

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

433 Lance Corporal
Leonard William
Woolan

37th Battalion



30203019

A.I.F. 37.

APL WOOLAN. L.W. 433.

W/M. June 7/9th 1917.

I knew him well. We called him the Len. His no. is a bout that. He was of medium height, sturdy build, and had dark curly hair and was about 21 to 22. I saw him dead about a mile in front of our old line and about 150 yards before we got to our final objective. He held this about 2 or 3 hours and then had to retire so that his body was out in front. We took the objective however again about ~~the~~ 36 hours after retiring and this time we held it. This was at Mesines.

Inf: Pte. R.R. Francome: 6012.
3rd. Can. Gen. Hosp.
BOULOGNE. 19.10.17.

SGC.

M

A.I.F.
37th Btn.

WOOLAN.
Leonard William 433

Ed & H. 7-9.6.17.

Buried Sheet 28. V.3d.4.a. S.E. of Messines, bet. Bethlehem
Farm and Septimo Barn and 700 yds to the South.
Cert. by Hqs list of verification of Possible
burials for Capt. Mills 4.7.19.

London.
16.7.19.

H.

A.I.F. 37th Btn

WOOLAN
L.W. 453

"Wded June-July"

Wded & Missing 7--9-6-17 - previously Reported Wded
Cert. by A.I.F. Hqs 15-8-17.

London
16-8-17

M

37th Batn
A. I. F.

WOOLAN
L. W. 453

"Wounded and Missing June 7-9. 1917"

He was wounded at Messines and McFadyen 37th who comes from Maara Gippeland (as do Woolan and myself) told me he was just about done when he left him and didnot think he could possibly survive-he was than unable to speak but Fritz started shelling too heavy for him to stop.

Witness:-

R. W. Hales 286
57th Batn A. Coy.,
18 Hnt.
Westham

W. A. Read
London.

20.11.17. Note written McFadyen 16.11.17.

M

Hayre

29th October. 1917.

37th AUSTRALIANS

WOOLAN, L.S. 433

W. & M. June 19th. 1917.

I. Cpl. Leonard S. Woolan of A. Co., I. Pltn., 433, came from Maffra, Victoria; he worked on a farm. Pt. J. McFadyen of A. Co., I. Pltn., who also came from Maffra, was on the same Lewis Gun with Woolan, and told me that when he left him at Messines in June, 1917, he, Woolan, was dying, and could not live long; he was terribly knocked about. McFadyen is, I think, with his unit. I also came from Maffra.

Informant: Pt. R. F. Hale, 286
37th Australian, A. Co., I. Pltn.
Australian Camp, Boualies.

R.F.H.

M

Havre

20th Sept. 1917

37th AUSTRALIANS

WOOLAN, D.W. 433

W & M. 9.6.17

I knew him. He was a Lewis Gunner in A Co. His initial is as stated, and his number is in the 400's. He was an original battalion man. He was a Victorian, single, about 23 years of age, and very dark and thickset. It was in the attack at Messines on the 7th June 1917 (we had gained our objective and were digging ourselves in) that I saw Woolan lying on the ground very badly wounded in the back. We were being heavily fired on, and Stretcher Bearer were not available at the time. I had to go with a message, and neither saw nor heard anything further of him, though I had discussed the matter afterwards with several men. I think he must have been buried by a shell.

Informant: Corporal R.L.G. McCoy, 351
37th Australians, A Co., 2nd Ptn.,
Havre Hospital.

RM

L de D.

37th A. I. F.

L. W. WOOLAN, 433.

Wounded & Missing ⁷/9.6.17.

I saw him get hit during the 1st day of the Messines attack, June 7th. We had got our objective and were digging in and he went out ahead of us with his Lewis Gun to cover our operations. I saw him get a bullet wound just as he got out of the trench-~~line~~ it went in the left side about the waist and came out at the back. The man who dressed his wound (Pte. J. McFadyen, 37.A.I. still with the Unit) told me the position of the wound and expressed the opinion to me that Woolan could not live. Soon after, our barrage began to fall short and we all had to retire and there was no one to bring Woolan. I know nothing further as to what happened to him. I actually saw him left lying in a shell hole just in front of our objective. Shells from both sides were falling around him when we left. Woolan enlisted with me at Maffra and we were trained together at Seymore and came over in "S.S. Persic" leaving Melbourne 3.6.16. He was aged about 20, 5'8", very broad, heavy, strong, worked on his Father's farm. He was a good living chap, ambitious, energetic and popular with his mates.

Reference: F. Bennett, 217.

No. 11 Con. Camp, Buchy nr. Rouen, 27.10.17. M

Letter Pte. McFadyen 6-11-17 FEP.

57th Battn.
A.I.F.

Woolan.
L.W. 433

"Wounded & Missing 7-9.6.17"

Re No.433 L.W.Woolan. Being one of L.W.Woolan's best chums and also being in the same Gun team I was with him when he was hit. He was hit wounded in two places, one bullet going through his left arm, the other entering his right breast and coming out so close to his spine that we could not tell if it was actually hit. As he was not bleeding very much out wardly, I came to the conclusion he was bleeding internally. He was conscious for about an hour and then he gradually sank away. While we were waiting for the stretcher bearers we found out we had gone past our objective and before we could do anything we were caught between our own and the enemy's barrage as we thought it was though a counter-attack I went to my gun but as we had to retire to our right position I went to where I left my chum and he was quite unconscious. We passed the spot a few hours later but he was gone. I heard nothing concerning him until a fortnight later, when it was rumoured he had passed through a dressing station. He was about 5'10" in height, strongly built, ruddy complexion dark hair and clean shaven. He was also troubled with his eyes

Letter from:-

Pte. J. McFadyen

London.

France 22.11.17.

18.12.17.

M.

PL. McFADYEN

37 A. I. F.

B. 4. 7.

about:

L. W. WOOLAN

433

37 A. I. F.

bordered museum

4/9. 6. 17.

9w.

16. 11. 17

(6-11-17)

Pli. J. McFadyen

37th Batta. A. 7. 7.

B. 9. 7.

alt.

433 Pli. L. W. Woolan

37th Batta. A. 2. 7.

W/M. 7/9-6-17

PO

6-11-17
A. 1. 7.

433

J. W. WOOLAN

37 Batt

W.M. 79.6.17

M. 4

France

22nd Nov 1917.

Dear Madam

In answer to your inquiry concerning No 433 J. W. Woolan 37th Battn, Being one of J. W. Woolan's best chums and also being in the same gun team I was with him when he was hit. He was wounded in two places, one bullet going through his left arm, the other entering his right breast and coming out so close to his spine that we could not tell if it was actually hit. As he was not bleeding very much outwardly, I came to the conclusion he was bleeding internally. He was conscious for about an hour and then he gradually sank away. While we were waiting for the stretchers bearers we found out we

had gone past our objective and before we could do anything, we were caught between our own and the enemies barrage, as we thought it was a counter attack. I went to my gun. but as we had to retire to our right position I went to where I left my chum and he was quite unconscious, we passed the spot a few hours later but he was gone. I heard nothing concerning him until a fortnight later, when it was rumored he had passed through a crossing station. He was about 5ft 10 in height, strongly built, ruddy complexion, dark hair and clear shaven, he was also troubled with his eyes. Hoping this will be of some use in indentifying my lost comrade.

yours faithfully
Pte J. M. Fadyen. //