

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

Lieutenant  
Louis Norman Stafford

55th Battalion



2600402E

A.I.F.  
55th Bn.

STAFFORD  
Lieut. Louis Norman

Killed in Action 4.7.18.

No trace Germany.  
Capt. by Capt. Mills 10.10.19.

London  
21.10.19.

8.

A.I.F. 55th Btn

STAFFORD  
Lieut Louis Norman

"WHEREABOUTS"

55th Btn B.E.D. - No report of casualty  
Cert by A.I.F. Hqrs 3-8-17

London  
3-8-17

P.I.

Havre.

30th. September. 1918.

55-

35th. Australians.

Stafford, Lieut. L. N.

K. July. 4/1918. Dets. D/n.

On the morning of July 4th. on the Morlancourt Sector. There was a raid of picked men of the Battalion under Lieut. Chadwick, Lieut. Stafford, and Lieut. Piddington. Lieut. Stafford was senior Lieut. of the party. On the right of the enemy lines Lieut. Stafford fell killed and Lieut. Chadwick took over Command. Lieut. Chadwick, reported having to leave Mr. Stafford's body up by the enemy's lines.

Inf:- C/M/Sergeant, J. J. Fraser. 28256.  
H. S. 'Famosa'.

JED.

CP.

Havre.

30th. September. 1918.

55th. Australians.

Stafford, Lieut. L. N.

K. July. 4/1918. Dets. D/B.

He was with a raiding party and Private Swift of A. or B. Company I think he was Mr. Stafford's batman at the time, told me that he saw him shot and fall into the German trench. We retired to our own lines and I don't know if his body was recovered.

Inf:- Corporal. A. Williams. 2512.  
55th. Australians. D. 15.  
Australian Conv. Camp.  
Rouelles.

*Note written Swift*

*19.10.18*

CRB

CP.

Havre.

1st. October. 1918.

55th. Australians.

Stafford, Lieut. L. N.

K. July. 4/1918. Dets. D/B.

We were in a raid and I saw him killed by a revolver bullet. He fell into the German trench and there was no chance whatever of getting him out and I don't know what became of him after that.

Inf:- Private. E. R. Wright. 3783.  
55th. Australians. C. 10.  
Australian Conv. Camp.  
Rouelles.

CRB

CP.

Bayre

2nd Octr 1918.

Australians. 55.

Stafford Lieut L.N.

K. 4th July 1918. Det D/B.

A. Coy. from H.S. Wales. He was killed instantly by a revolver bullet at Morlancourt while on a raiding party at dawn in the German support lines. I do not know if his body was brought in.

Inf:- Pte E.H. Clarke No. 2627.  
A.I.F. 55. A.  
Hospital Ship.

RBS.

PP.

55th Battn:

Stafford, Lt. L. H.

K. 4/7/18.

Pte. E. R. Wright (C. Company) who is at present with the Battn: told me he was with Mr. Stafford when he was killed. He said Mr. Stafford jumped in a trench in which were about 20 Germans and bayoneted one, when the German Officer shot him dead. Wright could give all information.

55th Battn:

Dunker, J. Pte. 3665.

A 4. Dartford. 3/10/18.

R.D.B.

*J.E.A.*

*P.1.*

*Written Wright  
10.10.18*

Havre

3rd Octr 1918.

Australians. 55.

Stafford Lieut L.B.

A. 4th July 1918. Det D/B.

I saw this officer shot by a bullet from a German officer  
(killed) at Morlancourt on the 4th July 1918. He was buried at La  
Esage, on about the 6th July 1918.

Inf:- Pte L.R. Woods No. 4916.  
A.I.F. 55. Co IX.  
74 Gen. Hosp.

HJG.

Pr.



Havre

3rd Octr 1918.

Australians. 55.

Stafford Lieut L.H.

R. 4th July 1918. Det D/B.

He was our Platoon Officer, and was in charge of a raid in front of Meteren. We started at daybreak, but had to go through our own barrage which caused a lot of casualties at the start. Only about half a dozen reached the German support line, and he jumped right into the trench and was shot by a revolver. Pte Swift of A.Coy. was on top of the trench and shot the man with the revolver. Pte Swift is still with the Battn. Cpl Gear was sent back after our last advance to try and find his grave, but did not succeed. I was one of the raiding party.

Inf:- Pte M. Kiehn No. 2858.

A.I.F. 55. A. IV.

Austra. Conv. Depot.

CR.

FP

AIF 55 Bat

Stafford, Lieut.L.N.

K. July 4/18.

We had a raid on July 4th. at the right of the Corbie-Bray road. I was with Stafford and we got right up to the German Trenches when a German officer shot him with a revolver, killing him outright.

We had to fall back then, and the dead had to be left where they lay. It was not until about July 28 that the German lines were taken by another party, so I cannot say whether Stafford's body was recovered.

Inf: Pryce, priv.C.F. 324, B Coy. 55 Bat.

G.F.G.

Westham Camp

5/10/18.

*W. G. G.*

*S. P.*

Havre.

4th. October. 1918.

55th. Australians.

Stafford, Lieut. L. H.

K. July. 4/1918. Dets. D/B.

He was killed during a raid in front of Morlancourt in the Sailly le Sec Sector. He was the C.C. of our Company; the only Officer who went over with our Company. Lieut. Piddington was in another Company working beside us. We were in the second wave; the other two Companies had to go to the first line and we had to go through them to the second line. The barbed wire in the second line was very thick in places and had not been touched. Our own barrage had fallen on us and we were therefore doubly delayed. Lieut. Stafford found a path through the wire and got into a trench with one or two other men. He found this occupied by the enemy of whom he immediately shot one man with his revolver and then was shot himself by one of the enemy. His own batman turned round and killed Lieut. Stafford's assailant. The batman's name was Private. Swift. (55. A. 1.) He is a friend of mine and told me all this. I was near at the time but did not actually see all this, not being able to get through the wire (we had not got the clippers.) I was batman to Lieut. Stafford myself for a few weeks. His body was never recovered but since that time Swift has been sent down to see if there is any Cross there. A Cross was found close to where he was killed but nothing definite to show it was

Lieut. Staffords. We had to evacuated the position after the operation described above. I knew Lieut. Stafford well; he was well liked by his men. He was tall, young, sharp featured, and had dark hair.

Inf:- Private. J. Dickens. 5361.  
55th. Australians. A. 1.  
~~xxxxxx~~ Hospital Ship.

WSM.

J. D.

S

P. 1.

Already written Swift  
19.10.18.

CP.

55th Battn.  
A.I.F.

STAFFORD  
Lieut. L.N.

"Killed 4-7-18"

He was in "A" Coy., and I saw him killed in front of Heilly when death was instantaneous he being hit by a bullet from revolver. He was but 2 yards away when a German Officer shot him in the chest and we shot this German Officer immediately. This happened during a raid about 3.30 a.m. on July 4/18. I knew him well and he came from New South Wales: he was a very popular Officer. We left him where he was killed, for we had to carry the wounded men back and never recovered his body. I cannot give any details of his burial nor can I refer to anyone except Battalion's Headquarters who may know something further for the ground was taken since.

Informant. Cole. Cpl. H.P.F. 2525-  
A.Coy. 55th Battn.,  
3rd A.A.H.,  
DARTFORD.

W.Oman  
London  
9-10-18  
J.E.A.

S P.I.

55th Battn.  
A.I.F.

STAFFORD.  
Lieut. L.H.

"Killed 4-7-18"

Front of Merlescourt. I saw him killed by bullet  
in raid. It was in the second line of German trench. He  
was killed at once. We went over to raid these trenches.  
This was about 3.15 a.m. We brought his body back but I did  
not know where buried. I came over with him from Australia.  
He was a good sub.

Informant: - Parkes. 2484.  
W.12. HAREFIELD.

D.R. Dickson.  
London.  
12-10-17.  
J.E.A.

S.

55th Battn.  
A.I.F.

STAFFORD  
Lt. L.N.

"Killed 4-7-18"

He was in my Coy. We were out raiding at Morlancourt on 4th July. I was alongside him when he was shot through the head by a sniper and killed instantly. I do not know where he was buried. He came from Snowy River, N.S.W. He was about 30, about 5'11", about 13 stone, dark complexion.

Informant. Allen. Pte.E.J. 1713  
A.Coy. 55th Battn.,  
Littlemoor Camp,  
WEYMOUTH.

T.Gsbprne  
London  
22-10-18  
W.E.A.

S.

55th Batta,  
A.I.F.

STAFFORD.  
L.N.      Lieut.

"Killed 4-7-18."

He was in my Coy. We were out raiding at Morlancourt on 4th July. I was alongside him when he was shot through the head by a sniper and killed instantly. I do not know where he was buried. He came from Snowy River, N.S.Wales.

Description:- About 30 years of age, 5'11" in height,  
" 15 st in weight. and dark complexion.

Informant:-

Pte. Allen P.J. 1715.  
A.Coy. 55th Batta.  
Littlemoor Camp.  
10-9-18.

G. Osborne.  
London.  
25-10-18.  
J.E.A.

B.



A.I.F. 55th Battn.

STAFFORD  
Lieut L.N.

"KILLED IN ACTION 4/7/18"

Think of C Company - on 4th July during a raid on Enemy's line in front of Morlancourt at 5.50 in morning. He was in the enemy's trench and told a German Officer to surrender and come out. The German threw up his hands and at the same time shot Lieut. Stafford - killed outright. His body could not be recovered. I was in the raid, but was further up the line. I did not see it happen but the men who were with Lt. Stafford told me what happened.

Informant:- Sgt. C.O. Seymout S440-  
55th Battn., B Coy., VIII pltn.,  
Harefield.

A.D.G.

London  
28/10/18.

S

A.I.F. 55th Battn.

Lieut. J. H. Stafford

Killed in Action 4.7.18.

Pte. Swift, A. Coy., told me that there was a raid to the left of Villers Brattonaux, and right of Heilly early in the morning. They got in the second German trench and were held up. He saw Lieut. Stafford shot with a revolver and himself shot the German. He could not say if the Lieut. was killed outright. They retired, but we advanced over this ground again. No. Det/B. Same Coy. as Lieut. Stafford.

Inf:- Corpl. P. C. Meldrum,  
55th Battn. A. Coy.

Oct. 9/18.  
T St. PP.  
London,  
29/10/18.

A.I.F.

Southall.

S.

H.G.

L.I.F. With Notes

RECEIVED  
Ident. L.I.F.

**INTERVIEW WITH L.I.F. #1**

He was in 4th Coy., and I met him killed on the left of Village  
pretenses that such was the intention of being sent by a German with a  
bullet. Suddenly he turned on the morning of 4/12/42. He had taken some  
prisoners and as he turned round to give them orders, one of prisoners  
drew a revolver and shot him. This prisoner was shot and the other prison-  
ers about half a dozen or more. He was in a field at the time and I saw  
him fall and a very painful sight. I saw several other men running and  
could give any details of burial. Later in April, while in 4th Coy., 4th  
Battalion, and now in France but I think he will have particulars of burial.

Informant:- With No Ball L.I.F.

4th Coy., 4th Battalion,

1st Army, 4th Div., Bedford.

NOTE:- Written Capt. White: 4/11/42.

W. C. C. C.  
1/11/42  
211

55th Battn.

A.I.F.

STAFFORD.

L.N. Lieut.

"Killed in Action 4-7-18"

I am afraid you will never find out anything very much about Lieut Stafford. He was killed in the German front line during a raid and his body had to be left there for burial.

Informant: - Cpl. E.L. Fitzgerald. (In answer to letter to  
A.Ccy. 55th Battalion. S. Hearnings)

London.

15-11-18.

H.G.

BY LEAVE.

S.

55th Battn.  
A.I.F.

STAFFORD.  
Lieut. L.N.

"Killed in Action 4-7-18" A

Re Lieut Stafford of this Battalion. The following are the facts concerning his death. He was killed on 4th July 1918 while leading a ~~minor~~ minor operation carried out by this battalion against an enemy position near Morlancourt. He was a volunteer for the job which it was known only too well, would be difficult and though the success of the operation won the highest praise from the Commanders of the highest formations, He was not spared to know the good work which he had done. He was killed instantly by a bullet while leading his men in the assault on the further objective - the trench was finally cleared but to recover his body was an impossible task - in the time allotted before the party withdrew.

The above operation was of many which paved the way to the commencement of the last big offensive on August 8th.

In the Battalion Lieut Stafford was a great favourite, and we have never ceased to miss his ready wit and cheerful manner. I only hope that his people may derive consolation from the fact that he died as every soldier would wish to die - with his face to the enemy and well out in front of his men.

London  
23-11-18.  
D.W.B.

Letter from:- Capt. K.R. Wyllie.  
55th Battalion.A.I.F.  
S.

55th Battalion, A.I.F.  
4th Reinforcements.

STAFFORD L.N. Lieutenant.

"Killed In Action. 4/7/18."

Informant states that on the 4/7/18, the Battalion was in Morlancourt Valley in front of Hely. About 4 a.m. a party of about 180 men drawn from two Companies, and including the Lieutenant and Informant, made a raid on the German 2nd line Trenches, about 1200 yards distant. They captured their objective, and about a quarter of an hour after they had done so, and as soon as he had jumped into a trench, the Lieutenant was killed by a revolver bullet fired by a German officer, who was himself killed by our men just afterwards. Informant was with the Lieutenant when he was killed, and of course saw his fall. As the raid was only a reconnoitring one, the position was abandoned as soon as they found out all they could.

According to Informant, the Lieutenant was a well liked officer.

Informant - Corporal H. Cole, No. 2525,  
55th Battalion.

Home Address - 54 Wyndham Street,  
Alexandria.

S.G.

No. 4 Australian General Hospital,  
SYDNEY.

8/1/19.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

S  
Ed  
inf

CC  
70  
Pt E. B. Wright  
C. Co  
55 Ballu  
A. I. F.

about  
Lt L. N. Stafford  
55 Ballu  
A. I. F.

K 4.7.18

Written 10.10.18

M. S.

(17. 10. 18.)

Pte. Swift

A Coy. I Plt.

5-5<sup>th</sup> Batta. A. 1.7.

abroad

abt. officer

St. L. N. Stafford

A Coy. I Plt.

5-5<sup>th</sup> Batta. A. 1.7. R

H. 4. 7. 18.

17. 10. 18.  
A. 1.7.



To Mr Swift  
Hon B. Co.  
55 Battn  
A. I. F.

about  
Lt L. M. Stafford  
55 Battn  
A. I. F.

K July 4/18

Written 19.10.18  
MRS

To

Capt Wyllie K. R.

B. Co.

55. Battery - A. I. F.

Attn

St. Clifford

55th Battery

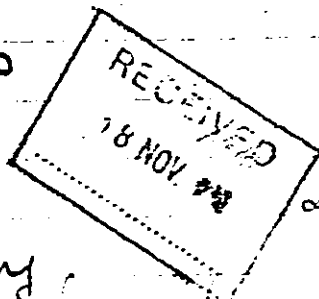
A. I. F.

K July 4. 18

Written 4. 11. 18

MRS

ack. P. Chaud  
19.11.18  
W/B



France

13. 11. 18

Lieut L. H. Stafford

55 Bn

Kia A. 4.7.18

S (cd)  
2

The Secretary  
Aus Red Cross Society  
London

Dear Madam,

In reply to your  
enquiry concerning the late  
Lieut Stafford of this battalion  
the following are the facts  
concerning his death:

He was killed on  
4 July 1918 while leading  
a minor operation carried  
out by this battalion against  
an enemy position near  
Morlancoeur. He was a  
volunteer for a job which it  
was known only too well  
would be difficult and  
though the success of the

operations won the highest  
praise from the Commanders  
of higher formations he was  
not spared to know the  
good work which he had  
done. He was killed

instantly by a bullet  
while leading his men in  
the assault on the further  
objective - the trench was  
finally cleared but to recover  
his body was an impossible  
task in the time allotted  
before the party withdrew.

The above operation was  
one of many which paved  
the way for the commencement  
of the last very offensive on  
August 8th.

In the Battalion's front  
Stafford was a great favorite  
and we have never ceased  
to miss his ready wit and  
cheerful manner. I only

hope that his people may  
 derive consolation from the  
 fact that he died as every  
 soldier would wish to die -  
 with his face to the enemy  
 and all out in front of his  
 men.

Yours sincerely

Rhyllie

S.H.B.

247

50 Pm

4.1.11

C

Army Church Hub

Perham Downs

W Andover. 30/1/17

Robert G. M. G.

Regd. D.O.

Salisbury

W. G. M.

Dear.

Madame

I wish to ask if you can tell me if either the following are wounded and in England I heard they are wounded but would like them and if possible trusting you will inform me by Return

Lt <sup>L.H.</sup> Stafford 55<sup>th</sup> Batt C Coy. 1st Bn.

Pte E. Blyton 55<sup>th</sup> Batt. C

Pte Mines 55<sup>th</sup> Batt. C

Pte Ray. Stalker 55<sup>th</sup> Batt. (1 leg off.) try 2nd Bn.

~~Last heard of~~

Last heard of at Bullencourt.

I remain

Yours Truly

Pte E. H. Keating 2265.

Late 55<sup>th</sup> Batt

a 97.

Bromley R Hospital

London N.W.

August 9th, 1917.

No 2255 Pte. R.H. Keating,  
55th Bn, A.I.F.,  
No 3 Command Depot,  
Hurdcott, Salisbury Plain.

Dear Pte. Keating,

In answer to your inquiry for Lt. L.H. Stafford,  
55th Bn, A.I.F.,

we are glad to tell you that he is with his unit in  
France and there is no report of any casualty for him.

We have now obtained unofficial details of the  
burial of No 2266 Pte. H.V. Bryant,  
55th Bn, A.I.F.

Informant being a man of his unit, who was in  
camp in France. He stated that he has seen Pte Bryant's  
grave in a ~~Sunk~~ road about 200 yards behind and about  
1/2 mile to the right of Bullecourt, facing Rencourt and a  
cross bearing his name and regimental particulars is  
erected over it.

He had known Pte Bryant for some months and says  
that he was 5ft 4ins in height, thickset, dark, clean-shaven

- 2 -

and about 22 or 23 years of age. He had been married just before leaving Australia with the 4th Reinforcement to the Battalion.

We are continuing our inquiries and will send you any further information that we receive.

With good wishes,

Yours faithfully,

V B

Secretary.

1YA