

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

**3709 Private  
Charles Robert Swain**

**26th Battalion**



2670910P

26th Battn.  
A. I. F.

Swain.  
C. H. 3709.  
R.

"Killed 2.3.17"

I saw Swain killed instantly by a shell at ~~W~~ellencourt during attack on March 2nd 1917. The casualty occurred on the rise just above the village near the sunken road. The ground was held. When I was relieved the body of Swain was lying on the wire very much battered. I did not see his burial. He was 5'10 or 11", well built, dark, 29-30 years. He joined as a private, but formerly was a Sgt.

Witness:-

N. Bellette 1057.

D. Coy. 26th Battn.

Perham Downs Camp.

A. R. McPhee.

London.  
30.7.17.

~~P.T.~~  
~~M.~~

2 copies  
H.

26th A.I.F.

Swain Pte. C.R. 3709,  
B. Coy.

(K. March 2/17 Det D/B)

"Swain was killed at Malt Farm Warlincourt near  
Bapaume on March 2/17. I didn't see it happen, but saw his  
body directly after he was killed by a shell". *Buried near by.*

Eye-witness:

Description: His name was Charlie, fair, well built,  
abt. 5'10

Informant: Pte. S. Williams 5113,  
26th A.I.F.,  
Napsbury Hospt.,  
St. Albans,  
Herts.

Home address:  
Warwick,  
Queensland.

Oct. 17/17,  
G. Grant.

*P.T*  
*MA*  
*2 copies*  
*H*

26th Australians

Swain C.R. 3709.

(K. Mar. 2/17) Det D/B

"I heard that Pte. Charles Swain (26th Batt) was being carried away wounded from Malt Trench, Warlencourt at the beginning of March. Shells were falling, so his S/B jumped down into a trench for shelter and before they could lower him too, a shell landed on him and he was blown to pieces. I did not see this happen but I know it is correct because I found out about him at the time".

Eye-witness: No.

Description: His wife lives in Melbourne; he was a waiter or chef.

Informant: Pte. S. Ricketts 3690,  
26th Australians, D. Coy., XIII Plt.,  
3rd Southern General Hospt.,  
Oxford.

Home address:  
36 Lawson St.,  
Fareham,  
Paddington, N.S.W.

Nov. 12/17,  
J.M. Payne.

P.I  
M  
H  
2 more

A.I.F. 26.

SWAIN, C.R. 3709.

K. March 2nd 1917. Dets D/B.

We were at Malt Trench near Lonpard (?) Wood, Wancourt. on March 2nd when he was killed outright at the barbed wire by M.G. fire with others and buried by our burial party the next day .. at the place where they fell. I saw his dead body but was not present at the burial. He was about 5ft 7, stout, rather bald 26 years.

Inf: Cpl. H.R. Nelson. 4177. 26.HQ.S/B.  
No. 8 Stat Hosp.  
BOULOGNE. 7.12.17.

PRBL

P-1  
M.  
H 2 more

A.I.F. 26.

R.  
SWAIN. C.K. 3709.

K. March 2nd 1917

He was killed at Malt Trench, Gravillers on the date named. He was in charge of some German prisoners and he had gone back with two prisoners to bring in a German who was badly wounded. A shell got all the party except the badly wounded German. It was a German shell. I was there at the time and thought I did not see this. I got it from men who did, I forget their names. It was during an attack and while bombing our way up a communication trench.

Inf: Sergt. Major. A.S. Moxley. 2137.

No. 11, C.C.

Buchy near Rouen.

24.12.17.

FEP.

*Not Sent on P.I.  
Refers to another man, possibly J.A. Swain 4541  
14th Batt.*

26th Battn.  
A.I.F.

SWAIN,  
C.R. 3709

"Killed 2.3.17."

I was told by Pte. S.G. Peterkin, since reported missing that he saw him killed at Malt Trench, near Warlencourt. He was caught by a shell, and killed instantly. Peterkin handed his disc into the Orderly room, and which I saw. I do not know place of burial, and I cannot refer to anyone for details, but I feel sure he would be buried at place of casualty.

Informant:- L/Cpl. V.R. Marlow, 2649.  
26th Battn, D. Coy, 14th Pltn.  
3.A.A.H.  
Dartford.

W. Oman.

London.  
9.2.18.

P.T.  
H

A.I.F. 26th Battn.

SWAIN  
C.R. 3709.

"Killed 2.3.17."

This man came over with me on "S.S. Afric" leaving Melbourne January 5th 1916. About 5ft. 10ins., fair, medium build enlisted in Tasmania. Married, wife in Victoria. He was wounded at Malincourt in the hcp-over. Brought back by Stretcher Bearer, he got down into the sap when a shell blew him to pieces. Do not know the names of Stretcher bearers.

Informant:- S.T. Ricketts, 3690,  
26th Battalion.

T. St. J. P.  
London  
1.1.19.  
A.W.

H.  
H. P.I.

17.6.18

Jack Swan

See under

20761

Philip Swan

S. F. A. B.

20.6.18.

Pvt. Jack Swain

See under

20.7.61

pvt P. Swain -

8th F. A. B.



6/10/19.

Final Draft To

Mr Swain  
93 Puller Rd  
Barnet

Amount

37.9 C. R. Swain  
26 \* Bn.

The Australian Red Cross Society  
(B.R.C.S.)

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

WOUNDED AND MISSING ENQUIRY BUREAU.

Enquiry No.

6885-

Date May 20-1918

Regimental Details of  
Soldier enquired about.

No. 339,  
Pte. Joseph Gallop,  
44<sup>th</sup> Battalion,

Details of Casualty.

{ Wounded (2<sup>nd</sup> Occ.)

Information wanted.

{ Present Location Condition

Information obtained.

Naval & Military Pensions.

HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL COMMITTEE.

Barnet Branch.

Major Ad.

Barnet.

30. 6. 17.

post card  
4-7-17  
Dear Sir:

✓  
R  
Pte. C. Swain. 3709.

D. Coy.  
26<sup>th</sup> batt.  
7<sup>th</sup> Bde.  
A. I. F.

The above soldier was killed in action somewhere  
in France, in March 17.

His mother Mrs Swain.

93. Pallet Ad.

Barnet

has asked me to try & find out particulars

for her if possible, as to his death & place of  
burial.

Can you give me any particulars  
regarding the soldier in question? I so  
should be greatly obliged.

Yours truly.

E. Dickins. (Miss).

The Secretary.  
Australian Branch  
B. A. C. S.

August 15th, 1917.

Mrs. Swain,  
93, Fuller Rd.,  
Barnet, Herts.

Dear Madam,

Your inquiry for details of the death of your son

No 370<sup>9</sup> Pte. C.A.<sup>R</sup> Swain.  
26th Battalion.  
A.I.F.

has been received from the Hertfordshire Branch of the Naval and Military Pensions and we have now received an unofficial report which we beg to forward.

No 1057 Pte. H. Bellette of the same battalion who was in No 1 Command Depot. Perham Downs, stated that he saw Pte. Swain killed instantly by a shell at Warlen<sup>C</sup>court on the line just above the village, during the attack on March 2nd. The ground was held but they were relieved shortly afterwards and informant did not witness his burial. When last he saw your son he was lying near the German wire near <sup>K</sup>Surken Road.

He adds that he was 5ft 10 or 11 ins, well built, dark and about 30 years of age and he had formerly been a ser<sup>d</sup>gent.

We are continuing our enquiries for details of his death

and burial and you may rest assured that we shall send you any information that is received as we realise how anxiously you must await particulars.

Trusting that it will be some comfort to know that your son met with a swift and painless death and assuring you of our sincere sympathy in your great loss.

Yours faithfully,

Vb  
Secretary.  
(L.A.W.)

Aug 15<sup>th</sup>

93 Puller Rd - Barret

Dear Sir

Thank-you for your letter of the  
13<sup>th</sup> respecting my sons death.

3704<sup>9</sup> Pte C. R. Swain. I shall be grateful  
for any further information you are able  
to send me -

Yours-gratefully.

A. Swain

Mrs. Swain,  
98, Pinner Rd,  
Barnet.

November 5th, 1917.

Dear Madam,

In further reply to your inquiry for details of the death  
of your son No 3709 Pte. C. R. SWAIN,  
26th Battalion,  
A.I.F.

We regret to inform you of another unofficial report which has been  
received from No 5113 Pte. J. Williams, when in the Haysbury War  
Hospital, St. Albans.

He stated that your son was killed instantly by a shell at  
Malt Farm, Thurlenecourt near Bapaume in March and he saw his body  
immediately afterwards. As far as he knows your son was buried  
close to the place of his casualty.

We are continuing the inquiry and as soon as further news  
is received we shall immediately advise you as we realise how  
anxious you must be,

Trusting that it will be some comfort to know that your  
son suffered no pain.

Yours faithfully,

*L.W.*  
SECRETARY.



January 1st, 1918.

Mrs. Swain,  
93, Puller Rd,  
Barnet.

Dear Madam,

We regret to inform you of unofficial evidence given by men of his unit about the death of your son  
No 3709 Pte. C.R. SWAIN, 26th Battalion, A.I.F.  
and we trust that it will be some comfort to you.

1621 Sgt. B.J. Powell, when interviewed in a hospital in Havre reported that during the attack at Warlencourt on March 2nd, he was engaged in carrying bombs with your son when a shell burst near them killing him and several others. They were forced to go on in the advance and was unable to ascertain if your son was buried. He last saw him lying dead where he fell.

No 3690 Pte. S. Ricketts, gives a somewhat different report. He was told that while Pte. Swain was carried away wounded, under heavy shell fire from Malt trench, Warlencourt at the beginning of March, his stretcher bearers attempted to move into a trench for protection but before they were able to do so he was killed instantaneously by a shell. Informant adds that Pte. Swain's wife lives in Melbourne where he had been a waiter or chef."

We are continuing the enquiry for details of his death and as soon as these are received we shall advise you as we realise how anxiously you must await information.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

*MW*

SECRETARY.

Mrs. Swain,  
93, Puller Rd.,  
Barnet.

January 28th, 1918.

Dear Madam,

In further answer to your enquiry for

3709 Pte. G. R. SWAIN, 26th Battalion, A.I.F.

We regret to inform you of another unofficial report received from a man of his unit when at the 8th Stationary Hospital, B.E.F. He stated that your son was killed instantly by machine gun fire at the barbed wire at Halt Trench near Leopard Wood, Wancourt and buried next day where he fell by the burial party. Informant saw his dead body but was not present at his burial. He describes him as 5'7" in height, stout and rather bald.

We are continuing our enquiries for details of his death and as soon as these are received we shall let you know as we realise how anxious you must be.

Yours faithfully,

*Lfw*  
SECRETARY.

February 12th, 1918.

Mrs. Swain,  
93, Fuller Road,  
Barnet, Herts.

3 Dear Madam,

We have just received another unofficial report as to the death of your son.

3709 Pte. G.R. SWAIN, 26th Battalion, A.I.F.

which you may like to have, though it does not amount to very much. 2649 L/Cpl. V.R. Marlow, 26th Battalion, D. Coy, 3rd A.A. Hospital, Dartford reports that he was told by Pte. B.G. Peterkin (since reported Missing) that he saw your son killed instantly by a shell, at Halt trench, near Warlencourt. Peterkin handed your son's disc to the orderly room, and Cpl. Marlow saw it there. He does not know the place of burial, but feels sure it would be near the place where the casualty took place,

We are continuing our enquiries and as soon as further details are received we shall advise you.

With our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

*F. K. G. St. George*  
for SECRETARY.