

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

**5239 Private  
Matthew Knowles  
Thorburn**

**1st Battalion**



2740505N

A.I.F. 1st Btn

THORBURN  
Matthew Knowles 5239

"Wded & Missing"

Killed in action 5-11-16 - previously reported Wded & Missing  
Cert. by A.I.F. Hqrs 2-1-18.

London  
7-1-18.

S

1st Battn.  
A. I. F.

Thorburn.  
Pte. M. K. 5239.

D Coy.

"Wounded & Missing 5.11.16."

Olsson Sergeant 1st Battn, A.I.F. (don't know his No.) carried Thorburn when he was wounded until he himself was wounded - I think Sgt. Olsson has gone home. He was in the 16th reinforcements and would probably be able to tell what became of Thorburn.

Eye-witness: Saw them together.

Description: Called "Mat" dark, medium height.

Informant:

Pte. Arthur Olsen 5311

1st Battn. C. Coy. 10th Pl.

Home address:

183 Evan St., Rozelle,

Sydney.

A. I. F.

Ford Hpl, Devonport.

E. M. Hall.

22.5.17.

Informant. Good.

S.

London.

9.6.17.

No other man named Thorburn in Battn.

1st Battalion  
B. Company.

THORBURN M.K. Pte., 5239.

W + M 5-11-16

I went away with Thorburn on "Makarini" on 1st April 1916. He was about 20 years of age, medium build, dark, called "Matt".

I was with him up to October 1916 at Baupau. We were billeted close together.

I was wounded on 5th November and on 6th November was in a hospital train going to Rouen, when I met a wounded man, Sergeant C. Olsen of the 1st Battalion, B. Coy. He told me that Thorburn was hit in the leg on 5th November at Baupau whilst charging. He fell, and the Sergeant picked him up, and was carrying him back to the lines, when the Sergeant was sniped and hit in the back. He dropped Thorburn and made his own way back as well as he could. He didn't say that Thorburn was badly hurt.-- never heard any more of him. Olsen went to England with me, but I have lost sight of him. I returned here on the "Kanowna" on 11/3/17.

Informant Private H.W. Hayes, 5109

1st Battalion C. Company.

J. Ward, NO. 4 Australian General Hospital, RANDWICK.

C.H.R. Mc.L.  
29/3/17.

Good witness

SYDNEY BUREAU.

Written Sept Olsen 10.7.17

A. I. F. 1.

THORBURN, M.K. 5239.  
(and 24 others)

W. & M. November 5th, 1916.

Their bodies were found all in a heap to the left of Sucudecourt just in front of Bayonet trench on March 3rd, 1917. They had been killed by H.G. fire on November 5th in the Flers charge. They were buried in shell holes all about where they were lying. I saw all the bodies and remember the names. Lt. H.A. A'Beckett, C. Coy. was present and kept a record. A big cross was put up with their names on it. I saw the cross and am certain that their names were on it. About 50 men were found altogether. Sgt. W. Pearce, D. Coy. was in charge of the burial party and also kept a record. The paybooks, discs, &c. were taken from all the bodies and handed in to the battn. SA.

Reference:- Pte. James Harr. 585. H.Q.

No. 1 A.D.B.D.

N.B. Facts checked from diary entry. SA.

Etaples. 23.4.17.

FRANCE

5239.

1st BATT. A.I.F.

THORBURN. MYK. 22/-

W.M. Nov 5th. 1918.

He was wounded in the leg, which I am sure was broken, on the German 1st line parapet in front of Fiers. He was being carried in by Sgt Olson, when Sgt Olson received a bad wound in the back. I had to leave Thorburn there while I brought the Sergeant in, and was unable to return for him after. It is possible that he is a prisoner, as we could see the Germans next morning, carrying some of our wounded in. WSI

Ref ---Sgt J.W. McDermid, 2954.  
No 47 Gen. Hospital.

NOTE Informant gave me three other reports. S

Le Treport. May 21st. 1917.

10.7.17

Sgt. C. OLSSON

Sgt Mess  
No 2 Command Depot  
Weymouth.

for

5239

Rt M. K. THORBURN  
B Co

1 Batt AIF

W + M. 5. 11. 16.

Eu.

17.7.17.

A.I.F. 1st Battn

THOREURN  
H.K. 5239

Wounded & Missing 5-11-16. H.Q 9B.96.

Missing 5-11-16. *Letter received from man in hosp. 10-10-16.*

Wounded & Missing 5-11-16  
Cert. by A.I.F. headquarters 12-12-16.

London  
16-12-16.

S.

A.I.F. 1.

THORBURN M.X. 5239.

W. & H. 5.11.16.

I had a letter in the 1st. week in Dec. last  
from Sgt. O. Olsson, D.Co. (same Rft. as Thorburn),  
in which he said he (Olsson) got his wound carry-  
ing young Thorburn in from No Man's Land.

FBP.

Reference: Pte. H.V. Cameron. 5043. B.Co.  
7 CanGen.Hosp.

Staples.  
12.3.17.

Written by Olsson 23.3.17



Sgt. C. Olsson

B. Co. 1st Batt.

A. J. 7

B. E. 7

for 5239

M. H. Thorburn

1st Batt.

A. J. 7

B. E. 7

Wm

5.11.16

J. H.

29.3.17

(1)  
ENQUIREES.

✓ THORBURN. Pte M.K. No.5239, 1st Batt. Reported W. & M. Nov. 5/16. Enquirer thinks it likely that Thorburn was taken P. of W. but would like any available information forwarded to him- Sergt. C. Olssen, No. 5193, 1st Bn., Sergeant's Mess, Monte Video Camp, Weymouth

✓ BLACKBURN. Pte E.S. No. 3657, "D" Coy, 55th Batt. Missing from July 20th, '16. May be a P. of W. Any information to ~~XXXXXX~~ Pte J.H. Williams, No. 2204, 1st Pion. Batt., "A" group, Verne Citadel.

✓ WILSON. Pte L.T. No. 2518, 13th Batt. Any information available. Was Reported Missing from April 11th, 1917.

✓ WILSON. Pte H. No. 2518, 13th Batt. Reported Missing July 19th, '16. Any information available to Pte A. Bateman, No. 2278, 30th Batt "B" Group Staff, Verne Citadel.

✓ WILSON. Col J. No. 70, 13th Batt. Reported Missing on 5-8-16. Any information to Pte K. Brown, No. 1672, 30th Batt., Hut 21, "B" Group, Verne Citadel.

✓ HOLMES. Pte J.L. No. 4508, 13th Bn. Reported Killed Aug. 30/16. His cousin, Pte J.W. Holmes, No. 2897, 52nd Batt., now in Hut 77, No. 4 Coy, Monte Video Camp, Weymouth, would be glad of any information available.

✓ ENNIS. Pte L.J. No. 2020, 29th Batt. Reported in our March 20th list of cancels as "Believed Killed". Pte S. Ennis, No. 4780, 8th Batt., now in No. 4 Coy, Monte Video Camp, Weymouth, would like all available information.

✓ BELL. Sergt. C.A. No. 4794, 25th Bn. Reported officially as "Killed in action" on the 14th Nov., '16. Miss G.P. Bush, "Glenberis" Bengal Road, Winton, Bournemouth, is enquiring for Det. D./E for relatives in Australia, and would be grateful for any information available.

H-6.17  
W. Whitmee