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

453 Corporal
Arthur Sydney North

21st Battalion



20203119

21st A.I.F. L/Cpl. A. S. NORTH, 453.

Missing 3.5.17.

He was killed whilst holding the telephone to his ear during the attack at Bullecourt, in No Man's Land. I saw the body.

Reference: Cpl. M. McLean 5440.
No.1 Australian, Rouen. 21.6.17.

FS.

Off. M.

21st A.I.F.

North T/Cpl. A.S. 453.

(M. May 3/17)

T/Cpl. North was killed at Bullecourt on May 3/17. Sig. R.D.S. Camm 4380 of C., Coy., found the body next day, got his pay book and knows all the details. The body was not buried by our Batt as we were relieved the next day by the Gordon Highlanders and Devons.

Eye-witness: No, told by Sig. R.D.S. Camm, 4380, C. Coy., 21st A.I.F. now in France.

Description:

Informant: Pte. Fred Knight 4454,
21st A.I.F., C. Coy., 7 Plt.,
Richmond Military Hospt.,
Grove Rd.

July 5/17,
A.C. Campbell.

Written Sig Camm 7.7.17

21st Battn.
A. I. F.

North.
Cpl. A. F. 453

"Missing 3.5.17"

re 453 Cpl. A. F. North. I regret that I cannot say what happened to him only that he, myself and another signaller were about the last of our company to go over the top 3.5.17 and before we got 100 yards we lost him in the darkness and did not see him again.

Letter from:-
R. Camm.
21st Battalion.
France. 24.7.17.

London.
20.8.17.

Off.M.
P.I.

21st Battn
B. Coy.
A.I.F.

NORTH.
L/Cpl. A.S. 463

"Missing 3.5.17."

I saw him going to the dressing station he had it bandaged he was injured near to Brigade HdQtrs. I saw him leave the dressing station, he walked without any assistance, there was a heavy barrage at the time, he may have been hit after leaving the dressing station, he was going back behind the lines.

Witness:-
Sgnl. J.P. Irwin. 5035
21st Batt. D. Coy. 16th P tn.
3rd A.A. Hospital,
Dartford.

W. Oman,
London.
28.8.17.

P I Off. M.

Havre 31st.August.1917.

21st AUSTRALIANS NORTH, L.Cpl. A.S. 453 C.Sig.
MITCHELL, T.Cpl. J.L. 1967

M. May 3rd.1917.

Both are Company Signallers. Mitchell was in A. Co., and North in C. Company. Sergt. Sid. Buchanan has been in ~~company~~ communication with the friends of both these men. I do not know whether he has any definite information, but it might be worth while writing him about them.

Informant: L.Cpl. Mc.Mahon, L. 451
21st Australians, Sig. Sec.
Australian Camp, Rouelles.

BPM.

off M.

P.I.

Written Sgt Buchanan
9. 9. 17

Hkra.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT ROBELON. 2450/2/13

(COPY)

Statement made by No.5440 L/Cpl McLean T. 21st Btn

re No.453 T/Cpl North A.S. 21st Btn
Missing 3.5.17

No.453 T/Cpl North A.S. 21st Btn was killed on the 3.5.17. I saw his body lying in the open and surmised that he was killed by shell fire as he was cut about a great deal.

Dated at Perham Downs this 7th day of September 1917.

(Sgd) T. McLean

Statement made and signed before me P.J. Vff clk Bd Bulk

(Sgd) R. Dooley.
Lieut.

21st Battn
A.I.F.

NORTH
L/Cpl. A.S. 453

Missing 3.5.17."

Was in C. Coy., Signal Section and was reported Missing after the attack on the Hindenburg Line immediately south of and just touching the fringes of the village of Bullecourt on 3rd May 1917. His body was not recovered by any members of this Unit and personally I think owing to the nature of the fighting there, there is no doubt that he was killed also. He was tall, and very fair, with hair gradually thinning. He was one of my own personal friends in Egypt and in Gallipoli and there is not the slightest possibility of mistaking identification in his case.

Letter from:-Sydney Buchanan,
Sgt. 566
Signal Section,
21st Batn A.I.F.
France. 27.9.17.

London.
6.10.17.

Off. M.
P.I.

43

19.7.17

Sig: R.D.S. CAMM

C. Co

21 Batt A/F

BEF

for

453 T/cpl

A.S. NORTH

21 Batt A/F

M. 3.5.17

20.7.17

F.M.

RECEIVED
15 AUG 1917
CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE

Answered 16.8.17

Enquiry re
North/Corp AS 453
AIF 21
in May 3.

Please send any information
to his brother
Corp. C. S. North 67848
M.G.C (Imperial) 51

Probably 2 H day at
No 11 Convalescent Camp.
G. Company

566

Sjt Sid BUCHANAN (5.9.17

Signal Section

21 Batt A.I.F

B.E.F

Cpl

453 Lcpl A.S. NORTH

C. Co Sig

21 Batt A.I.F

M. 3. 5. 17

R.C.

6.9.17

UV

L/Cpl. A. S. North. 453.
21 Batt.

Secundus

Pte. G. W. Milburn 4710.
21 Batt.

8/10/17.

Shipps

THE SALVATION ARMY

International Headquarters, Queen Victoria St., London, E.C.

ENQUIRY ON 26/9/17. 191

from Mrs M.A.North,
139, Cricklade Road,
Gorse Hill,
SWINDON.

who stands in the relationship of Mother.
to the undermentioned:—

Number 453.
Rank L/Cpl,
Name A.S.North,
Platoon
Company C.
Battalion Signalling Section 2nd
Regiment A.I.F.
Officially Reported on May 3rd. 1917
as Missing.

A.S. 6.10.17

RECEIVED
1 OCT 1917
CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE

B 30.

In reply kindly quote Reference No.

Ack
M 31.7.17 453
Cpl A. NORTH
M 3.5.17 OffM 21 Batt A.I.F. France 24/4/17
P.T. 5.

To Sec, W, M, Enquiries &c

In answer to your inquiries re 453 Corpl A. S. North and regret that I cannot say what happened to him only that he, myself, and another signaller were about the last of our Company to go over the top 3.5.17 and before we got one hundred yds we lost him in the darkness and did not see him again.

Remain
Yours Faithfully
R. Camm

21 Batt

M 3.5.17 OffM
Pl. 5.

answered
3.7.17

139 Bricklade Rd
Gorse Hill
Swindon
Wilts

The Secretary
Dear Sir.

I am writing to know if you could investigate under the Red Cross Soc: news of my Son. T/Cpl A. S. North 453 21st Battn. 6th Coy Sigs. A.I.F. He has been missing ever since May 3rd and I cannot get any more definite news. The O.C. that Coy has inquired of the boys of the Battn, but it seems neither of the Signallers of that Coy. returned, and no news can be traced. There may be wounded in Hospital that may know the fate of those missing. I should be esctremely grateful to you, if you could do anything for me.

Thanking you for any information
I am
Yours Faithfully
(Mrs) M. A. North

Draft 5. Letter

13th July, 1917.

Mrs. M.A. North,
139. Cricklade Road,
Gorse Hill,
Swindon,
Wilts.

( ) Madam,

453.1/C.A.S.North,
(21.Batt)

5.6.17

I/C.North

August 1st. 1917.

Pte. R. Camm
21st. Battn. A.I.F.
B. E. F.

Dear Pte. Cann,

Very many thanks for your letter of July 24th. in answer to our enquiry concerning :-

453 Cpl. A. North, 21st. Battn. A I.F.

The information you have sent will be of much assistance.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully,

V.D

Secretary

139 Bricklade Rd
Gorse Hill
Swindon
Wilts
9.8.17

The Secretary

As fourteen weeks has elapsed since May 3rd when my Son L/C H. S. North 453 A.I.F. was missing. I shall be glad if you can inform me, if lists of prisoners has been received from about that date. I have not heard any more definite news than that he is "missing".

You will understand I am very anxious to know something definite regarding him. His mates are unable to forward definite news. One boy thought he was wounded, if so, should you have received lists of wounded of about May 3rd?

Thanking you for information

I am

Yours Sincerely

Mary A North.

16.6.17

Mrs. M.A.North
139 Cricklade Rd., Gorse Hill, Swindon, Wilts.

Dear Madam,

We very much regret to tell you that no official information has been received about your Son No. 455 Cpl A.S.North 21st. Btn. A.I.F. either from Germany or from hospital and from our unofficial report which has been received we fear that he must have been killed. We must however emphasise the purely unofficial character of this report and hope that he may still be reported as a prisoner.

Informant No. 4454 Pte. F.Knight who was in hospital in Richmond stated that he was told by Signaller [illegible] R.D.S.Camm of the same unit that he had found your Son's body on May 4th, the day after the attack on Bullecourt in which he had been killed. He took his pay book and will be able to give further information. They were relieved next day by the Gordon Highlanders and he knows nothing of his burial.

We have written to Signaller Camm for any information which will throw light on this subject as we realise how very anxious you must be about him and unfortunately our inquiries have elicited no other report.

Assuring you of our very sincere sympathy and regretting that this news should be so distressing.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary,

Miss Cran

August 17th, 1917.

67848 L/Cpl.C.S.North,
51st Machine Gun Coy,
G.Coy, No 11, Convalescent Camp,
B.E.F., France.

Dear Sir,

Your inquiry for 455 T/Cpl.A.S.North,
21st Battn,
A.I.F.

has been handed on to us from B.R.C.S. as we deal with all enquiries for wounded and missing men in the Australian Forces,

We regret to state that he is still officially reported "Missing 3.5.17". We have received two unofficial reports from men of his unit who unfortunately believe that T/Cpl.North was killed.

5440 Cpl.M.McLean said that North was killed whilst holding the telephone to his ear during the attack at Bullecourt in No Man's Land. Informant adds that he saw the body.
4454 Pte. Fred Knight stated that North was killed at Bullecourt on May 3rd. He adds that Sig. Camm found his body the next day, and knows all details, the body was not buried

by the Battalion as they were relieved by the Gordon Highlanders and Devons.

We have written to Sig.Camm but have not yet had a reply. As soon as we receive any futher news we shall at once advise you .

We trust this letter reaches you safely and should be glad if on receipt of it you would forward us your present address.

With sympathy in your anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

10.917

No. 6784 L/Cpl C.S.North.
51st. Machine Gun Company B.E.F.

Mrs. M.A.North
139 Cricklade Road. Gorse Hill. Swindon. Wilts

Dear Madam,

We very much regret to tell you of a further unofficial report received from a man of the unit about your Son, No 453 L/Cpl A.S.North 21st. Batn. A.I.F. from which we fear that there is little hope of his being alive.

No. 5033 Signaller P.Irwin, who was in the 3rd. Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford reported that he saw L/Cpl North leave the dressing station after having his wounds bandaged, and walk without any assistance towards the rear. There was a very heavy barrage through which he had to pass and it is feared that he must have been killed on the way down.

Unfortunately it seems that this is most likely for nothing has been heard of him since then, and had he reached the base it would have been reported at Head Quarters. We fully realise how terribly hard it is to bear this suspense and we wish to express our sincere sympathy with you in your anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

V. D.
Secretary
LAW.

October 8th, 1917.

Mrs. M. A. North,
139, Cricklade Road,
Gorse Hill,
Swindon.

Dear Madam,

Your letter of 26.9.17 has been forwarded to us from Carlton House Terrace, in reference to your inquiry for -

453 L/Cpl. A. S. NORTH - 21st Battalion.A.I.F. who is officially reported missing since 3.5.17, we beg to forward the following unofficial evidence - which we regret is of rather a distressing nature as our informant - 5440 Cpl. M.McLean states that "L/Cpl. North was killed whilst holding the telephone to his ear during the attack at Bullecourt in No Man's Land". On the other hand the information given by 5035 Signaller J.P. Irvin is of a somewhat conflicting nature. He says "I saw North going to the dressing station to be bandaged. He was injured near to Brigade Headquarters. I saw him leave the dressing station, he walked without any assistance. There was a heavy barrage at the time, he may have been hit after leaving the dressing station. He was going behind the lines".

We cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of evi-

dence obtained in this way and would advise you not to accept it as conclusive in the absence of more definite and official information. We are doing our utmost to obtain further news, and will advise you as soon as we succeed.

With sincere sympathy for you in your anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

B M for M R.

October 18th, 1917.

Mrs. M.A.North,
139, Cricklade Rd, Gorse Hill,
Swindon, Wilts.

Dear Madam,

We regret very much to inform you of further unofficial evidence about the death of your son No 457 L/Cpl.A.E.North, 21st Battalion, A.I.F.

informant being No 666 Sgt.S.Buchanan of the same unit who wrote to us from France to this effect:- "L/Cpl.North was in C.Coy, Signal Section and was Reported Missing after the attack on the Hindenburg Line immediately south of and just touching the fringes of the Village of Bullecourt on 3rd May 1917. His body was not recovered by any members of this unit and personally I think owing to the nature of the fighting there, there is no doubt that he was killed also. He was tall, and very fair, with hair gradually thinning. He was one of my own personal friends in Egypt and in Gallipoli and there is not the slightest possibility of mistaking identification in his case."

From the unofficial evidence which we have sent you we fear that there can be little hope that L/Cpl.North is alive and we wish

to express our sincere sympathy with you in your great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

V. D

SECRETARY.

LAW.

October 13th, 1917.

No 57[illegible] L/Cpl.C.S.North,
51st Imperial Machine Gun Coy,
B. E. F.

Dear Sir,

We regret very much to inform you of further unofficial evidence about the death of your son No 452 L/Cpl.A.S.North, 21st Battalion, A.I.F.

informant being No 566 Cpl.J.Buchanan of the same unit who wrote to us from France to this effect:- "L/Cpl.North was in C.Coy, Signal Section and was reported Missing after the attack on the Hindenburg Line immediately south of and just touching the fringes of the village of Bullecourt on 3rd May 1917, his body was not recovered by any members of this unit and personally I think owing to the nature of the fighting there, there is no doubt that he was killed also. He was tall, and very fair with hair gradually thinning. He was one of my own personal friends in Egypt and in Gallipoli and there is not the slightest possibility of mistaking identification in his case."

From the unofficial evidence which we have sent you we fear that there can be little hope that L/Cpl.North is alive and we wish to express our sincere sympathy with you in your great anxiety.

Yours faithfully,
V.D.
SECRETARY.
(APW)