



Australian Newspaper Articles

THE SOLDIERS' POSTBAG

HOW JACK BOYNS DIED

Lance-Corporal T. H. Ross, 40th Battalion, writing to the "Croydon Mining News," from France, under date June 21, says:-

A few lines on behalf of the Croydon boys of D Company, 49th Battalion, who share their sorrow with the relatives and friends of Lance-Corporal Jack Boyns, who was killed in action on the morning of June 8th, 1918. The Croydon boys I D Company, to which Jack belonged, are Glen Kennedy, Broadley O'Neil, Tommy Hughes and myself. Alf Chargois also joins us in sending his deepest sympathy. As it is not known how all of our boys come to grief, I will give an account of Jack's death, and it is nice to know that he died with the honors of a soldier – on the battlefield. I was situated on an outpost which Jack used to pass every morning just before daylight on his way to his dug-out with a patrol which he had charge. We always had a little conversation before Jack left the post, and the fifth time he called he said, as he was leaving, "I have two Croydon papers, and will fetch them with me to-night. But I am sorry to say the first man to my post as soon as it got dusk was a runner, and he gave us all the sad news of Jack being killed that morning at ten o'clock.

I then inquired into the matter, and as I know full well that the Hun had a barrage on us at this time, I found that a shell hit the dugout next to Jack's and wounded two chaps who occupied it. Jack, seeing this, ran to give them first-aid, and was engaged in bandaging their wounds when a second shell fell in exactly the same place and killed Jack and both the wounded men. Jack's death was felt very much throughout the company, as he was a favorite, and he was liked by everyone that knew him. He was a soldier both in the firing line and out of it, and furthermore, he feared no danger. Apart from this Jack was a clever musketry instructor, for which he carried certificates. He was a musketry instructing sergeant at Codford while in England. He had the opportunity of staying at Codford as musketry instructor, but said he would sooner go to France with the boys. I am one of many who will miss Jack very much out of our company. P.S. – I may state that Lance-Corporal J. Boyns' body was removed from the battlefield and buried in a cemetery in rear of the lines.

(*Cairns Post*, Queensland Thursday 12 September 1918)

Lance Corporal John Alexander Boyns - (Born at Gympie, Queensland) 34692, 49th Battalion died on 9th June, 1918 aged 27. He was buried in Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, France – VII. A. 10.

VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MILITARY CEMETERY was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from other burial grounds in the area and from the battlefields. Plots I to XX were completed by 1920 and contain mostly Australian graves, almost all from the period March to August 1918.



(Photo from CWGC)