21.6.17

France

17. 6. 17

The Secretary  
Aust. Red Cross party

Dear Madam.

I have been handed a letter addressed to Pte H. Butfield of the 17th Bn from your Society regarding L/Cpl H. P. Sampson of this Bn. L/Cpl Sampson was a member of my party that night. (We were making a raid on the German lines) and was with me up to the time we were preparing to return. I lost trace of him then, but when we were back in our own trenches someone came up and shook hands with me and a Sergeant who was speaking to me at the time. We were pretty sure it was Sampson but of course everyone was more or less excited and in the darkness mistakes <sup>that</sup> were made. I felt so sure myself that it was he that when we got back to the billet I did not go to his bed to see if he was home.

A few days later I heard that the body of an Australian soldier had been found on the route my party had decided to take

going home. This body could not be  
identified as was buried as "Unknown".

Sampson was of small stature about 5'11"  
in height, dark hair and sharp features.  
His voice was rather high-pitched and  
he had one leg showing marks of an  
old injury which had been operated  
on by a surgeon.

I am afraid this is all I can tell of  
the occurrence and of his personal appearance.

Yours faithfully

H. P. Sampson 2/24

37. Balto A. 87

2261

Left H. P. SAMPSON

37 Balto A. 87

M. 27.2.17.

A 3

23rd June 1917.

2/Lt. H. Barbour,  
37th Aust: Inf: Btn:  
B.E.F.

Dear Sir,

We have to thank you very much for your letter in answer to our enquiry (made to Pte H. Buttfield) concerning - 2261 L/Cpl H.P. Sampson 37th Btn, A.I.F. The information you have sent will be of much assistance.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

V. D  
Secretary. *Shu.*