

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

2424 Private
Donald John
MacPherson Smith

44th Battalion



2540302G

A.I.F. 44th Btn

D. J. McP.

SMITH
2424

"MISSING"

Killed in action 11-16-17 - previously reported Missing
Cert. by A.I.F. Hqs 11-3-18.

London
21-3-18

OFF. M. & P. I.

44 A.I.F.

Smith. Pte. D.J. McP. 2424

(M. Oct; 11/17)

"Smith was killed at Ypres near Broodsinde. We were in shell holes at the time and were waiting to go back after the 9th and 10th had gone through to the further point. I saw Smith in a shell hole and saw a shell land in the shell hole and explode. He must have been blown to pieces. He was in No. IX Pl; with me."

Eye-witness: Yes.

Description: Scotchman, big and moustache which stuck out; 5ft 7 ins; fair. His brother manages the Sunday Times in W.Australia.

Informant: Pte; Thomas Denny. 481.
44 A.I.F. C Co; IX Pl;
Horton (County of London) War Hospital.
Epsom.

Home address: Letters to 130, Horseferry Rd.,

6.12.17.
H.Garsie.

OKM
P.1
1

Statement made by No. 481 Pte Denny H.W. 44th Btn.

re No. 2424 Pte Smith D.J. MOP. 44th Btn.
Missing 11.10.17

No. 2424 Private Smith D.J. MOP. was well known to me, and was in the same company of the 44th Battalion. He was detailed as a guide on the night of 10th October to lead No. 9. Platoon. "C" Company 44th Battalion, up to the front line near Zonnebake Railway, Belgium. Later on, I heard that he was killed on the way up, but do not know this definitely, and never saw it happen.

3 copies

*Off dt
P.1*

Dated at Hardecott this 28th day of January 1918.

(Sgd) T.H.W. Denny

Statement made and signed before me

(Sgd) M. Readford.
 Captain.
 18th Battalion.

44th Battn.
A.I.F.

COPY.

Smith.
D.J. MCP. 2424

"Missing 11.12.17"

Dear Sir,

Pte. Humphries handed me your letter re Don Smith, late of my Platoon (missing) and I will endeavour to give you as exact an account of him as censorship regulations will permit. I was chosen for a rather ticklish job in the vicinity of Passchendaele (the nature of which I cannot disclose) with four picked men, Don Smith being one of them. This job necessitated going through a very heavy artillery barrage and also most of the time being under rifle and machine gun fire. In one place the artillery became so hot that we had to take shelter in shell holes for a few minutes and it was while there that a shell burst in the hole where Smith had taken cover, killing another of my men and wounding a third. I can assure you he was marked-missing, not taken prisoner and that he was marked missing is due to the fact that there was no trace of him. The shell was a twelve inch high explosive, so you can draw your own conclusions. He was one of the best soldiers I have ever had.

(Sgd) Harold D. Neuman, Lieut. Belgium 18.12.17.

Letter to:-

G.S. Goodhart Esq.,
one of our enquirers.

London: 8.1.18.

Off.M.
P.I.

Have

5th February 1918.

44th A.I.F.

✓ Smith D.J. No. 2424.
✓ Stewart E. No. 2422.

M. 11th Octr 1917.

Smith's Brother is McCullum Smith of the 'Sunday Times' Perth, W.A. He had a large moustache and sandy hair. Stewart came from Ora Banda near Kalgoorlie W.A. He was dark, and full faced.

I saw these two men leave the billets at Poperinghe to find out the track. They were to act as guides. Later when we went up Lieut Ewan of the 44th Battn A.I.F. (now with the Battn) was the officer in charge of their party. They left us about the 2nd October.

Inf:- 1/Cpl G.B. Stabb No. 2423.
44th A.I.F. C. Co. 12 Pltn.
Australian Camp.
Rouelles.

G.H.

PI Missing
07/11

1/4rd

A. I. F. 44th Bn.

SMITH, D.J. MOP. 2424.

STEWART, E. 2422.

Killed Oct. 11/17. Det. D/B.

I knew Smith and Stewart. On the night of the 11th I was with an advance party not far from Ypres, and Smith and Stewart, who were both together in another Section, had been told off to guide us to the part of the trenches we were to occupy. They did not appear and we moved off without them and I heard they had both been killed by one shell on their way to join us. Lieut. Newman, 44th A.I.F. who was in charge of Smith and Stewart's party, can give you details.

Reference: Pte. E.C. Godfrey, 2335,

No. 6 General, Rouen, 11.7.18.

HNT.

W. H. H. P. 1

written P. H. Newman

3rd Feb. 1918

Dear Madam,

I have to thank you for
forwarding unofficial
reports about my brother
D. J. M. Smith ~~2424~~ ^{44th} ~~44th~~
It is all very sad
but we feel proud to
know that he died
nobly doing his duty to
King & Country.

we hope that soon out
of this darkness & chaos
a new light will arise
& that we will look
forward to a settlement
of the world's troubles
again thanky you.

Believe me
Yours faithfully,
J. B. Grant.

Act 22 Nov 17

Boleyn Mrs. Grant

1917

18th Nov. 1917

My Brother Private
Donald John Macpherson Smith
No. 2424 C. Coy. 44th Battalion

A I F France has been
missing since the 11th Oct. 1917.

I had a field P.C.
written on the 8th Oct. 1917.

When he was well that
is the last news I had of
him & I should feel
obliged if you could
furnish me with any more

particulars about him
or perhaps give me the
address of any of his
Comrades who might be
able to tell us what has
become of him.

His home address is
Perth West in Australia
but he had letters sent
to our address whilst in
this country.

Thank you in anticipation

I am yours faithfully

J. B. Grant.

Final Draft - 8-10-49

Mr. G. B. Plant.

187 City Road
Cardiff.

cc

24-24 Smith ... D. G. M. P. 44-Ru

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

WOUNDED AND MISSING ENQUIRY BUREAU.

Enquiry No. 6988

Date 27-May 18

Regimental Details of
Soldier enquired about.

7446

4 Cpl. A. L. Sleep
H4 Battalion

Details of Casualty.

{ Wounded

Information wanted.

{ Location & condition

To
Lieut Heroman
44th Inf. Battⁿ
A. I. F.
B. E. F.

about
2424 P. O. J. R. P. Smith
44th Inf. Battⁿ
A. I. F.
B. E. F.

K. Oct 11/14

Written - 27.7.18
M. S. F.

U.S. V. post bl...

POST OFFICE

To Mr. Grant 27.11.14

184 City Rd
Cardiff

Re. 2424 Pte D. J. Macpherson Smith

44th Battalion A.I.F.

of rep. missing 11.10.14.

Missing Draft Snd.

Inquirer for

2424

D. J. M. SMITH C. Co
44 BALTAIF

M. 11.10.17.

B & F

Inquirer for
relatives at
~~Quaker~~

Yellowcard

Mr Goodhart.
150 Primrose Hill Rd
Hampstead.
N. W. 3

Telephone

2977 Hampstead

Inquirer w/ cable relatives if P. W.

EM

29.11.17

Smith

D. J. M. P. 2424.

44 Battery.

COPY.

M. 11.12.14.

BELGIUM,

18th December, 1917.

off M.
P.I.
5

G. E. Goodhart, Esq.

Dear Sir,

Private Humphries handed me your letter re Don. Smith, late of my Platoon (missing) and I will endeavour to give you as exact an account of him as censorship regulations will permit.

I was chosen for a rather trickish job in the vicinity of Passchendaele (the nature of which I cannot disclose) with four picked men, Don. Smith being one of them. This job necessitated going through a very heavy artillery barrage and also most of the time being under rifle and machine gun fire. In one place the artillery became so hot that we had to take shelter in shellholes for a few minutes and it was while there that a shell burst in the hole where Smith had taken cover, killing another of my men and wounding a third. I can assure you he was not taken prisoner and that he was marked missing is due to the fact that there was no trace of him. The shell was a twelve inch high explosive, so you can draw your own conclusions.

He was one of the best soldiers I have ever had.

Believe me, Sir,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Harold D. Neuman, Lt.

Letter to G. E. Goodhart Esq.

one of our enquiries

Belgium
18.12.17

HOPE POLLOCK & CO

Stock & Share Brokers.

W. H. POLLOCK.
G. E. GOODHART.

Telegrams,
CRYPTOGRAM, LONDON.

Telephone.
5364 LONDON WALL.
(3 LINES)

28 & 29 Threadneedle Street.
(and The Stock Exchange)

London, 27th December 1917.
E.C.2.

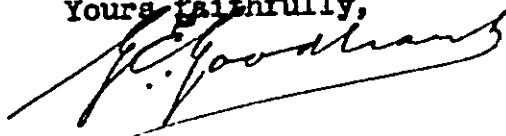
The Secretary,
Australian Red Cross,
54, Victoria Street,
S.W.

Dear Sir,

No. 2424,
Private D. J. M. Smith,
C. Company,
44th Battalion,
A.I.F.

I enclose copy of letter dated 15th instant which I have just received from Lieutenant Harold D. Neuman with reference to Private D. J. M. Smith who was reported missing since 11th October, 1917. The letter makes it clear that Private Smith was killed by shell fire and was not taken prisoner. I am passing on the information to relatives both here and in Australia.

Yours faithfully,



50th January 1918.

Mrs. J. B. Grant,
187 City Road,
Cardiff,

Dear Madam

We have received further unofficial reports about your brother Pte. D. J. M. P. Smith 2424-44th. Batt. which contain very sad news, though we cannot vouch for their accuracy. Lt. H. Newman 44th Batt. was doing a very ticklish job near Passchendaele with four picked men (your brother was one) They had to go through a very heavy barrage and took shelter in a shell-hole and while there a 12inch high explosive shell burst on top of your brother. Death must have been instantaneous. Lt. Newman adds that "he was one of the best soldiers I ever had". Pte. T. Denny 481-44th. Batt. confirms this account and described him as being a Scotchman, fair and about 5ft. 7" whose brother managed the Sunday Times in W.A.

We are very sorry to send you such very sad news and are continuing our enquiries and hope to get more details.

Assuring you of our deep sympathy in your great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

R. R.

Mrs. J. B. Grant,
187, City Rd.,
Cardiff.

19th March, 1918.

Mr. Goodhart,
50, Primrose Hill Rd.,
Hampstead, N.W.3.

Dear Sir,

We regret to inform you that we have received an unofficial report respecting - 2424 Pte. D. J. McP. SMITH, 44th Battalion, A.I.F. - given by 481 Pte. H. W. Denny, 44th Battn, A.I.F., when at No 4 Command Depot, Hurdcott, recently. He reported that Pte. Smith was detailed as a guide on the night of Oct 10th, to lead No 9 Platoon C. Coy, 44th Battn, up to the front line near Sonnebeke Railway. Later on he heard that he had been killed on the way up, but does not know it for a fact.

We regret to have no more definite news to send you, but we are continuing our enquiries and will at ^{once} advise you of any information we may obtain.

With sincere sympathy in your anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

F. J. G.
SECRETARY.

25th March, 1918.

Mrs. J. B. Grant,
187 City Road,
Cardiff.

Re 2424 H. J. McP. SMITH, 44th Battalion, A. I. F.

Dear Madam,

We deeply regret to inform you that the above soldier who was previously reported missing is now reported "Killed in Action" on 11-11-17.

We are making further enquiries in the hope of learning full details of his death and will immediately forward to you any information that we receive.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

LAW

SECRETARY.

25th March, 1918.

Mr. Goodhart,
50, Primrose Hill Rd,
Hampstead, N.W.3.

Re 2424 D.J.MOP. SMITH, 44th Battalion, A.I.F.

Dear Sir,

We regret to inform you that the above soldier who was previously reported Missing is now reported "Killed in Action on 11-1917."

We are making further enquiries in the hope of learning details of his death and will send you any information that we receive.

Regretting the distressing character of this news.

Yours faithfully,

Law

SECRETARY.

Received

50 PRIMROSE HILL ROAD, 27-3-18

HAMPSTEAD, N. W. 3.

26th March, 1918.

The Secretary,
Australian Red Cross Society,
36 Grosvenor Place,
London, S. W. 1.

Dear Madam,

RE 2424, PRIVATE D. J. MCP. SMITH,
44th Battalion, A.I.F.

I thank you for your letters of 19th and 25th instant and I note that Private D. J. M. Smith is now officially reported as having been killed in action on 11th October, 1917.

If you will refer to my letter of 27th December, 1917, which was written from my City address, 28/29 Tread-needle Street, E. C., you will find that I sent you full particulars of the circumstances under which Private D. J. M. Smith was killed, the particulars having been received by me from his Lieutenant who was with him at the time. It is, therefore, not necessary to pursue the enquiries further. I informed Mr. Smith's relatives both here and in Australia as soon as I received the details in December last.

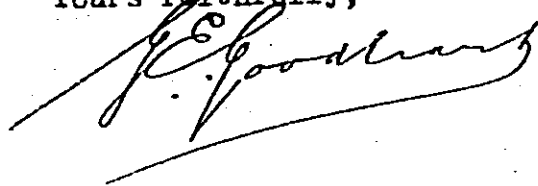
The Secretary, Australian Red Cross.

26th March, 1918.

Thanking you for all the trouble you have taken in the
matter,

I am,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Goodwin", written over a horizontal line.

July 31st, 1918.

Mrs. J.B. Grant.
187 City Road.
Cardiff.

Dear Madam,

With further reference to your enquiry for your brother -

2424 Pte. D.J. McP. SMITH. 4th Battalion, A.I.F.

We regret to inform you of further unofficial evidence of his death given by one of the men of his unit.

2335 Pte. J.C. Godfrey interviewed recently at No 6 General Hospital, B.F.F. stated that he knew your brother and on the night of Oct 11th, 1917 he was with an advance party not far from Ypres. waiting for Pte. Smith and Pte. Stewart who were in another section, and were to guide them to the trenches they were to occupy. As they did not appear Pte. Godfrey and his party went on without them and he heard later that both men had been killed by a shell whilst they were on their way. Our informant further stated that Lt. Newman of the same unit would be able to give us fuller details and we have therefore written to him and will advise you as soon as we receive his reply.

With our sincere sympathy in your loss.

Yours faithfully,

(MISS) *Mrs. Stanfield*
Secretary.