

## **Letter to Parents of 4711 Private G.H. Handford KIA 14 November 1917**

Somewhere in France, December 31.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Handford,

I am awfully sorry to have to inform you of the death of your son, Private G. H. Handford. We were in the trenches all Xmas and on Xmas night I went out between our lines and Germans', with two other chaps, to bury some of the poor boys that had fallen. My orders were to take their pay books and identification discs off those we buried. This I did and handed them to our officers. They will forward them on to the Australian authorities, and you will be notified in due course. Naturally, I took their letters off them also. Those I kept, as I knew they would never reach you otherwise. I was determined if ever I got back myself, I would forward them all to their people if possible, as I have a little idea what it is to be kept in suspense, since I have had twenty months out here, and have seen all my chums go west. I gave your son as decent a burial as possible under the circumstances. And it may be a little comfort to you to know that he must have died bravely, doing his duty, to be in the position he was when I found him. I found, your address in his papers. There were no photos whatever. I will be awfully pleased if you will drop me a few lines to say, if you received them safely. I am awfully sorry but am not allowed to tell you. the place etc. where your son fell.

Yours in deepest sympathy,

Lance-Corporal J. SHAW, 30606, Welsh Regiment.

Source: Toowoomba Chronicle, 26 March 1917, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article252894608>