

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

**Captain  
Percy Herbert Cherry**

**26th Battalion**



0721103E

May 24th, 1917.

Miss M. W. Stephens,  
21 John Street,  
Adelphi, W.C. 2.

Dear Madam,

We are in receipt of unofficial information about Capt. P.H. Cherry, 7th Machine Gun Coy, A.I.F., in which some light is thrown on the circumstances of his death.

No. 1505 Pte G. Berson of the same Unit, who on May 11th was in the 5rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, says that Capt. Cherry was killed by a shell while in a dug-out, and that he was buried with military honours near Legnicourt. He describes him as clean shaven, dark and of medium height, and build, and about 25 years of age.

We are making further enquiries for details of Capt. Cherry's death, and on receipt of information will again communicate with you.

With renewed sympathy in the loss of your friend.

Yours faithfully,

U.D.  
Secretary.  
L.A.W.

Machine Gun Coy.  
A.F.A.

Cherry P.H. Capt.  
7th Company.

27  
(K. Mar. 2/17 Det. D/B)

"I know that Capt. Cherry was killed in a dug-out by a shell we had a brigade parade of Officers and our senior officers went to his funeral. Capt. Cherry was buried with military honours, near Legnicourt. Capt. Cherry was very popular, had just been transferred to 26th Batt."

Eye-witness:

Description: Medium height and build, dark hair, clean shaven, about 25 years old.

Informant: Pte. George Barson 1505,  
Machine Gun Coy., A.F.A.,  
3rd London General Hospt.,

Home address: Wandsworth.  
Railway Town,  
Broken Hill,  
New South Wales.

May 11th 1917,  
C.A. Stevenson.

5th Australians, M.G.C.,

Cherry, Capt. P.H.,

27  
K. March 2nd 1917.  
Det: D. & B.

26.7.17  
"I am certain that Cpl. Cherry left the 7th M.G.C. before Christmas, and joined the 26th Battalion. Our officer Lieut. Beggs (7th M.G.C.) told me that he saw Capt. Cherry after he was killed at Legnicourt in March. He was buried in the vicinity but I have not seen his grave. Lieut. Beggs could give all particulars. I was in the attack and we held the ground."

Eye Witness: No, Lieut. Beggs (7th M.G.C.)

Description: Clean shaven, Informant could give no further description.

Informant:-- Pte. William Hilder, 443,  
7th Australian, M.G.C., 4th Bat:  
3rd Southern General Hosp:  
Cowley Section, Oxford.

6.6.17.  
H.M.B. Home address:-- 11, Napier Street, Paddington, Sydney.  
Cambridge.

7th Machine Gun Coy.  
A. I. F.

Cherry.  
Capt. P.H.

"Killed 27.3.17."

This Officer was awarded the V.C. for valour. He was killed the same night that I was wounded, on 26th March 1917. Just after the attack at Lagnicourt the village being taken and held. Capt. Cherry took up his position near the Sunken Road to the right of the village. He was in a dug-out when about 3.30 p.m. a 5.9 shell entered the dug-out and killed Cherry instantly. I saw him after he was killed. He was buried to the right of where he fell at the rear of the village of Lagnicourt. Our Batta. C.O., Col. Fraverse (26th Batta) informed me that cross (with name and V.C. honour inscribed) was placed on grave.

Witness:-

Lieut. E. Hay.  
26th Batta.  
Perham Downs Camp.

A. E. McPhae.

London.  
25.6.17.

H.  
P.I.

A.I.F. 8th M.G. Coy. (M.C.)  
late 26th Btn

CHERRY  
Capt Percy Henry

"W. 2-3-17"

Now reported Killed in Action 27-3-17  
Cert. by A.I.F. Headquarters 18-4-17

London  
18-4-17

H.&.P.I.

A.I.F. 7th M.G. Coy. (M.C.)  
late 26th Btn

CHERRY  
Capt. P.H.

"W. 2-3-17"

No further report  
Cert. by A.I.F. Headquarters 28-3-17

No trace  
Cert. by 'phone from Cox's 2-4-17

No further <sup>report</sup>~~report~~  
Cert. by Rouen letter 31-3-16

Previously reported wounded 2-3-17 - now reported Wounded &  
remaining on duty 2-3-17  
Cert. by A.I.F. Headquarters - 4-4-17

H & P.I.

London  
17-4-17

26th Batt. A.I.F.

Cherry,  
Capt. ~~V.C.~~ P.H.

"Killed in Action"

Re your enquiries in reference to late Capt. P.H. Cherry V.C., M.C. Captain Cherry was killed on the 27th March, 1917, and was buried in the field near the village where he was killed. I will endeavour to give you a short description of his general appearance namely, short, thick set, fair and always smiling. Owing to the Censorship regulations, I cannot mention the village, but if your enquirers look on the papers somewhere about the 12th of April they will see when his V.C. was mentioned and also village.

Informant:- J. Beggs

London 13.9.17

H.P.I. & H

Letter

17th June, 1917

MACHINE GUN COMPANIES, AUSTRALIANS

CHERRY, Capt. P.H.  
7th Co.

K. 2.3.17 Det. D/D

Capt. Cherry was in command of No. 2 Section, 7th Company,  
 when I knew him about July, 1916. I was also in the section.  
 About the end of March, 1917, in Shatterwood Camp to the  
 right rear of Perimeter, P.O. A.G. Power of the 7th M.G.C.,  
 No. 4 Section, told me he was making a cross for Captain  
 P.H. Cherry's grave. Power was the man who made crosses  
 when necessary. He was evacuated from Senlis in the  
 Albert District about the end of May; I cannot say where  
 he was sent to.

Informant: Pto W. Miles, 270  
 7th Machine Gun Co., Australians;  
 H. S. [unclear]

S.H.  
 G.P. 1  
 H

ONE

7th Machine Gun Coy.  
A. I. P.

Cherry.  
Capt. P. H.

"Killed 27.3.17."

I know Capt. Cherry personally. He was killed in a dug-out by a bursting shell near Iagnicourt and buried there. He was awarded a V.C. after his death (the first V.C. in the 7th Brigade) In appearance he was fresh complexioned and of medium height. I think he was a native of Tasmania. He was buried close to where he was killed.

Witness:-

J. A. Cricks.  
7th Machine Gun Coy.  
Dartford.

O. A. H.

London.  
25.6.17.

H.  
P.I.



Capt P. H. Cherry

26 B/W

W. 2. 3. 17.

23. 3. 17

Aug: Mrs M. W. Stephens  
21 John St  
A. Adelphi  
W. C. 2.

phone

5205 Terr.

Oct. 10 - 6 pm.

FRANCE,

15th July 1917.

*ask 21/7/17*  
The Secretary,  
Red Cross Society.

Dear Madam,

Re your enquiries in reference to  
late Captain P. H. Cherry. V.O. H.O.

Captain Cherry was killed on the 27th March  
1917, and was buried in the field near the village  
where he was killed.

I will endeavour to give you a short descrip-  
tion of his general appearance namely, short,  
thick set, fair and always smiling.

Owing to the Censorship Regulations I cannot  
mention the village, but if your enquirers look  
up the papers somewhere about the 12th of <sup>April</sup> ~~May~~  
they will see when his V. C. was mentioned and  
also the village.

Yours faithfully,

*LT*  
*J. B. Zeggs*  
*7th M.G.C.*

Capt P.H. CHERRY V.C.

56 Bally AIF

Kia. 23.3.14

Act. 27/1/17

H.

Pl.

H.



J. A.

21, JOHN STREET, ADELPHI,  
LONDON, W. C.

April 24<sup>th</sup> 1917.

Dear Madam.

With further reference to yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> inst., I was deeply disturbed at its very distressing information, & should like to thank you for all your trouble in making enquiries for me, it was indeed most kind of you.

I need not say how grateful I shall be for any further particulars you are able to give me concerning Captain Bherrie's death and burial. I fear his death must have been one of great suddenness, because he was previously wounded & recovered sufficiently to rejoin his battalion as I had a letter from him dated 25. 7. 17. However, I shall look forward to your further news with deep interest.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

M. S. Stephens.

Miss Vera Deakin.

20th April 1917.

Miss M.W. Stephens,  
21 John Street,  
Adelphi, W.C.2.

Dear Madam,

With regard to your enquiry about Captain P.H?  
Cherry 7th Machine Gun Coy, A.I.F., (Formerly 26th Battn), we  
regret very much to have news of a very distressing character.  
Captain Cherry, who was previously thought to be wounded, is  
now reported by A.I.F. Headquarters, to have been killed in Action  
27-3-17.

We are making all possibly enquiries, and any further  
particulars, which we receive concerning his death and burial, will  
be immediately forwarded to you.

Assuring you of our sincere sympathy on the loss  
of your friend,

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

V.D.  
P.H.  
M.W.B.

July 28th. 1917.

Lieut. J. Beggs,  
7th. M.G. Coy., A.I.F.,  
B. E. F.

Dear Sir,

We beg to thank you for your letter of the 15th. July  
in answer to our enquiries for the late :-

Captain P.H. Cherry, V.C. H.C., 26th, Battn. A.I.F.

We are much obliged for your kind help, which will enable us to send  
particulars to his friends.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

V.D

(J.P.)

J.A

10  
7  
17.

21, John Street  
Adelphi  
W. C.

To The Secretary.  
Australian Red Cross Society.

Dear Madam.

I am in receipt of your favor  
of the 26<sup>th</sup> ult., for which please accept  
my best thanks, & I much appreciate  
all the trouble you have gone to in  
the matter.

I note you have now closed  
the inquiry, but should you receive  
further information respecting Captain  
Cherry <sup>26<sup>th</sup> ult.</sup> I need not say, I shall be  
glad to hear of same.

If you are able to procure  
me a photo of his grave from the  
Graves Registrations Bureau, I should  
like to have one. Again thanking you.

Yours faithfully,

M. W. Stephens

26th June 1916.

Miss M.W. Stephens,  
21 John St,  
Adelphi, W.C. 2.

Dear Madam,

We are in receipt of further unofficial information about Capt. P.H. Cherry, 7th Machine Gun Coy, attached 26th Btn, and we beg to advise you of the same.

Pte J. A. Gricks, of the same unit, when in the 5th Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, reported that Capt. Cherry was killed by a bursting shell while in his dugout near Lag<sup>ni</sup>court. He was awarded the V.C. after his death and was a native of Tasmania, of fresh complexion and medium height.

Lt. E. Hay, 26th Btn, when at No. 1 Command Depot, Berham Downs reported that Capt. Cherry was killed on March 26th just after the capture of Lag<sup>ni</sup>court Village. He was killed instantly by a 5.9 shell, while in his dugout and his grave which is at the rear of Lag<sup>ni</sup>court, is marked by a cross bearing his name and particulars. Lt. Hay also stated that Capt. Cherry had been awarded the V.C. for valour.



- 2 -

443 Pte Wm. Hilder, gives similar evidence.

We have made an application to the Graves Registration Bureau for a photograph of his grave, which, if the latter is registered by that Society, will be sent in due course direct to his Next of Kin.

We have now closed the inquiry but will send you any further information, that we receive.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary