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

10991 Gunner
William Alfred Whittle

6th Field Artillery Brigade



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6th Field Artillery Brigade

Whittle,
Gnr. Wm. Alfred. 10991

Drowned 31/3/16.

Drowned 31/3/16, Canal between St. Venant and Merville, buried Merville Cemetery.

A.I.F. Headquarters, 130 Horseferry Road,
19/7/16.

London,
19/7/16.

H.

6th Bgde.
A.F.A.

Whittle,
W.A. 10991

Drowned:

Was in the 21st Battalion, going up to front in Motor Bus and came to a bridge on a canal at Sailly, and Motor bus shot over on to the water and Whittle was stuck beside the bus and was drowned. I did not see him buried, but I think he was buried hereby some men - who were near.

Ref.:- F.D.Sanders, 809, 21st Battalion,
Ward 18, Harefield.

D.P.Dickson
3/8/16.

H.

AUSTRALIAN FLD ARTILLERY. 6 Bde.

WHITTLE, W.A. 10991. Drowned March 3/16. Det. D & B.

Whittle came over as 2nd reinforcements to 6th Brigade, but was transferred with others to 21st batt, 22 Brigade. In March he and a party of Gunners were en route from le Havre to the front at Bois Grenier. They went part way by train I believe. On taking the road they were in a bus of sorts which in avoiding a collision overturned into a canal somewhere. Whittle was the only one drowned. Gunner J.McD.Thomas now with the battalion was nearest to Whittle and tried to save him. He may give further information.

Informant: Driver A.Currow. 8639. 21 Batt. 22 Bde. A.F.A.
Mauricien Hospital.
BOULOGNE. August 9th.1916. JT.

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Revd Co.

21st Australian Field Artillery — Whittle, W.A. 10991, 6th Brigade

(Drowned March 3rd 1916.
Details D & B)

Informant states that on March 31st not 3rd 1916 on the way between Berquette and Armentieres Whittle was in the last motor 'bus transport (there were 6) and the steering gear went wrong and they went over the Bank into the Canal. Whittle was got out and artificial respiration was applied but it failed although it was tried for an hour. The Last Informant saw of him was being taken to a British Red Cross Field Hospital, name of which he does not know, and British A.M.C. men were attending to him.

Reference: Sergt C.R. Bain, 8739,
17th A.F.A., 6th Brigade, 2nd Div:
Ashton Hayes Red X Hospital,
nr. Chester.

Home address: 19, Frankland Street,
Launceston,
Tasmania, Australia.

12.8.16

H Cancel

4.a

6th Brigade, A. I. F.

Whittle, W. A. 10991.
A.F.A. Coy.
(Drowned March 3/16. Details D.& B.)

Informant states that on March 31/16 proceeding from Burgatte to Armentieres in motor buses a motor bus collided with a farm cart, its steering gear was carried away and the bus overturned into a canal, Whittle being the only one drowned. Cpl. Bristowe and informant worked on his body for one hour and five minutes, using every means of artificial respiration with no result. The water was icy cold, and the body had been in 20 minutes before it was recovered by Cpl. MacArthur, A Coy, 17th Battery, 6th Brigade. The British Doctor said life was extinct and the body was taken away by the R.A.M.C.

Reference:-- Gunner Luther Howchin Morter, 8410.
18th Battery, 6th Brigade, A. I. F.
Linden Lea B. R. C. Hospital,
Brooklands, Sale, Cheshire.

Home address:-- Supreme Court,
Adelaide, S. Australia.

4.a.

August 23rd.
James.

France

AUSTRALIAN Fld Artillery. 6 Bde. WHITTLE, W.A. 10991

Drowned March 3/18 Det: D & B.

Informant says "As Whittle was going to Armentieres in a motor waggon, the car ran off the road into the Canal. He probably hit his head and couldn't extricate himself. No casualty except him. Picked men of 16, 17 18 and 21 Batteries were going for a course with English Artillery. He was got out, and I think he was buried at Armentieres."

Informant: S.Sternberg, 7903. A.M.C. with HQ 6 A.F.A.

No.3 Canadian General Hospital.
BOULOGNE. Sept. 2nd. 1916. JFSJ

H. Cd

6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery. Whittle, W. A. 10991.
21st Battery.

(Drowned May. 3/16, Details D & B.)

Informant states that on March 31st 1916, going from Burgette to Amentiere in motor buses one collided with a farm cart, its steering gear was carried away, and the bus overturned into a canal. Whittle was the only one drowned; he was in the water 20 minutes before his body could be recovered, and it was icy cold. Cpl. Bristowe and informant worked on the body for 1 Hour and 5 min using every means of artificial respiration, but with no result. The British Doctor proclaimed life to be extinct and the body was taken away by the R.A.M.C. - Corpl. MacArthur, O.C. 17th Battery 6th Brigade recovered Whittle's body from the water.

Reference: Morter, Gunner Luther Howchim, 8410.
A.F.A. 18th Battery, 6th Brigade
Linden Lea Aux. Mil., Brooklands,
Sale, Cheshire.

Home address:
Supreme Court. Adelaide, S.Australia.

1st Report sent up Aug. 25th.
2nd, Sept.12th.
E. A. James.

cd

AUSTRALIAN FIELD ARTILLERY. 21. Bty. WHITTLE, W.A. 10991. France.
6 Bde.

Drowned March 3rd. 1916.

The date was April 3rd not March 3rd, as the 6th Brigade only arrived at Marseilles on the 23rd March. Whittle came from South Australia. The 6th Brigade came to Havre on March 26th-a party of each battery was sent off in advance to join the RFA on the Armentieres front. Whittle was in one of the motor busses, that came out from England, and on the way to Armentieres at a place called Lynde, the buss overturned into a canal off the River Lys. Whittle who was inside the Buss was drowned. Whittle was the only casualty. Informant was not with that party, but it was read out to them by the O.C. and others of his battery at Havre three days later.

Informant: W.A.McCleave, 12209. 18Bty.6 Bde.
2 Div. A.F.A.

No. 8 Stationary Hospital.
BOULOGNE. Sept. 5th. 1916. JND.

H
C d

6th A. F. A.

Whittle, W.A. 10991,

(Drowned March 3rd 1916.
Details)

Informant states "Whilst travelling from Bourdette (?) to Armentieres in motor 'buses on a Narrow road beside the edge of the canal with embankment, not more than 2 feet high, the wheel of of a 'bus fouled the wheel of a cart containing two women and the driver in trying to regain control of the steering gear ran the front wheel into the embankment and the bus fell over into the canal. All the men escaped except Whittle who was drowned. I was on the box in front and saw the whole affair. I consider that no blame could be attached to the driver. The 'bus I was in was stopped as soon as possible and I returned with others to the scene of the accident. A Captain (? McArthur) obtained a drag-line and Whittle's body was recovered artificial respiration being tried but without success. The body together with all the others in the overturned bus was taken to the nearest hospital. I proceeded on the journey and could not say where the burial took place."

Reference: Bmr. R. Williams, 8635,
A.I.F. 21st Battery, 22nd Brigade,
Beaufort War Hospital, Ward 2, Bristol

5.9.16
F. Gardiner.

Ted

FRANCE.

A.F.A. 6th.Bgde. WHITTLE, W.A. 10991.

Drowned March 3. 1916.

He was drowned between Burgette and Merville in the Canal. A motor Bus collided with a cart and he was shot into the canal. We saw his body brought into the hospital at Merville. He belonged to the 21st Battry: 6th Bgde. He came from Blousington, Tasmania. To know him quite well. He was drowned the last day in March 1916.

References: Gunner T.McKinnon, 10969, 21st.Battery 6th.Bgde.(now 22nd Bgde)

Gunner H Armstrong, 8556.

No.2.A.D.H.D. Staples. 9th.Sept. 1916.

SA