

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

**5440 Private  
John Roy Willmott**

**19th Battalion**



2970809Z

FRANCE.

19th BATT. A.I.F.

WILMOTT. J.R. 5440.

D/W Sept 20th.1917. Det.

He was in A.Coy and came from Sydney, and was about 19 years of age. His father was out here but went home again and Willmott received a letter from him from home, the day before going into the line. Willmott was one of a carrying party to bring in stretchers from Zonnebeke Ridge, when he was struck by portions of a shell which dropped amongst the party. L/Cpl Donnett, who was in charge of the party was my informant. He was not hurt at all. He said that there was hardly anything left of Willmott except his head.

WSI.

Ref ---Pte W.Frudenstein. 2898.  
No 16 Gen. Hospital.

NOTE. Informant gave four other reports.

*William Donnett*  
*1-5-18* S

Le Treport. April 24th.1918.

19 A.I.F.

Willmott. J.R. 5440.

(D/R. Sept. 20/17.)  
Det. D/B.

"I know that Pte. Willmott (19.A.IV.) was very severely wounded in the leg by a shell, while out on a fatigue behind the Support Line at sunset about Sept. 20th on Westhoek Ridge. I think he died on the spot. L/C. Donnett (19. A. IV.) was with him at the time, and could give more particulars. Twelve men went out, but only four came back safely."

Eye-witness: No. Told by L/C. Donnett (19.A.IV.)

Description: Single; Sydney; Had just received letters from home to say that his father had arrived home wounded.

Informant: Pte. Wm. Frudenstein. 2898.  
19 A.I.F. A Co. IV Pl.,  
3rd Southern General Hospital.  
Masonic Hall. Oxford.

9.5.18.

Home address: Iandre Post Office.  
Hilda.M. Pickard-Cambridge. Via Greenthorp.N.S.W.

S

19th Battalion, A.I.F.  
"D" Company.

WILLMOTT.  
Pte. J.R. No. 5440.

"Died of Wounds 20.9.17."

I Knew a man called Willmott who was in "A" Company with me on 20.9.17, up at a support trench this side of Passchendaele. He was medium size and complexion. He had been batman to either Lieut. Siegel or Lieut. Neilson, both of whom were wounded on 19.9.17, and therefore Willmott came back to the Company. He might have been in "D" Company, but the Willmott I refer to was in "A" Company on 20.9.17. He and I were in a party of twelve who were detailed to go to Menin Road for stretchers. When we got to an aid post on our way, the Doctor asked us to carry a case each down to the Menin Road Dressing Station. On our way back with empty stretchers going up the Ridge from Menin Road, a shell came over and landed in the middle of the party of twelve, killed five, including No. 4149, Jackson A.E., and severely wounded three including Willmott. He was picked up and carried back about 50 yards to an Aid Post and left there. I was wounded by the same shell and do not know what happened to him, except that I was told about half an hour later that he had died.

Informant: Private L. Thompson, No. 3935.  
19th Battalion, "A" Company, 4th Platoon.  
Home address: Clutha, Morton Street, Woolstoncraft.

H.S.O.  
5.4.18.  
No. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

19th Battalion A.I.F.

WILLMOTT J.R. Pte.  
No 5440.

"Died of Wounds 20/9/17"

Willmott left with me in the a.s. Wiltshire on the 22nd August 1916. I knew him well. He came from Surry Hills. He was about 5ft 4in in height, fair, clean shaved, we went over to France together. He was severely wounded on 20th September 1917 at Westhoek Ridge, Ypres. I helped to carry him to the dressing station. He was dying there. I found out from the Red Cross Society in England that he had died. I heard this in November 1917. He was a good fellow. He was a cobbler of mine here and also at the front.

Informant: J. B. Bowie, Pte. 19th Battalion. No 5305.  
Home address: No 4 Australian General Hospital,  
166 Princes Street, RANDWICK.  
Church Hill, Sydney.

17/6/18.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

F.B.W.

*Sd  
6/11*

Havre

A.I.F. 19.

18th June 1918.

Willmott J.R. 5440.

D/W 20th Sept 1917. Det D/B.

I was with him when he and 4 others were blown up with a shell.  
I saw him with both legs and one arm off. He died very soon after.  
He was removed by the pioneers soon after and I presume buried.  
This was at Ypres, near Java Trench.

Inf:- Pto A.J. Buchanan No. 2285.  
A.I.F. 19.  
H.S. 'Essequibo'.

SJ.

Sd  
Bd  
Jw/10

Hg

19th Battalion, A.I.F.  
D. Company.

WILLMOTT, J.R.  
Private No. 5440.

"Died of Wounds, 20.9.17".

Informant described Willmott as about 5 ft 3 inches high, medium build, fair complexion, aged about 19 to 24. Left Australia together per "Wiltshire" on 22.8.16.

Informant states that they both belonged to D. Company. On 20.9.17 the Battalion was in reserves at Broodseinde near Hollebekke Ridge. In the morning Willmott volunteered to go out as a Stretcher Bearer to get in a wounded man, and while out was hit by a shell fragment. Informant was about 50 yards away, and saw Willmott hit, and went over to him and found him conscious. He told Willmott that he would be all right, but Willmott only smiled. Willmott died in Informant's presence shortly afterwards, just as he was about to be taken away. Informant believes that Willmott was buried either at Hollebekke Ridge, or at the Casualty Station at Poperinghe.

Informant added that he knew Willmott well, and that he was highly thought of by his mates.

Informant:- Private W.J. McCann, 5368,  
19th Battalion, D. Company.

Private address:- 81 John Street, Petersham.

W.E.G.

9.4, Aust. General Hospital, Randwick.

2.4.19.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

1 Corp DONNETT

A. W. 19 A. I. F.

B. 9. 7.

about

5440

J. R. WILLMOTT

19 A. I. F.

D/W 20 9. 17.

SW

1. 5. 18