

No. 2 Camp,
Codford,
England,
10/4/19.

Dear Mrs. Mackay,

I am writing you this letter on account of being with your late son, Gunner A.S. Mackay, at the time of his death in December last. Knowing that you would be anxious to hear of the circumstances I intended writing when I returned to the Battery from Hospital but was quickly placed on a quota for home and mislaid your address and was unable to obtain it again until I called at A.I.F. Headquarters London a few days ago so I trust you will pardon me for the delay.

Gunner Mackay and I left the Battery on the 5th December to take our 14 days leave in Italy; having been to Paris together the previous year we only spent a few days there and left on the 9th for Italy. We arrived at Milan on the 10th and were to go on to Rome on 12th but on that day we both felt a little unwell so decided it would be better for us to go back to Paris than touring Italy which would mean a great deal of train travelling in very cold weather. We left Milan on 13th and arrived at Turin at 6.30 p.m. where we were to remain that night on account of the train not going on until next day. On reporting to the Railway Transport Officer he noticed that we were unwell and sent us to the 29th British Stationary Hospital at Turin where we were examined and immediately put to bed suffering from Influenza which developed into pneumonia. I was in the next bed to Gnr. Mackay until about 8 hours before he died when I was removed to another ward and from what I can remember he appeared to be very low but was in no pain when I last saw him. I don't think he suffered any pain at all during the three days before he died and was quite cheerful until a few hours before I was removed. When I asked the Sister next morning how Gnr. Mackay was she told me the very sad news that he had passed away. He was buried in the Military Section of Turin Cemetery which is a short distance from the town of Turin.

I would like to mention the attention and kindness we received from the Hospital Staff and Medical Officers and feel sure the treatment and attention could not have been better. The trouble seemed to grip and carry the poor fellow off in a very small time but I know everything possible was done for him.

It is awfully sad that he should have gone through the dangers of war and then died of sickness when everything was over. Will you please accept my very deepest sympathy in your great loss. Gnr. Mackay was a particular friend of mine and although I didn't have the pleasure of knowing him before he joined the Battery I can honestly say he was one of the finest men it has been my good fortune to meet and was very popular in the Battery where his death was keenly felt.

Whilst in Paris we had our photos taken. These I collected on my way back in February and am posting you under separate cover by this mail. It was taken on 8th December so would only be about 9 days before he passed away. Several of his particular pals in the Battery were very anxious to have one of these so I took the liberty of giving them one which I hope will meet with your approval. The remainder are being posted as mentioned.

After I had recovered and was allowed out of bed I made enquiries about his personal effects but these had already been forwarded through the Authorities and I trust they reached you safely.

I expect to sail for Australia in about a fortnight's time. I am giving you my private address so that

should there be anything you wish to know I will give you
all information possible.

Again expressing regret at the unfortunate delay
in writing and again tendering my deepest sympathy to you and
yours in your sad loss.

Yours sincerely,

H. J. Williams
Bdr.

22224 30th Battery.

Address.

H. J. Williams
North Adelaide Cycling Club,
Pirie Street,
ADELAIDE.
S.A.