

*Transcript of Letter published in the Geelong Advertiser on Frid 27<sup>th</sup> July 1917*

POW PIONEER CROSTHWAITE MET HIS DEATH

Mrs Crosthwaite has received the following letter :-

Engalnd, 24/5/17

I was till recently attached to No. 3 Platoon, A Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneers, and being present when your brave son was killed, and having a mother of my own, I knew you would like to know your son was buried decently in the Anzacs' graveyard at Martinpuich on the Somme. You may have heard the circumstances. We had to get a light tramline up to the support trenches for the infantry, who were in bad need of food; anyhow things went alright for a while, and then, without any warning, a shell burst nearly under us; it killed a chap named Johnston and your son. Your son suffered no pain whatever. Johnston was terribly knocked about; just a bit of shrapnel hit your lad in the head. We carried them down to the Anzac Cemetery at Martinpuich at ten that night. I think it was the first of March. Mr. Cresswell, our officer, and the Methodist Padre, a sergeant and myself laid them to rest. I can only say your son was a brave lad, highly respected by all who knew him and died a soldier's death fighting for his country.

If there is anything further than this you would like to know, if you write I will be pleased to answer same.

Yours sincerely

R.V. Thomas

2<sup>nd</sup> Air Mechanic

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