

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

**4797 Private
Thomas Colin Watson**

20th Battalion



2871103M

20th A. I. F.

Watson, T.C. 4797,

(K. Nov. 7th/16. Det: D & B)

Watson was killed at Swiss trench near Flers, by a shell instantaneously. He was a corporal before.

Informant: W. James, 4452,
20th A. I. F., D. Company,
Lewisham Military Hospital,
London, S.E.

Home address:

7th February, 1917.
M.K.P. Clark.

20th A.I.F.

Watson, Pte. T.C. 4797

(K. Nov. 7/16)

I have heard since being here from Sgt. Burgess, at present with the batt. that Pte. Watson was instantly killed, shot through the head at Flers. The date was Nov. 14 and not the 7th as in list, as on the 7th. I was with the Batt. and we were not then in the firing line. I have no information as to burial.

Informant:- Cpl. B.W. Francis, 1632.
20th A.I.F.
Queen's Hospital,
Birmingham.

Home address.
18, Thompson Street.
Drummoyne
Sidney. S

Feb. 8th
F. Jarvis.

Written Sgt Burgess 16.2.17

20th. A.I.F.

T. C. WATSON. 4797.

Killed. 7.11.16. Det. D/B.

Watson was shot through his body by a Sniper when going out to relieve a bombing post. He only lived a few minutes. He was killed at Flers, just in front of the firing trench.

Reference:- Pte. F. A. Moore. 4207.

Barrn. Bombers.

No. 5. General. Rouen. 16.2.17.

EMM.

5

20th A. I. F.

Watson, T.C. 4797,
C. Company

(K. Nov. 7th/16)

"I did not see Watson killed, but I was present at the
burial. He was buried just outside Switch Trench. I saw his body.
I knew him well." *M. Kears*

Eye-witness: As above

Description: Tom.

Informant: Pte W.S. Hosford, 5027,
20th A. I. F., A. Coy, 4 Plat.
St. John's Hospital, Ward C,
Cheltenham.

Home address:
Station Street,
Barris Park,
Faramatta, N.S.W.

16th February 1917.
Edward E. Holt Evans. *S*

" K. Nov 7/16. Det. D. & B. "

The witnesses saw soldier killed by a shell at Switch
Trench, Hillcross, in front of Fleurs. Death was instantaneous,
and soldier was buried an hour after his death. Two pioneers buried
him in a shell hole just over the parapet, and the ceremony was super-
vised by a 2nd Lieut. Ross Cannot remember his name. Nothing to
distinguish the grave.

Description. Hgt. 5ft8. Dark complexion.

Witness. Hobart B. 4436.
" C " Coy. 20th Batt.
Morris. E. A. 4736.
" D " Coy. 20th Batt.

Feb. 21st. '17.
S. W.

J W
Worgret Camp,
WAREHAM. S

Written L^t Ross 27.2.17

20th Batt.
M.G.S.

WATSON
P.C. 4797

Killed, Nov. 7th 1916. Dets.

Informant was training in the same section with Watson at Salisbury Plain. Watson was then a Corporal, but was reduced on going to France. They joined the M.G.S. at Poperinghe. Christian name - Thomas - 12th Defts. Informant & Watson were in the switch trench at Fliers when a bit of shell struck Watson under the chin killing him at once. Informant was beside him and saw this. Watson was buried by a M. Gunner, Wilson and his mate from the next dug-out the same night. He was killed about dusk.

Reference:- Ite. W.A.C. Wood, 4795,
20th Batt, M.G.S.,
Dartford. 19.2.17.

London
21.2.16
P.C.

NOTE: Written Ite. Wilson 21.2.17.

5

20th A. I. F.

Watson, Pte E.C. 4797,
H.Q.Coy, B.C.C.

(K. Nov. 7th/16. Det: D & B)

"I know that Watson was going up to the line and a shell struck him on his way up and killed him instaneously Nov 7th/16. Watson is buried in front of the support at Flers. "

Eye-witness: No, told by E. Kimber att. E.C. L.C. 20 A.I.F.

Description: Tom, 30 years dark, 5'8", slim, clean shaven,
left England as Cpl and 13 stripes until joined Bn.

Informant: Pte S.R. Nichell, 4734,
20 A.I.F. C. Coy,
Edmonton Hospital.

Home address:
Hazel Park,
Croydon Rd,
Caterham Valley. *J.*

27th February 1917.
D.S. Brown.

Written by Kimber 2.3.17

20th Batt.
I.F.,

WATSON
E.C. 4797

"K. in A 7.11.16"

Pte Watson was buried in the field via - in Switch Trench, midway between Carlton Camp and Elers Wood. A wooden cross was erected over the grave on which was inscribed his name etc. In appearance he was of medium height, slim, dark complexion and pointed features. Age about 19-20. If you could trace Pte D.A. Phillips 20th Batt. who is believed to be in England you would no doubt be able to get fuller information from him as he assisted in the burial.

Cert. by letter fro, Pte S.W. Kimber,
France.
13.4.17.

Note: Written Pte Phillips 13.4.17.

London
21.4.17.

S.

20 Batt. A. I. F.

WATSON T. C. 4797.

" K. Nov. 7/16. Det. D. & B. "

Witness saw soldier killed in front of Fleurs, near Swiss Trench. Both were in the Battalion Machine Gunners, and at the time were in the support trenches. Soldier was just stepping down for a drink of water, when a shell hit him in the face, killing him instantly. Witness helped three others to bury soldier in the shell hole where he was killed, and has since heard that a cross was erected on the grave by pioneers. Knew soldier well, and was in the same section.

Description. Hgt 5ft4. Dark complexion and hair.

Witness. Phillips D. A. 4752.
20 Batt. M. G. Sect.

March 1st., '17.
S. W.

Worgret Camp,
WAREHAM.

S
S

20th Batt.
A.I.F.,

WATSON
T.C. 4797

"Killed Nov. 7/16"

He was a C.1 at Salisbury just before he joined the Batt. in France and lost his stripe in France. If this is the Watson who answers to the above description I saw him dead in Swiss Trench at Fleurs, killed by a shell. He was of median size dark and came from Sydney.

Reference:- 4540 W. Walton
20th Batt, A.I.F.,
Ward 23
Hamfield Hospital.
2.3.17.

London
6.3.17.
W. Alison

S.

H.G.S.
20th Batt.
A.I.F.,

WATSON
T.C. 4797

"Killed 7.11.16"

Pte T.C. Watson was one of a machine gun section to which I was attached at the time and was killed in the afternoon of 7.11.16 by a shell. I was only about eight yards from the spot at the time and assisted in his burial which took place on the Field. I am positive of his identity as I knew him in camp in Australia before joining the battalion in France. We missed him very much with his pleasant and jovial disposition and felt his loss very keenly.

Cert. by letter from 4328 Pte C.J.W. Wilson
France.
4.3.17.

London
13.3.17.

S.

20th A. I. F.,

Watson, Pte. T.C., 4797,

K. Nov. 7th, 1916. Det: D & B.

Informant states that "On Nov. 7th, 1916 at Switch Trench outside G Flers he saw Watson after he had been killed by a shell. He was buried in the vicinity."

Eye Witness: Yes.
Description: Medium or little over, had previously been Cpl. in Reinforcement.

Informant:-- Pte. Gilbert Haywood, 4147,
20th A. I. F.,
2nd Birmingham War Hospital,
Hollymoor.

Home address:-- R. Haywood,
Alcombe Cross,
Alcomb,
Mr Minehead.

18.3.17.
C.E.Dix.

20th A. I. F.,

Watson, T.C., 4797,

K. Nov. 7th, 1916. Det: D & B.

"I knew Watson personally. We first met in Liverpool; Australia. He was formerly a Cpl. in the 12th Reinforcement. When we got to France he was drafted into the 20th Battalion with me. He lost his rank of Cpl. in the new draft. There is no doubt, about his identity, or that he was killed at Flers on Nov. 7th, 1916. He was hit by a shell and badly knocked about. I was with him at Flers when he was killed. I cannot give any information about his burial, it is uncertain if he received burial in the general acceptance of the term."

Eye Witness:
Description:

Informant:-- Cpl. Bert Francis, 1662,
20th A. I. F., Bombers Sec.,
Harborne Hall V.A.D. Hosp:
Birmingham.

Home address:-- c/o Mrs. Robinson,
18 Thompson St.,
Drumoyne, Sydney.

23.5.17.
Bullock.

Havre

8th March, 1917.

20th AUSTRALIANS

WATSON, T.C. 4797

K. 7.11.16 Det. D/B.

He was buried by his own company mates in Swan Trench, Fiers front out from Carlton Camp, Montauban, very shortly after he was killed. We made the cross and this is a copy of the inscription on it, done in indelible pencil:-

R.I.P.
Sacred to the Memory
of
T.C. Watson, 4797,
K. in A. 7 Nov./16.
D Co. 20th Australians.

book.

The above was shown the searcher in Tout's note

Informant: Ssg/Cpl. A.J. Tout,
20th Australians, D Co.
H. S. Lanfranco.

PQP

20th Batt.

~~U.S.A.~~
A.I.F.,

WATSON
T.C. 4797

"Killed in Action 7/11/16"

I did not hear any particulars of this man's death, but I saw his grave, and saw his mate Peacock making a cross from a piece of shell for the grave - Peacock was killed next day.

Reference:- James B.W. -452
20th Batt. Coy.
Dartford,
2-3-17

London
7.3.17
~~2-3-17.~~
JACPLC

S.

20th A.I.F.

Watson T.C. No. 4797.
K. 7th November 1916. Det D/B.

There was a Watson a M.G. Corporal who came out in the 13th Reinforcement. I think he was killed about a week before Godwell (that is about the date named). There were several Watson's in the Battalion but only one got killed. I was on a ration party about 2 miles back, and I saw him lead a M.G. party up towards the reserve trenches. I knew him well and sang out to him. When I got back I heard that he had been killed. A piece of shell hit him on the head and shoulder and killed him instantly. I saw his grave right against the trench. It was the Switch trench but it must have been shelled since.

Inf:- Pte James No. 4320.
E.S. "Dieppe".
Calais. 2.3.17. CR.

S
cut

No 2 ~~Isms~~
K in A

~~write to~~

4758 D.A. PHILLIPS
20 Batt~~AIF~~

at Worgret Camp
Wareham
Dorset

for

4797 I. C. WATSON
20 Batt~~AIF~~

KA. 7. 11. 16

17. 4. 17

M. E. B

ACK
FM 13.4.17

France

April 11th

The Secretary
Inquiry Bureau
Australian Red Cross Society

Re 4794 Pte T. C. Watson
20th Battalion

Dear Sir

In reply to your letter
of March 9th the following information
may be of some use to you

/// Pte Watson was buried in the
field viz. in Scotch Trench midway
between Barton Camp and Lees Wood.
A wooden cross was erected over the
grave on which was inscribed his
name etc.

⊙ In appearance he was of medium height,
slim, dark complexion and pointed
features. Age about 19-20. //

Hoping this may be of use to you
I am, yours sincerely

S. W. Kimber (Pte)

P.S.

If you could trace Pte D.A. Phillips
20th Battalion who is believed to be
in England, you would no doubt
be able to get further information
from him as he assisted in the
burial.

S.W.K.

4497. T.C. WATSON

K.A. 7.11.16

20 Batt AIF

S. 2

Note written Pte Phillips 13.4.17

March 9th.1917.

Pte.L.Kimber.
H.Crs. L.G.S.
20th.Battn. A.I.F.
B. E. F.

4797. Pte.T.C.Watson, HQrs.Co. L.G.S. 20th.Battn.

A.F.Killed.7.11.16.

Pte.T.C.Watson,

RM for 7.11.

10.5.17.

(Lt Col 20th Batt), 62 Battalion

P Coy
Windmill Camp
Pukam Downs

A494 T.C. WATSON 20 Batt AIF

KA 7.11.16

To be

Your letter of 17.11.17 addressed to me received today
re your inquiry re the T.C. Watson A494. 20th Battalion.
I will see the Battalion and I was at it all with 12th Para
Battalion and were mates from the time we went to camp
a shell caught him in his trench and about the
morning of the 5th 17th the concussion knocked him into a
shell hole when I got up we 3 other men working help buried
him in a shell hole.

Johnston was Dark. Compassion.

Dark Hair

Height about 5'6"

Thin Build

Another lad of Watson's and myself got killed the following
day while we were writing to Watson's father his name was

A. Peacock

Just say this information is useful

Yours faithfully

Des. Phillip

add

11758

P Coy

62 Battalion

Windmill Camp

Pukam Downs

Wattle

Have written Battalion

18th April 1917.

Pte. S.W. Kimber,
20th Austr. Inf. Battn.
B.E.F.

Dear Pte. Kimber,

Very many thanks for your letter of April

4th. in answer to our enquiry for:-

No. 4797. Pte. T.C. Watson, 20th Battn. A.I.F.

The information you have sent will be of much assistance.

We shall try and trace Pte. Phillips, in order to obtain
further particulars as you suggest.

Our hospital index shows:-

No. 4758. D.A. Phillips 20th Battn.

to have been discharged to

Worgret Camp.
Wareham,
Dorset.

on March 27th. 1917. and we shall probably find he is still
there.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully, V.D

Secretary. *Lu.*

14th March 1917

4328 Pte C.L. Wilson,
20th Aust: Inf: Batta:
B.E.F.

Dear Pte Wilson,

Very many thanks for your letters of March 4th in
answer to our enquiry for -

4797 T. G. Watson, M.G.S. 20th Batta, A.I.F.

The information you have sent will be of much assistance.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

V.D.

Secretary

Alu.

March 9th.1917. --

2/Lt.Ross.
20th.Battn.A.I.F.
E. E. F.

4797 T.C.Watson. 20th. Battn. A.I.F.
Killed 7. 11. 18.

T.C.Watson,

P.M. for 7. 11.

Aek
F.M. 10.3.17

France
4/3/17.

The Secretary,
Wounded & Missing Inquiry Bureau
Aust Branch, B.F. Society.

Dear Sir,
Your enquiry to hand
concerning the late Private T. C. Watson
No #799. I have the greatest pleasure
in furnishing any information that may
be of value to you as follows:—

Private T. C. Watson was one of a Machine
Gun Section to which I was attached at
the time and was killed in the afternoon
of 7/11/16 by a shell. I was only about
eight yards from the spot at the time
and assisted in his burial which took
place on the field.

I am positive of his identity as I
knew him by camp in Australia before
joining the Battalion in France. We
enjoyed him very much with his pleasant
and jovial disposition and felt his loss
very keenly.

Yours faithfully,
Lt Col. H. Wilson

~~4499~~ T. C. WATSON M.G.S.
4494 20 Batts.

K. 7.11.16

2 5

Settled
Cdt

February 19th. 1917

SGT. BURGESS
20th. Batt. A.I.F.
B.E.F.

No. 4797 Pte. T.

T. C. WATSON. 20th. Battalion A.I.F. reported killed on
7 - 11 - 16

T.C. Watson

22nd February

- 7.

Private Wilson,
Machine Gun Sect.,
20th Australian Inf. Battn.
B. E. F.

No. 4797.

Private T. C. Watson, 20th Battalion A.I.F.
Rep. Killed 7.11.16.

Pte. T.C. Watson