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

5742 Private
John Walton Swain

3rd Battalion



2680103K

3rd Btn.
A.I.F.

q

SWAIN
John Walton 5742.

"Killed in Action 5.5.17."

No trace Germany Cert. by Capt, Mills. 10.10.19.

London.
16.10.19.

S. & P.I.

A.I.F. 3rd Btn

SWAIN
John Walton 5742

"WHEREABOUTS"

Killed in Action 5-5-17
Cert. by A.I.F.Headquarters 29-6-17.
c

S & P.I

London
2-7-17

Havre 16th July, 1917

3rd AUSTRALIANS SWAIN, J.E. 5742

K. 5.5.17. Dot. D/B.

I knew him well: he was in my company and was Sanitary ~~Picquet~~ Picket
I did not know him before he joined. He was young, about 5'9", rather sallow complexioned, dark hair. He was reported to me as killed by the Company Clerk, Pte. Townend of B Co. who is with the regiment at the front, and has all the records.

Informant: (L.H.S.) Pearce, J.F., 1163
3rd Australians, B Co.,
H. S. Grantully Castle.

L de D.

3rd Batt,
A.I.F.

Swain,
J.W. 5742.

"Killed 5.5.17"

We had to leave him lying unburied in the trench as were bombed out of it and it fell in the hands of the Germans at the time, - We were both Pltn 7. B.Coy,

Reference:- W.F. Bellinger, 6116,
3rd Batt, B.Coy,
Dartford 16.10.17

London 25.10.17

S.& P I.

3rd Battalion.

SWAIN, J.W.
5742 Pte

Killed in Action 5/5/17.

I knaw Swain well. He was killed in an isolated trench on the night of the 4th or 5th with Anchau. Fuller information about him can be given by Pte Clark in J.Ward, Randwick Hospital, who saw him during the stunt. I did not.

Informant: Murray, 5797
No.4 Australian General Hospital,
RANDWICK.

H.S.W.
6/12/17.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

S
P1 C1 Coy
(1)

A.I.F. 3. SWAIN, J.W. 5742.

K. May 5th 1917. Dets D/B.

I knew a man called Swain in B.VII. I believe his christain name was Jack. I don't remember his number. I knew nothing of him before joining up. He was the only man called Swain in the company. I saw him shot through the groin and very dangerously wounded in the action at Bullecourt on the 5th May. He afterwards D/W and I was present when he was buried in one of our trenches in the Hindenburg Line.

InF; Pte J.Newman. 4537. 3.B.VII.
No. 3 Can Gen Hosp.
BOULOGNE. 20.12.17.

AGL

DRL

3rd Battn
AIF

SWAIN
J.W. 5742

"Killed 5.5.17."

Refer to Sgt. W. Delaney of B.Coy., who I believe can give you the information.

Witness:- T.A. Batchelor T.A. 1317
3rd Battn

1pg
London.
10.1.18

Note written Delaney 4.1.18. S & P.I.

3rd. BATTALION. A.I.F.

SWAIN J.W. Private
No. 5742.

"Killed in Action 5/5/17".

Informant described Swain as about 5 feet5or 6 inches high, rather stout build, aged about 25. Went into camp at Liverpool on 17/1/16 and left Australia with the 18th. Reinforcements on 3/6/16.

Informant states that they both belonged to "B" Company No.7 Platoon. On 5/5/17 the Battalion was holding the front line while theGermans were counter-attacking at Bullecourt. Some time during the day Swain and Informant were alongside each other in a trench Swain was shot in the head by a bullet and instantly killed. A few minutes earlier Informant was speaking to him and turned aside for a short time. When he looked round to speak to him again he found he had been killed at once. We were forced back from that trench and Swain's body had to be left there.

Informant:- Private W.T. Bellinger, 6116,
B. Company 3rd. Battalion.
Home address:- 118 Upper Fort Street, Sydney.

W.E.G.
No. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK,
21/8/18.

SYDNEY BUREAU.

7

3 A.I.F.

Swain. Pte J.W. 5142.
B.Coy. XII Pltn.

K. May 5/17 Det D/B

"I know that Swain was killed just after an attack. He was hit through the forehead by a sniper's bullet and died immediately. He is buried at Hermes just behind the line."

Eye-witness:-- No, most of the Batt. knew at the time.

Description:-- Fairly tall, young. His people live in England. Think he was farming round the Northern Rivers.

Informant:- Pte Cook, 2812,
3 A.I.F. B.Coy.
Edmonton Hospital.

Home address:- Fanning Street,
Temples,
Sydney.

S. P.1

Sept 25/17.
D.W.Brown.

A. I. F. 3. SWAIN, J.W. 5742.

K. May 5th, 1917.

I the undersigned saw Swain killed. He was shot through the stomach at Bullecourt on May 3rd and killed outright. I do not know where he was buried.

SA.

(Signed) W.Kew. 2695. B.Coy.
Verified by E.Gazon. 5072. B.Coy.
Cert. by Adj. 3rd Battn. Hallingham.

Etaples
23.11.17.

S
P.1

A. I. F. 3. SWAIN,J.W. 5742.
SMITH, R.C. 5445.

K. May 5th, 1917.

I the undersigned saw those two men killed at Bullecourt on the dates given. Smith was killed by a shell and was buried afterwards by some of our own B.Coy men. I saw them bury him near where he fell. Swain was shot through the stomach and killed outright.

SA.

(Signed) W.H. Taylor. 1008. B.Coy.

Cert. by Adj. 3rd Battn. Hallingham.

S
P.1

Etaples
26.11.17.

A.I.F. 3. SWAIN, J.W. 5742.

k. May 5th 1917.

I saw him killed by a M.G. bullet shot through the groin and he only lived a few minutes in our own front line at Bullecourt towards evening. He was buried in the trench that same night, but at that time nothing was erected to mark his grave. He was in my platoon and came from N.S.W. and came to us in a draft. He was tall with a dark moustache and about 30 years of age. I don't know any further details.

Inf: J.Newman. 4537. 3.B.VII.
No. 7 C.C.
BOULOGNE. 4.1.18.

FD

3rd Battn
AIF

3WAIF
J.W. 5742

"Killed 5.5.17."

Refer to Sgt. W. Delaney of B.Coy., who I believe can give you the information.

Witness:- T.A. Batchelor T.A. 1317
3rd Battn

LPO

London.
10.1.18

Note written Delaney 4.1.18. S & P.I.

Absent P.I

3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

SWAIN
Private J.W. 5742.

"KILLED 5.5.17."

Informant described Swain as about 5 feet 6 inches high, slight build, yellowish complexion, aged about 30.

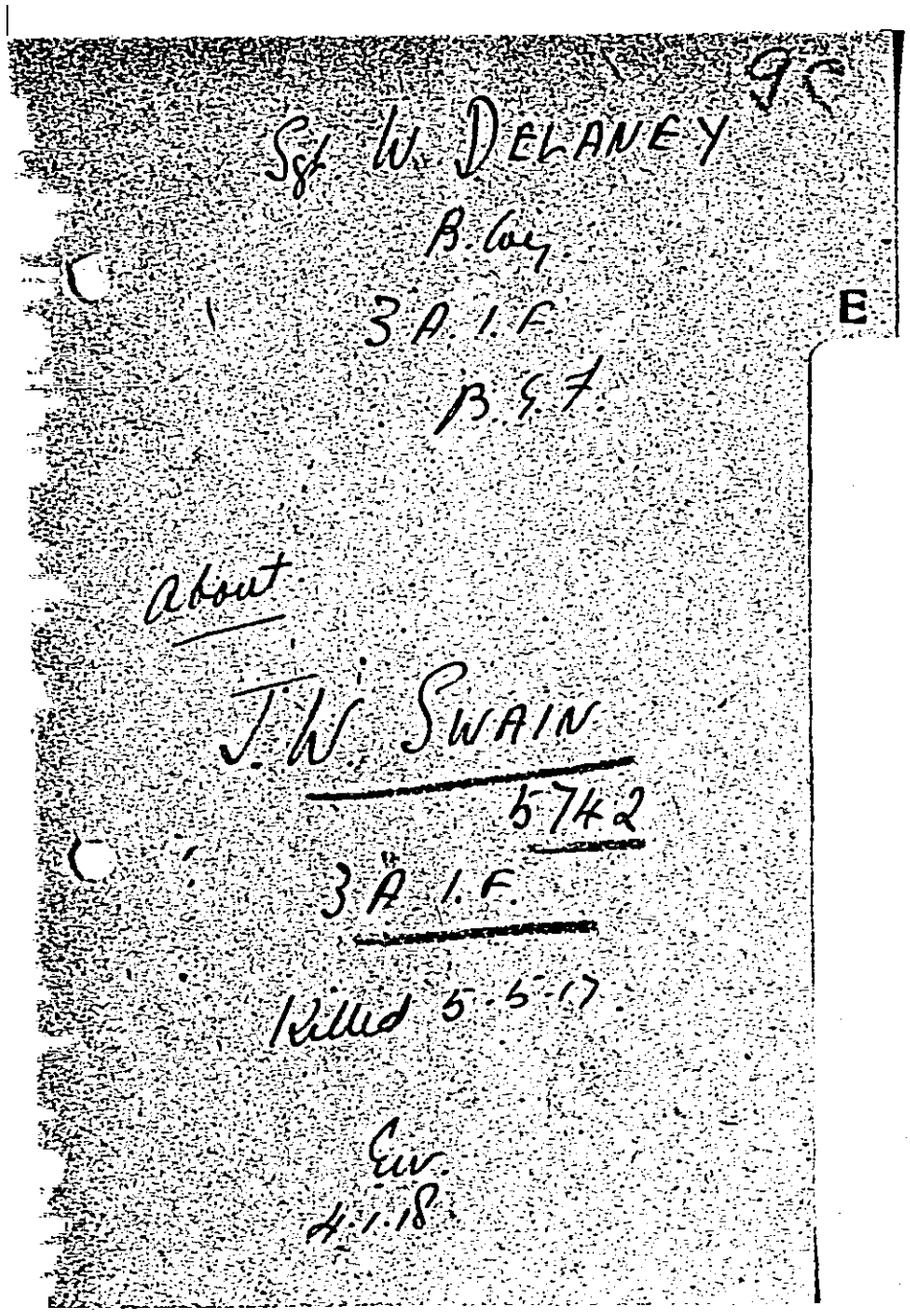
Informant states that they both belonged to "B" Company. On 3.5.17 (not 5.5.17, as officially reported) the 3rd Battalion was holding the front line at Bullecourt. The previous day the 2nd Division had captured Bullecourt and lost it again. The Company had been attacked by the Germans in portion of a trench held by it, and forced back to another portion of the trench occupied by the 1st Battalion. It was while they were in the trench, to which they had retreated, that Informant saw Swain's dead body. He had been killed by a shell. Informant was himself shortly afterwards wounded and could give me no particulars as to the burial of Swain. Next day the portion of the trench lost was re-captured."

INFORMANT;- Lance-Corporal L. V. Boot, 3695,
"B" Coy, 3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

Home address;- 17 Muston Street, MOSMAN.

W.E.C.
No.21 Australian Auxiliary
Hospital, SYDNEY.
13/3.18.

SYDNEY BUREAU.


Sgt W. DELANEY
B. Coy
3 A.I.F
B.G.F.
About
J.W. SWAIN
5742
3 A.I.F.
Killed 5-5-17
Enr
4.1.18.

No 5742 Pte J.W. 125 High Bank Rd
Winshell
Burton on trent
Staffs
22/7/17

ack. 25.7.17 J Swain 3rd Bn

To the Secretary
of the Australian Red Cross Society
Dear sir or Madam

Has My Daughter as received a notification from you saying that My son J.W. Swain No 5724 3rd Battn A.I.F. was killed in Action on 5-5-17 will you Please send the offical notifaction to me (his Father) at the above adress as I have got him insured and cannot draw anything with the notice which My Daughter received from you or Please send me the Adress of his Head quaters and Instructions

how to get same and
Oblige Yours Etc
H Swain
125 High Bank Rd
Wednesbull
Burton on Trent
Staffordshire

June 12/17

High St
Repton

RECEIVED
13 JUN 1917
CARLTON [illegible] CAMP

Mr. Derby

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask you if you could please give me any news of Pte J. W. Swain No. 5 4 42. 3rd Batt. A.I.F. on Active service Abroad

its 5 weeks since we heard from him I have wrote him since then to above address but had no reply I should be glad if you could find out for me where he his

yours truly

Mrs. G. Hilbert

July 5th. 1917.

Mrs. C. Hibbard,
High Street,
Ripton,
Near Derby.

Dear Madam,

We very much regret to tell you that L_
No 5742 J.W. SMALL, 3rd. Battn. A.I.F.
was killed in action on 5.5.17. and as yet no details are available
We have added his name to our enquiry lists and will send you any
information that we receive about him.

With assurances of our sincere sympathy,

Yours faithfully,

I.O'

Secretary.
A/w.

July 9/17

High St
Repton
Mr. Derby

Dear Sirs
I am so grieved to hear of the death of my brother
Pte J. W. Swain No 5742. 3rd Batt. A.I.F.
I shall be very pleased to hear of any information you get concerning him thanking you so much for all you have done for me.
Yours truly

Ada Hilbert

25th July 1917.

K.Swain, Esq.,
125 High Bank Road,
Wingshell,
Burton-on-Trent,
Staffs.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your letter of 18nd inst., about your son - 5742(not 5724)Pte J.W.Swain, 3rd Battn, A.I.F., we very much regret that the report that he was Killed in Action on 5-5-17, is true, as we have again verified it at A.I.F.headquarters 130 Horseferry Rd, S.W.1. We can only suggest that you write to them for further information as to the death certificate.

We are already making inquiries on behalf of Mrs. Hibbard for details of your son's death and will if you wish it, send any information that we obtain to you also.

May we express our sincere sympathy with you in the loss that has befallen you,

Yours faithfully,

V/D

Secretary

October 12th, 1917.

K. Swain, Esq,
125, High Bank Rd,
Winshell, Burton-on-Trent,
Staffs.

Dear Sir,

We deeply regret to inform you that an unofficial report has been received about your ~~brother~~ son No 5742 Pte.J.W.Swain, 3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

and we trust that it will be some slight consolation to know that he was killed instantly.

No 2812 Pte. Cook when in the Edmonton Hospital, stated that just after an attack at Hermies on May 5th, Pte.Swain was killed instantly by a sniper's bullet which wounded him in the forehead, his burial taking place just behind the line at Hermies".

Pte.Cook describes him as fairly tall and young and he thinks that before enlisting he was engaged in farming in the Northern rivers district in New South Wales.

We are continuing our inquiries for details of his death and as soon as we receive further news we shall advise you immediately. Assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully, SECRETARY./.

October 18th, 1917.

Mrs. G. Hibbard,
High Street, Repton.
Nr. Derby.

Dear Madam,

We deeply regret to inform you that an unofficial report has been received about your brother No 5742 Pte.J.H.Swain, 3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

and we trust that it will be some slight consolation to know that he was killed instantly.

No 2812 Pte.Cook when in the Edmonton Hospital, stated that just after an attack at Hermies on May 5th, Pte.Swain was killed instantly by a sniper's bullet which wounded him in the forehead, his burial taking place just behind the line at Hermies".

Pte. Cook describes him as fairly tall and young and he thinks that before enlisting he was engaged in farming in the Northern rivers district in New South Wales.

We are continuing our inquiries for details of his death and as soon as we receive further news we shall advise you immediately. Assuring you of our sincere sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

H.D.
SECRETARY AAW

Mr Nov.10th, 1917.

K. Swain,
125 High Bank Rd.,
Winshell,
Burton-on-Trent.

Dear Sir,

In further answer to your enquiry for -

6762 Pte.J.W.Swain - 3rd Batln.A.I.F. - we beg to forward the following unofficial report that has come to hand.

6116 Pte.T.F.Bellinger said that when Swain was killed unfortunately they had to leave him lying unburied in the trench as they were bombed out of it by the Germans. He adds that both he and Swain were 7th Platoon, B.Coy.

We are continuing our enquiries and will advise you of any further particulars that we receive.

Yours faithfully,

V.D. per

Secretary.

NOV. 10th 1917

Mrs. G. Hibbard,
High St.,
Repton,
near Derby.

Dear Madam,

In further answer to your enquiry for -

5742 Pte.J.W.SWAIN - 3rd Batn.A.I.F. - we beg to forward the following unofficial report that has come to hand.

6116 Pte.W.T.Bellinger said that when Swain was killed unfortunately they had to leave him unburied in the trench as they were bombed out of it by the Germans. He adds that both he and Swain were 7th Platoon.B.Coy.

We are continuing our enquiries and will advise you of any further particulars that we receive.

Yours faithfully,

Y. Dyer

Secretary.

December 18th, 1917.

Mrs.G.Hibbard,
High Street, Repton,
Nr.Derby.

Dear Madam,

We are sending you a further unofficial report we have received concerning

No 5742 Pte.J.W.SWAIN, 3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

from a man in the same battalion No 1098 Pte.W.H.Taylor, who certifies he saw him killed at Bullecourt on the date given and he saw him buried where he fell.

Trusting this slight information may be of some value.

Yours faithfully,
Miss McConnell
SECRETARY.

December 18th, 1917.

K.Swain, Esq.,
125, High Bank Rd,
Winshell, Burton-on-Trent,
Staffs.

Dear Sir,

We are sending you a further unofficial report we have received concerning

No.5742 Pte.J.W.SWAIN, 3rd Battalion,A.I.F.

from a man in the same battalion No 1098 Pte.W.H.Taylor, who certifies he saw him killed at Bullecourt on that date given and he saw him buried where he fell.

Trusting this slight information may be of some value.

Yours faithfully,

Miss McConnell

SECRETARY.

K.Swain, Esq,
126, High Bank Rd,
Winshell, Burton-on-Trent,
Staffs.

and

Mrs.G.Hibbard,
High St, Repton,
Nr. Derby.

January 30th, 1918.

Dear Madam,

We regret to inform you of further unofficial evidence about the death of

No 5742 Pte.J.W.SWAIN, 3rd Battalion, A.I.F.

for whom we have now closed our enquiries although we shall forward to you any information that we receive.

No 4537 Pte.J.Newman, when interviewed in an Convalescent Camp, in France stated that he saw Pte. Swain killed by a machine gun bullet which wounded him in the groin when they were in the front line at Bullecourt, his death taking place almost instantaneously. He was present at his burial in the trench in the Hindenburg line on that same night but he does not know if there is any cross to mark his grave. He described Pte. Swain as tall, with a dark moustache and about 30 years of age.

Trusting that it will be some comfort to have this further assurance that your son did not live long after being wounded.

Yours faithfully,

Vera Deakin

SECRETARY. DMB. for LdW.