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

9991 Gunner
Rohan Albert Tapfield

1st Field Artillery Brigade



2690406R

1st. Bgde.
A.F.A.

Tapfield
9991 R.A.

Died of Wounds 16.8.17.

Re 9991, Gunr. R. A. Tapfield, I may state that I have already personally written to his wife and also to his brother in law, Sgt. R. D. Westmore of London, England.
For your information I inform you that this soldier who was my own life long comrade and friend, was killed by a piece of a shell which burst near him while he was working his gun during a German attack just after dawn on the morning of 16th. August last. Owing to the exigencies of circumstances we buried him almost at the spot where he fell, and although I am not permitted to mention the place, his grave is registered with the Registrar of Graves, Reninghelst, Belgium, who will be able, on application to give you the exact location. He was buried with due ceremony and a cross marks his grave, and his private papers and effects were forwarded to his wife, Mrs. R. A. Tapfield, "Canberra" Wood Street, Manly, Sydney, NSW.
His description is height 5'6" slightly built, weight about 128 lbs. fair hair, rather sallow but slightly browned complexion and in private life wore spectacles.
He was a very fine soldier and most capable. I personally cabled to my own people, who broke the news to his people before the official notification reached them.

1st. Bgde.
A.F.A.

Tapfield.
9991, R.A.

Ref. Letter from H. Haward Harding,
No. 9919, Bdr.
3rd. Battery,
A.F.A.

London.
20/11/17.

S.

A.F.A.

Tapfield R.A. 9991,
1st Bde.

(D/W Aug. 16/17 Det D/B)

I knew him and helped to bury him. Gnr. Harding 3rd Batt: sent a cable to his people.

Eye-witness:

Description:

Informant: Pte. L.H. Humphries 425,
A.F.A., 1 Bde. 3 Batt:
Bethnal Green Military Hospt.

15.11.17,
H. Walters.

Havre 9th October 1917

AUSTRALIAN FIELD ART: TAPFIELD R.A. 9991 D/W 16.8.17
Coghlan 5862 K. 31.7.17 det D/W

1st Brigade

Gunner Tapfield and Signaller Coghlan, 3rd Battery (Coghlan's nickname was "Kitchener") were buried at the gun pits in front of Zillebeke in July 1917. I think there will be a cross on each of the graves.

Informant: Gunner T.Lees 2083
1st Brig. 3rd Battery A.F.A.
Australian Camp Rouelles

RDM

A.F.A. 1. R.A. TAPFIELD, 9991.

D/W Aug 16th 1917.

I knew him. He got hit by a piece of shrapnel in the head. He died five minutes afterwards. I carried him down. He is buried at Mable Copse, Zillebeke. There is a cross put up.

Inf: Bombdr F.Plaisted. 3612.
No. 1 C.C.
BOULOGNE 24.10.17

RAOI

S

1st Bdge
R.A.

TAPFIELD R A. 9991

"Died of wounds 16.8.17."

He was 3rd Battery-Refer to his friend gunner H.H. Hardy 99919 of same Unit for details.

Witness:- P. McDonnell 417
1st Bdge 3rd Battery
Southall.

NOTE Written Gr. Hardy, 25.10.17

London.
26.10.17.

S

A.F.A.
A.I.F. 1 Bde. TAPFIELD, R.A. 9991.

D/W Aug 16th 1917. Dets.

Tapfield was in 3 Bty and was killed on Thursday August 15th in the battery position, 1000 yards in front of Zillebeke, and was buried up at the gun position. I was not there then but in the wagon lines. The battery had to evacuate for a time owing to the heavy shelling, and could not get away Tapfield's body, and it must have been buried by infantry or pioneers or some one.

Inf: Bomdr H.E.Lilleyman. 526 1/3
No. 14 Gen Hospital,
BOULOGNE. 7.11.17.

JT

1st Bde. A.I.F.A. Tapfield R.A. 9991,

(D/W Aug. 16/17 Det D/B)

"I was beside Gnr. Tapfield (1 Bde. 3 Battery) when he was hit in the head by a shell, about Aug. 15th, while in the Battery position, at Zillebeke. The Germans were attacking, but were driven back. Gnr. Tapfield was taken to the Dressing Station, but only lived for about five minutes. He was buried close to the D.S. in the open. I have seen his grave. There is a cross put up. There was a Memorial Service one Sunday afterwards for those who had fallen, and the Chaplain read out the names."

Eye-witness: Yes

Description: Married, commercial traveller, out abt. 20 months.

Informant: Gnr. Fred Barrah 1692,
1st Bde. Field Artillert A.I.F., 3 Bty.
3rd Southern General Hospt.,
Oxford.

Home address:
421 William St.,
Nov. 13/17, Perth, W. Australia.
H.M. Pickerd-Cambridge.

A.F.A. 1 Bde. Tapfield. R.A. 9991

D/W 16.8.17. Det D/B

"I saw Tapfield struck on the side of the head by a large piece of shell and he died within an hour whilst being carried to the dressing station. At the time he was struck we were in action at Zillebecke and it was about 9 a.m. He was buried about 200 yards behind the gunpit where he was struck and a cross was erected over the grave. He was a married man with two children and came from Sydney."

Eye-witness:
Description:

Informant: Gnr. R.D. McDonald, 10317,
A.F.A. 1 Bde. 3 Btty.
Beaufort Hosp. Bristol.

Home address: 149 Young Street, Fitzroy, Victoria.

17.11.17
F.Gardiner.

Sgd Staff

1st Bde. 3rd Batty. Tapfield Pte. R.A. 9991.

(D/W Aug. 16/17 Det D/B)

I saw a cross made out for the grave of R.A. Tapfield who was buried near Sanctuary Wood. I was told that he was killed near Sanctuary Wood by a shell on the date given".

Eye-witness: No,

Description: Slight, young, had been in England sick.

Informant: Gunner C.E. Johnston 11346,
1st A.I.F., 3rd Battery, 1 Div.,
Runcorn Vicarage Hospt.

Home address:
c/o A.S. Johnston,
Paradena,
Lucas Rd.,
Burwood,
Sydney.

Nov. 27/17,
E.J. Clayden.

Sgd Staff.

A.I.F. Fld.Art. 1st Bde. 3 Batty. TAPFIELD. R.A. 9991.

D/W. Aug.16th 1917. Bets.D/B.

I knew Tapfield who came out with me from Australia and was in the 13th 1st Bde Reinforcement. He was with his Batty. in position on the 16th Aug 1917, and during an enemy bombardment he was wounded and later on died near the guns. The gunners buried him near the Batty. and a cross bearing his name and number was placed on his grave.

Inf. Drv.G.Bovis 9956. 3rd Batty.
57, Gen. Hosp.
BOULOGNE. 11.10.17.

HH.

25-10-17

9919

Gunner H. H. HARDY.

121. Coast F. A. Brigade

A.I.F.

B.E.F.

9991

R. A. TAPFIELD.

121. Brigade A.E.A.

A.I.F.

D/W 16-8-17

25.10.17.

A.I.B.

Dec 1=M.51.7/1911

PASSED
1st Bde A FA
DATED

In the field 3rd/1917

The Secretary
Aust Red Cross Society
London.

Dear Madam

I have received your enquiry re 999 Gnr R A Taffield and in reply I may state that I have already personally written to his wife and also to his brother in law Lt R B Neatmore of London Eng.

For your information I may inform you that this soldier who was my own life long comrade and friend, was killed by a piece of shell which burst near him whilst he was marking his gun during a German attack just after dawn on the morning of the 2nd August last bring to the exigencies of circumstances we buried him almost at the spot where he fell and although I cannot permitted to mention the place, his grave is registered with the Registrar of Graves Reninghelst Belgium

who will be able, on application, to give you the exact location. He was buried with due ceremony and a cross marks his grave, and his personal papers and effects were forwarded to his wife, Mrs P A Tapfield "Canberra" Wood Street, Manly, Sydney NSW.

His description is height 5ft 11". slight build, weight about 128 lbs, fair hair, rather sallow but slightly browned complexion and in private life wore spectacles.

He was a very fine soldier and most capable. I personally called to my own people, who broke the news to his people before the official notification reached them.

Yours faithfully
H Howard Harding
No 9919 Pte
3rd Battn
A.I.F.

5. 11. 17.

9919. Bdr. H.H Harding,
3rd Batty, A F.A.
A.I.F. - B.E.F.

Dear Bdr Harding,

Very many thanks for your letter in answer to our enquiry concerning:-

9991. R.A. Tapfield, 3rd ~~Battalion~~ Battery A.F.A

The clear and detailed information you have sent will be of much assistance to us and of great value to our enquirers. Please accept our sincere sympathy in the loss of your friend,

Yours faithfully,

V. D.

SECRETARY,