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

5456 Corporal
Henry James Smith

53rd Battalion



2550404K

A.I.F. 53rd Battn.

SMITH
Cpl. H. J.
5456

"WHEREABOUTS"

Killed in Action 29.7.18
Cert. by A.I.F.Hqrs List 11.9.18

London
12.9.18

P.I.

53rd Batn.,
A.I.F.

SMITH,
H.J., Cpl. 5456.

"Killed in action - 29-7-18."

"No.5456 Cpl, Henry James Smith, I am forwarding the following information.

He was a fine soldier well set up about 5 ft. 10 ins. dark complexion with black curly hair.

He was a very brave man and was killed while leading some of his men quite close to me on the night of 29-7-18. All his personal gear and belongings have been sent home by me to an address given to me by him before the stunt to some relations in Aberdeen, N.S.W.

His body was carried back and he was buried by the Padre in a Military Cemetery well behind the line and a cross erected.

Informant:- Sgt. C.A. Omodie, 865,
53rd Batn., A.I.F.

A.C.K.
London,
12-11-18.
J.E.D.

P.1.

53rd Battn.
A.I.F.

SMITH.
H.I. 5456 Cpl.

"Killed in Action 29-7-18"

On the 29th July last my battalion was in Morlancourt Sector. Shortly after 1.a.m. we were ordered over the top. My Company (C- led and we went over the front German trench. A Company which formed the second wave came shortly after us. Smith was killed by a fragment of a shell before we reached the German trench. I was the "runner" for my Company. that morning and I saw his body between the German front trench and our original front trench when day broke. The ground was won.

Eye-Witness:-
Description:- about 5ft 8. fair.
Home address:-
33 St George Sq.
Liverpool.

Informant:- Rylands.William.1730.Pte.
(fairly intelligent man. His account is substantially correct)
53rd Battn.A.I.F. C.Co.
Belmont Road Hospital.
LIVERPOOL.

A.W.Owne.
London.
12-11-18.
H.G.

P.1.

A.I.F. 53. SMITH, Capt.H.J. 5456.

K. July 29th 1918.

I saw Cpl.Smith of A.III body back at Battn HQ after he had been shot, I think through the head and killed instantly, but am not sure, about 3 a.m. on July 29th at Morlancourt during the hop-over and just after they had reached the objective.

I think he would be buried at No. 2 Mil.Cem, Heilly.

Cpl.Smith was with us in Goulburn Camp, and came over fromAustralia in the Cerannic. Left Australia 14.4.16, 17th Reinf for 1st Bn.

Inf: Pte.W.Scott. 5453. 53.A.IV.
No. 2 Stat Hosp.
ABBVILLE. 2.10.18.

HEH

P.I.

Havre. 11th. October. 1918.

53rd. Australians. Smith, Corporal, H. J. 5456.

K. July. 29/1918. Dets. D/B.

I saw him killed by a bullet at Morlancourt on the 29th. July. 1918. His bodywas recovered after about two days and was buried behind our lines. He was about 5 feet 10, well built, rather red hair, about 28 years of age.

Inf:- Private. D. Halliday. 3402½
53rd. Australians. C.
No. 74. General Hospital.

HJG.

P.I.

CP.

53rd Battn.
A.I.F.

SMITH.
Cpl. H.J. 5456.

"Killed in Action 29-7-18"

He was in A Company. 3 Platoon. I knew him well. There was no other Cpl Smith in A.Coy. He was about 5ft 10. high, dark and about 26 years of age. On the night of Morlancourt on July 29th 1918. at 1 a.m. we were engaged in a small stunt and had taken Fritz's 1st and 2nd trenches. Smith was near me when a shell came over, and a piece of it killed him instantly. He was hit in the chest and neck. I saw his body being carried away by the stretcher bearers. I did not see him buried, but Sgt Cmady, 53rd Battalion.A.Coy. 3rd Pl, told me he was buried on the battle field close to the place of casualty. The Sgt was Smith's personal friend and said he was present at the burial and saw a cross erected. We handed the trenches over to the Tommies, but they lost them later. Smith was buried in a deep ravine. I do not know Cmady's number.

Informant:- V.Moye.3769.
53rd Bn. A.3.
J.V.M.Kennedy. 21.DARTFORD.
London.
21-10-18.
J.E.A. Note:- Written Sgt Cmady. 17-10-18.

P I.

Havre. 22nd. October. 1918.

53rd. Australians. Smith, Corporal, H. J. 5456.

K. July. 29/1918. Dets. D/B.

I knew Corporal HEnry James Smith, A. 3. he came with me in the 17th. to the 1st. Reinforcements from Sydney in the 'Ceramic' sailing April 14th. 1916. I saw his body lying at B.H.Q. behind Morlancourt on July 29th. 1918 he had been killed by a bullet and his body brought back for burial. I did not see his Grave but I think it is in the Military Cemetery at Heilly.

Inf:- Private. W. Scott 5453.
53rd Australians. A. 4.
Australian Conv. Camp.
Rouelles.

RDM. P. Scott Pte.

CP.

53rd. Battn. Smith, H.J. Cpl. 5456.

K. 29/7/18.

I assisted to bury Cpl. Smith, (A. Coy) together with 2 others in a grave in a place called "The Mad Acre" near Corbie. I saw the cross was erected giving all 3 names but I cannot remember the the names of the other two.

53rd. Battn. Haile, J.L. Pte. 3165.

B. 28. Dartford. 24/10/18.

R.D.B.

P.1

6d

53rd Bttn.
A.I.F.

SMITH. Cpl.
H.J. 5456.

"Killed 29-7-18."

He was in "A"Coy. Refer to Sgt.C.Keatle,"A" Coy, 53rd Bttn, who is now in France for he saw him killed and saw his grave Morlancourt where he was killed by pieces of shell.

Informant - Cpl.T.P. Quinn, 5436
"B"Coy. 53rd Bttn.
3rd A.A.Hpl.Dartford.

W. Oman.
London.
25-10-18.
M.I.S.

P.I.

NOte. Wrriten Sgt. Keatle.24-10-18.

Letter returned marked "not with unit"
30.14-18

Havre 28th Octr 1918.

Australians. 53. Smith Cpl H.J. 5456.

K. 29th July 1918. Det D/B.

I knew him well. He came over with the 17th to the 1st sailing in the 'Ceranic' from Sydney April 1918. I think he lived in Sydney, and was an all round athlete especially in swimming. He was about 28, tall, and dark. About the 29th July on the right of Morlincourt, attacking. We went up shortly after midnight, and got our objective. Just as we got there Smith was shot by a bullet in the chest. The S/Bs went to him but he died while he was being bandaged. I saw all this as I was close by. The body was buried but I don't know where.

Inf:- L/Cpl A.G. Webb No. 5479.
A.I.F. 53. C.
Austra. Conv. Depot.

CWSG

c. sell p.1.

PP.

53rd Battn.
A.I.F.

SMITH
Cpl. H.J. 5456

"KILLED 29-7-18"

During an advance in the Morlancourt sector Smith was killed in action. Death was instantaneous. I was about ten yards from *him* at the time and saw him fall. The body was taken behind the lines for burial, but I do not know the name of the place or Cemetery. His Christian name was Harry, J. He was rather tall, dark hair, figure somewhat stout. There was another man of same name in Battn. The ground was held.

Informant - Harvey.Pte.L.3170
(Stated quite clearly all he knew)
53rd Battn.A.Coy.3rd Pltn.
Sec.5 War Hosp.
EXETER.

Home Address:-
Mrs. M. Harvey
Stewart's Point
Macleay River
N.S.W.

E.M.Stokes
7-10-18
London
1-11-18
M.I.S.

P.I.

17.10.18.

Sgt. Omady
A Coy. III Pltn.
53rd Battn. A.I.F.
abroad

abt.
5456

Cpl. H. J. Smith
A Coy. III Pltn.
53rd Battn. A.I.F.

K. 29.7.18.

17.10.18
A.I.B.

T/

To
Sergt C Keatle
A. Co
53 Battn
A. I. F.

about
5456 Pte H. J. Smith
53rd Battn
A. I. F

K July 29/18

Written 24.10.18
MEG

Mrs. H. Simpson
42 Station Road,
Aldershot Hants.

Files

15-11-18.

W. G. Sargood Esq
25 High Street
Salisbury.

Dear Madam (Sir)

In reference to your enquiry for 5456 Cpl: Henry James Smith 53rd Batt: A.I.F. we beg to inform you that we have received an unofficial report from 865 Sergt C.A. Omodie of the same unit who stated that Cpl: Smith was a fine soldier, a very brave man, well set up, about 5 ft-10 in high, with a dark complection, & black curly hair

Sergt. Omodie saw him killed instantaneously while bravely leading his men on the night of 29-7-16; & he sent all Cpl. Smith's ~~his~~ personal belongings to a relation in Aberdeen N.S.W, this he had been previously asked to do, in the possibility of his death. Sergt. Omodie added that his body was buried by the Chaplain in a military cemetery well behind the lines & a cross was erected over it.

3165 Tte. J. L. Haile of the same unit interviewed at No 3. Australian Ausc: Hospital, Dartford, stated that Cpl: Smith was buried in a place called "the Mad Acre" near Corbie.

THIS REFERENCE MUST BE

INQUIRY BUREAU, 39 BROAD STREET, BRISTOL.

BATH WAR HOSPITAL.

Cross Index No. Bath 12560

NAME Garrett Chas Saml. (Surname first) No. 3560 Rank Pte

Regiment 31st A.I.F. Coy. H.Q. Plat.

Hospital Bath War Ward Tent V.2.

Arrived 22nd October 1918 At Front from Jan. 17 To Oct 18

Home Address Haden, Queensland

Depot Horseferry Rd.

GIVES INFORMATION REGARDING:—

Missing man Kelly P. Casualty? K. Aug 29/18.Det D/B

Regiment A.I.F. Battln. 31st Coy. D No. 240

Red Cross List dated 1st Nov 1918 page 16a

C. S. 11
B.
p. 1.

B.E.F.

"Kelly was killed near the Somme Canal. I did not see him buried. I made the cross and know it was put up. I was in the 31st Pioneers and it was my Head Quarters was in the

We have also received an official reports from several men in his unit 3402 Pte: D. Halliday 5453 Pte: W. Scott, 5436 Cpl: T.T. Quinn 5479 L/Cpl: A.G. Webb (who states that the casualty occurred near Morlincourt, & that Cpl: Smith was a very good all round athlete) 3170 Pte: L. Harvey & 1730 Pte: W. Rylands — & 3769 Pte: Moyes - We are now closing our enquiries as we feel we are unlikely to obtain further particulars should we do so however we will at once advise you.

With Sincere Sympathy -

Any Nickname? no *Christian Name?* do not know

Any Tattoo Marks? no - Age abt 21 *Scars?* no. Dark hair, medium height

When last seen, and where? in action *Date* Aug 8th

Was it light or dark at the time? about 11.30 a.m.

If killed, was body buried, and where? cannot say where

Engagement or Circumstance? British advance *Place?* Hamel

Was the ground held or not? held

Were you an eye-witness? yes

If not, who told you, and when? Give man's No. and Rank, if possible

Any other man of same name in Battln.? not that I know of

Searcher's opinion of Informant satisfactory

Searcher's Name F. J. Kingsley

Dated Nov 5th 1918

PB

To Miss Dearin 31/13/18

2.1.18

On 5th Sept I took from Petersburg

a [illegible] about 545 b Cpl H. J. Smith
H Coy. 53d Batt.

Your reply passed out of my hands.

Can you now let me know the name

of this man next of Kin in England

(if any)?

Please

[illegible]

ack

42 Station Rd
Aldershot
Hants

Australian
c/o The Red Cross Records Office
Horseferry Rd
London

Sirs

Would you please give me any information of Corpl Chas. Leech No 5456. 53rd Batt A Coy. A.I.F.

And Oblige
Yours truly
(Mrs) A. Simpson

H.J SMITH

12 9

ack. p.c. 29.10.18 J.E.D.

5456 Cpl. H. J. Smith 53rd Bn. K. in A. 29.7.18 P.I.

France
23.10.18

To Sec. Aust Red Cross Society. (cd)

Dear Miss Deakin

Received an enquiry concerning No 5456 Cpl Henry James Smith and in reply am forwarding the following information.

He was a fine soldier well set up about 5 feet 10 ins dark complexion with black curly Hair

He was a very brave man and was killed while leading some of his men quite close to me on the night of 29.7.18 all his personal gear and belongings have been sent home by me to ~~his~~ an address given to me by him before the stunt to some relatives in Aberdeen N. S. Wales

His body was carried back and he was buried by the Padre in a Military Cemetary well

behind the line and a cross erected.
Trusting this information is satisfactory
I am

Yours sincerely.

No 865. Sgt. Sct. Omodee
53rd Batt. A.I.F.
C. D.

J.E.D.

20/11/18

42 Station Ra
Aldershot
Hants

To the Secretary

I received your letter and tender my sincerest thanks to you for the trouble you have taken regarding 5454 Opl. H.J. Smith 53 Bltn

and many thanks to the boys for giving you the information

Again thanking you

I remain

Yours Sincerely H. Simpson

RECEIVED
21 NOV. 1918

14-9-18.

W.G. Sargood, Esq.
25 High Street.
Salisbury.

Dear Sir.

In reply to your enquiry dated 5-9-18 regarding -

5456 Cpl. H.J. SMITH. 53rd Battalion. A.I.F.

We regret to have to inform you that he was Killed in Action on 29-7-18. His next of kin is an uncle - George Smith - who lives at Motherwell, Scotland, which may assist you in identifying him. If you wish for any further details regarding his death and burial will you kindly let us know and we will pursue our enquiries.

With sincere regrets for having to forward such distressing news.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) Mrs Macmillan

Secretary.

Mrs. H. Simpson.
42 Station Road.
Aldershot. Hants

W.C.Sargood, Esq.
25 High Street.
Salisbury.

October 21st, 1918.

Dear Sir.

In further reply to your enquiry for - 5456 Cpl. H.J.SMITH 53rd Battalion. A.I.F. We very much regret to have to inform you that we have received the following unofficial evidence from 5453 Pte. W. Scott of the same unit, which we fear confirms the report of his death in action on 29-7-18.

Pte. Scott states:- "I saw Pte. Smith's body back at Battalion H/Qs after he had been shot, I think through the head and killed instantly, but am not sure, about 3 a.m. on July 29th at Morlancourt during the hop-over and just after they had reached the objective.

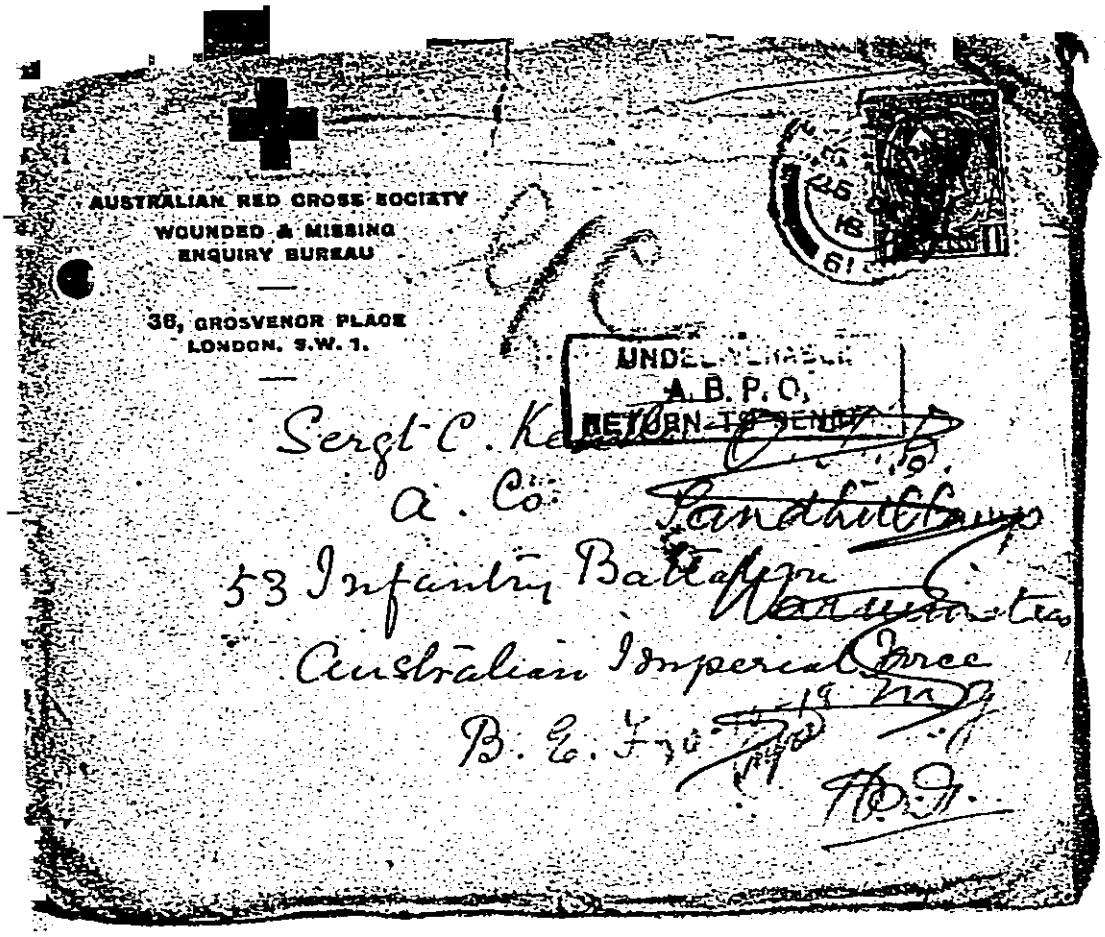
I think he would be buried at No 2 Mil.Com.Meilly. Cpl. Smith was with us in Goulburn Camp, and came over from Australia in the Corannie. Left Australia 14.4.16, 17th Reinf. for 1st Bth."

Trusting that the above information will be of some assistance to you.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss)

Secretary.

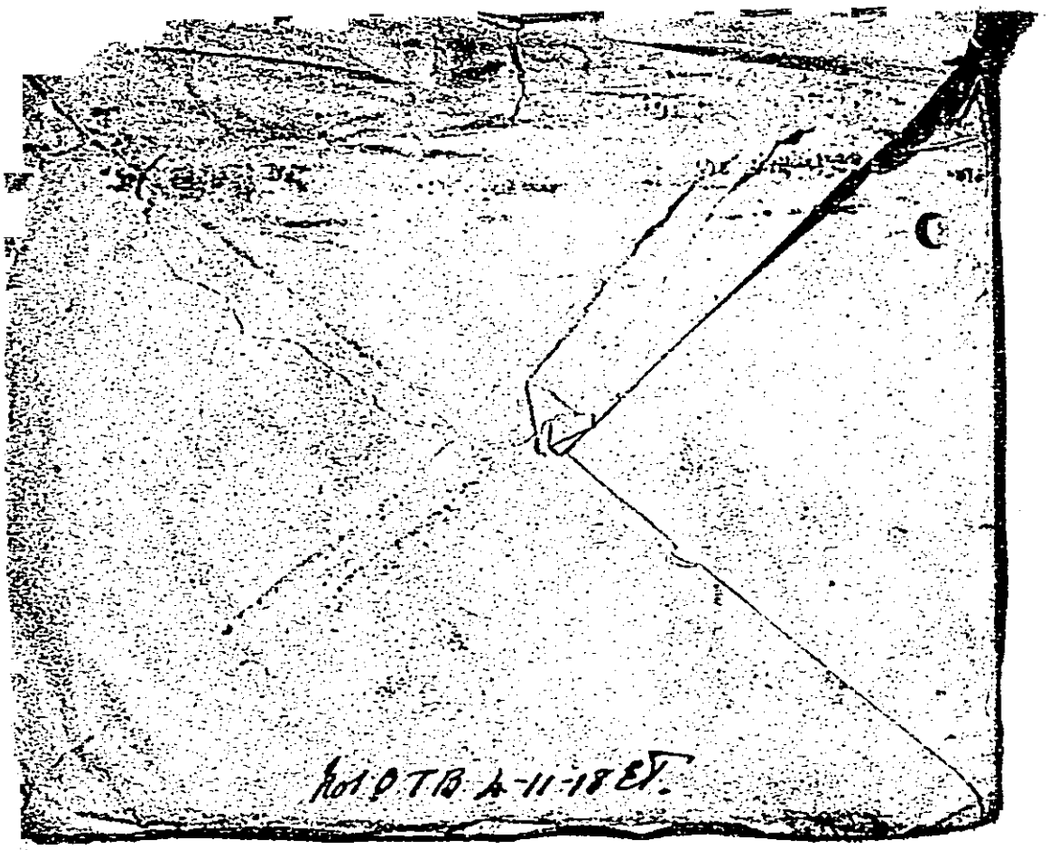


AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY
WOUNDED & MISSING
ENQUIRY BUREAU

36, GROSVENOR PLACE
LONDON, S.W. 1.

UNDELIVERABLE
A.B.P.O.
RETURN TO SENDER

Sergt C. K[illegible]
a. Co.
53 Infantry Battalion
Australian Imperial Force
B. E. F[illegible]


Kol O T B 4-11-18 ET.

Tel.: VICTORIA 8576 8577 8578

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO "THE SECRETARY," WOUNDED AND MISSING — ENQUIRY BUREAU — AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.

A

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY.

36, GROSVENOR PLACE,
LONDON S.W. 1.
24.10.18

Sgt C. Keatte
A. Co
53 Battn - A.I.F

Dear Sir,

We are making enquiries about a man of your unit,

5456 Cpl H. J. Smith 53 Battn - A.I.F
reported killed July 29/18

and have been told that you may be able to help us by supplying some information.

We should be most grateful for any details you can send us concerning him, but our enquirers wish especially to know whether he was buried, if so, whether it was on the field, or in a soldiers' cenetery where the grave would be registered. We would also be glad if you could add a short description of his personal appearance or any points that might help to prove his identity.

In your reply kindly quote name, initials and number, as without these particulars delay and confusion might be caused in identifying the soldier about whom you have written.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) Vera Deakin

Secretary.

Permes

This letter not forwarded. Cancelled case

January 3rd, 1919.

W.G.Sargood.Esq
C/o Mrs. Sargood.
A.R.C.S.,
36 Grosvenor Place.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your enquiry of 31st ult'o, for the name and address of the next of kin of 5456 Cpl. H.J. SMITH. 53rd Battalion. A.I.F. We regret that we are not allowed by the Authorities to supply it. If however you wish to write to them and will address the letter C/o this office we will be pleased to forward it on for you.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) MR.

Secretary.

Salisbury
5/9/18

[illegible]

pc 9 9 S

[illegible]

[illegible]

A [illegible] 53 [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

16th September 1918

Mrs. H. Simpson,
42 Station Road,
Aldershot,
Hants.

Dear Madam,

In reply to your enquiry for any news of -

5456 Cpl. Chas. Smith (we have his initials as H.J.)
53rd Btn A.I.F.,

we regret very much to tell you he is reported Killed in Action on 29-7-18. Further details we have none. If you think this is the Cpl. Smith you are enquiring for and will let us know we will gladly make enquiries about his death & burial.

Regretting that we have such sad news to tell you,

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) WTO

Secretary.

17/9/18

pc. 18. 9. 18

42 Station Rd
Aldershot
Hants

Dear Miss Johnson

Many thanks for reply to my letter respecting 5456 Cpl H.J. Chas Smith 53 Bltn there may have been a mistake as regards the initials but without doubt it is the number I should take it as a very great favour if you could make inquiries as regards his death & Burial

The news has indeed been a great grief to me and I should like to know all I possibly can

Again thanking you for

Your Kindness
I remain Yours
Faithfully

H Simpson