

**All Saints Church Cemetery,
Hursley, Hampshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



LIEUTENANT

L. GEORGE

AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

12TH MAY, 1918 Age 25

Leslie GEORGE

Leslie Eden George was born at Christchurch, New Zealand on 8th November, 1892 to parents Ernest Eden and Ada Jane George (nee Butler).

Leslie George attended Sydney Grammar School, NSW in 1908.

Leslie George was a 23 year old, single, Photographer from 75 Esplanade, Manly, NSW when he enlisted on 15th March, 1916 at Menangle Park, NSW with the 2nd Light Horse Brigade, 7th Light Horse Regiment, 22nd Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3001 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Ada George, of Eden Studios, George Street, Sydney, NSW. Leslie George stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served 6 months with the Rifle Club & was still serving.

Private Leslie George was posted to Camp with 7th Light Horse Regiment on 15th March, 1916.

Private Leslie George embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Katuna (A13)* on 23rd November, 1916 & disembarked at Suez on 2nd January, 1917.

Private Leslie George was marched in to Isolation Camp at Moascar on 2nd January, 1917.

Private Leslie George was posted with 2nd Light Horse Training Regiment until 9th January, 1917.

Private Leslie George was transferred to R.F.C. (Royal Flying Corps) at Kantara & posted as 2nd Air Mechanic with No. 68 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps on 10th January, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George embarked from Alexandria on H.T. *Kingstonian* on 13th January, 1917 & disembarked at Southampton, England on 30th January, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George was detached from attached duty with No. 31 R. Squadron R.F.C. Spittlegate & attached to No. 49 R. S., R.F.C on 24th March, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George was transferred to No. 69 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps on 2nd July, 1917 & taken on strength of No. 69 Squadron at South Carlton on 3rd July, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George was marched out from No. 69 Squadron, A.F.C. on 5th July, 1917 to Admin. Headquarters, London.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George was attached to No. 29 Training Squadron for instruction as a Cadet on 11th August, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George was detached from No. 29 Training Squadron, A.F.C. for duty with No. 34 Training Squadron, A.F.C. on 22nd September, 1917.

2nd Air Mechanic Leslie George having graduated is appointed Flying Officer (Pilot) & was to be 2nd Lieutenant with Australian Flying Corps on 11th November, 1917.

2nd Lieutenant Leslie George was promoted to Lieutenant on 11th February, 1918.

A Medical Report was completed on 2/Lieut. Leslie George of No. 34 Training Squadron, Ternill, Salop on 19th February, 1918 at Officers Invaliding Board, R.F.C., Hamstead. 2/Lieut. Leslie George was described as having air sickness which originated in October, 1917. The Air sickness was attributable to military service & specifically to Flying. 2/Lieut. Leslie George's present condition was described as "*Complains of sickness after stunting in light scouts. Confirmed by C.O.'s report. States he is not a good Sailor, Complains of headaches after being sick in the air.*" The disability was described as permanent & 2/Lieut. George was disabled by 30% re flying. The Board found that 2/Lieut. George did not require any treatment & he was fit for general service. Captain, Commanding No. 34 T.S., R.F.C. reported that 2/Lieut. George was a "*capable pilot but is unable to stunt a light Scout machine on account of air sickness. I consider that he would be quite fit on a heavy bombing or Artillery machine.*"

Lieutenant Leslie George proceeded to Artillery & Infantry Co-Operation School at Hursley Park on 18th April, 1918.

Lieutenant Leslie George was flying a R.E.8 (Royal Aircraft Factory) Serial No. 60473 on 12th May, 1918 when it stalled, spun, struck the ground & burst into flames at Worthy Down, near Winchester, Hampshire, England.



Royal Aircraft Factory R.E.8

Lieutenant Leslie George died at around 3 pm on 12th May, 1918 at Worthy Down, Winchester, Hampshire, England as a result of an aeroplane accident.

A death for Leslie George, aged 26, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Winchester, Hampshire, England.

A Court of Enquiry was held on 13th May, 1918 at Worthy Down by order of Lieut. Col. J. A. Chamier, D.S.O., Commandant Artillery & Infantry Co-operation School, enquiring into the accident resulting in the death of Lieutenant Leslie George on 12th May, 1918.

Proceedings of Inquest:

Lieut. S.W. Withers stated:-

About 3 O'clock in the afternoon on Worthy Down Aerodrome I saw deceased officer Lieut. George take off, I heard the engine working after he had left the ground and it seemed to be working perfectly. I saw the machine after it had been burning for half an hour and very nearly burst completely out. It was tested by Lieut. Barraclough the same day.

Lieut Barraclough stated:-

The machine which was used by Lt. George was new machine from Coventry, I took the machine up on the morning of the 12th and it was working perfectly and no one else flew it until the deceased.

S/Lieut. E.J.B. Powell stated:-

On the 12th. afternoon about 3 O'clock I was on the Northern boundary of the aerodrome which I understand to be in the Parish of Headbourne Worthy. I saw a machine pass over my head about 100 feet up, going due west. When the machine crossed over the main road, it made a flat left hand turn and stalled, that is, looses speed and stops, and immediately going i into a nose dive, and after making half a spin struck the ground and burst into flames. On arriving at the scene his

head (the pilot's) appeared to be shapeless.

Capt. R.E. Bell R.A.M.C. stated:-

I saw the body immediately after the accident, it was very badly burnt and practically unrecognisable, and that death took place at the time of the crash. Papers found on him showed him to be Lieut. Leslie George, from records produced the deceased was 26 years old, resided once 727 George Street, Sydney, Australia, belonging to the Australian Corps.

Capt. E.G. Whelon R.A.F. stated:-

From records shown the deceased was an experienced pilot but did not show he had had much experience on this particular type of machine he was flying when he was killed. Machines are detailed to pilots under instruction by Flight Commanders. From evidence given I consider that the accident happened through an error of judgement on the part of the pilot.

Evidence:

1st. Witness. 2/Lieut. F.J.B. Powell R.A.F. states:-

I was standing about 200 yards from where the accident occurred, when this machine passed over me at the height of a 100' to 150' climbing slowly. When just clear of the boundary of the Aerodrome, the machine made a flat turn left, stalling. The nose immediately dropped, the machine making a half spin, struck the ground and burst into flames.

(Sgd) F.J.B. Powell. 2/Lieut.
R.A.F.

2nd. Witness. Lieut. N.E. Barraclough R.A.F. M.C. states:-

On the morning of the 12th. May 1918, I flew No. C.2473. R.E.8. for 25 minutes. I found that the machine was extremely well rigged, the engine uncommonly good and all the instruments in working order.

(Sgd) N.E. Barraclough. Lt.
R.A.F.

3rd. Witness. Capt. R.E. Bell. R.A.M.C. states:-

That at about 3.30 p.m. on the 12th. day of May I was notified that a crash had occurred about 400 yards from the Aerodrome. I immediately proceeded to the scene of the accident and found the machine burning fiercely. The Pilot was dead and in a burning condition. The body was removed as soon as possible and conveyed to Avington Park Military Hospital Mortuary.

It is suggested that about 40 yards of chain with a grappling iron attached be kept in the ambulance for the purpose of:-

- (1) Salvaging the occupants of a burning machine from fire.
- (2) Removing burning debris which cannot be handled.
- (3) Removing parts of the machine which constitute a danger to rescue parties during a fire.

That the ambulance be fitted with a rack carrying at least four large "Minimax" extinguishers.

The ambulance again proved inadequate to the demands called for in this crash.

(Sgd) R.E. BELL. Capt.,
R.A.M.C.

R.A.M.C.

4th. Witness. No. 77102. 2/A.M. Gregory C.E. R.A.F. states:-

I was the driver of the ambulance that went to this crash and from the pilots remains extracted a pocket book containing two meet cards bearing the name of Lieut. George L.

(Sgd) C.E. Gregory C.E. No. 77102 2/A.M.
R.A.F.

5th. Witness. No. 4534. Flt. Sergt. W.W. Gregg R.A.F.:-

I took over R.E.8. No. C. 2473. on the 11th inst. personally examined the rigging of this machine and ran up the engine and found everything O.K. On the afternoon of the 12th. inst. myself and two mechanics set the machine off with Lieut. George as Pilot the engine was giving just under 1500 Revs. and before the machine left the ground I examined the machine in detail and ascertained that there were three sand bags filled with sand in the observers cock-pit.

(Sgd) W.W. Gregg. F/Sergt.

6th. Witness. No. 12789. Sgt. Clayden F.R. R.A.F. states:-

On the afternoon of the 11th. inst as rigger Sergt. I thoroughly examined the rigging and controls of R.E.8. No. C. 2473. and found everything in perfect order. On the morning of the 12th. the machine was tested in the air. When it came down I again examined the machine and found everything in order.

(Sgd) 12789. Clayden. F.R. Sergt.
R.A.F.

Verdict of Jury: After carefully listening to the evidence death was caused by the aeroplane crashing to earth. Accidental death.

Finding: The Court found that there was insufficient evidence to find the cause of the accident. The Court is of opinion that it was an accident; there is no evidence to prove in what way Lieut. George met his death.

Lieutenant Leslie George was buried at 2.30 pm on 15th May, 1918 in All Saints Churchyard Extension Cemetery, Hursley, Hampshire, England and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Lieutenant Leslie George - *The funeral of the deceased Officer was conducted by the Military Authorities under the usual military Conditions. A large body of Allied troops were drawn up on the line of route to the graveside, and a Squadron of girls from Queen Mary's Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, stationed at Hursley Park, followed the remains of the deceased Officer to the Cemetery. They also contributed a floral wreath "in token of kind remembrance."* The funeral ceremony was carried out impressively, and everything done to mark the respect in which the deceased Officer was held by his brother Officers, rank and file and those in the vicinity in which his duties had brought him into contact. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. Names of relatives and friends present at the funeral – Lieut. S. Jones. A.F.C. & Lieut L. R. Penton, A.F.C.

** Second Lieutenant John Stone William of Australian Flying Corps crashed his aeroplane & died around four hours earlier & on the same day in a separate incident & in the same vicinity as Lieutenant Leslie George. They were given a joint funeral & were buried next to each other in All Saints Churchyard Extension Cemetery, Hursley, Hampshire.

Newspaper Article from *The Daily Mail*, Brisbane, Queensland – 13 July, 1918:

AUSTRALIAN FLYING OFFICERS

LATE LIEUTS. GEORGE AND LORD

FUNERAL IN QUIANT, OLD ENGLISH VILLAGE

LONDON, May 18, 1918

A Brisbane sergeant who was present at the funeral supplies the following details of the tragic death and the burial, under somewhat unusual circumstances, of two Australian airmen in England.

Europe is sprinkled with Australian graves. We shall probably never have any precise knowledge of the number of these in Gallipoli, in France, and Flanders, to say nothing of those in Egypt and Palestine. There are a considerable number of Australian graves in England. Australians who have been wounded or invalided out of France have been sent to English and Australian hospitals, and when they have eventually died there have been buried in some God's acre near by. "Anzac Corner" for instance — that portion of the parish churchyard at Harefield set apart for the burial of Australians who have died in the No.1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park — holds somewhere about 50 Australian graves.

There are Australian graves in other rural churchyards throughout England. Last Wednesday (May 16, 1918), the tally was augmented by two when the remains of two Australian airmen, who had met a tragic end on the preceding Sunday, were laid to rest in the little cemetery at Hursley— an old-fashioned little English village some three miles from Winchester, in Hants. . The burial of the two gallant young Australians took place under circumstances that were distinctly unique. The two deceased Australian officers were Lieut. Leslie George and 2nd-Lieut. J. S. W. Lord. Both were Sydney men, and in each instance the sorrowing next-of-kin is the mother.

TWO FATAL FLIGHTS

Both were members of the Australian Flying Corps, and their deaths had been dramatically sudden. On the forenoon of Sunday, May 12, Lieut. Lord ascended Engine trouble somehow overtook his machine and it crashed into a wood. The young Australian officer— he was only 20—was killed instantly.

Four hours later, Lieut. George, who had by then learned of the death of his friend, also ascended. While flying practically over the spot where his comrade had met disaster, he also fell. What precisely happened — it has been suggested that recollections may have unstrung his nerve— will never be known. His machine fell to earth, and burst immediately into flame. Lieutenant George must have been killed instantaneously, but his body had been somewhat burnt before it could be disentangled from the blazing machine.

It was a tragic sequence of calamities in more ways than one. The two young men had been sworn friends. They had been in the Light Horse together in Egypt, and had seen service in France together. They had been comrades throughout their aviation career. Both had their "wings" and were reported skilful and "nervy" pilots.

THEIR FINAL TRAINING CAMP

Both officers had been attached to the Artillery and Infantry Co-operative School at Hursley Park. This is a large instruction camp in the Winchester Common, devoted to the finishing courses of an airman's education. Flying men are not sent to Hursley Park until they have won the right to wear "the wings" of the accomplished aviator at some other school. Hursley Park is devoted to the final military instruction of flying men. Particular attention is given to the matters of "artillery observation" and "infantry contact," both vital factors in which aeroplanes are primarily concerned in schemes of modern battle slaughter.

REVERENT AMERICAN TRIBUTES

At the time of the dual catastrophe, Hursley Park Camp was in a stage of transition. The British troops who had manned the camp were on the point of being transferred to a newer camp and aerodrome some six miles away. Hursley Park Camp was being handed over to the control of the Americans, many of whom were already in residence there in the regulation huts.

The remains of the two Australian officers were given a full royal air force funeral. In front of the R.A.F. motor tender, which bore the flag-draped coffins of the victims, there marched a squad of 20 of the rank and file of the R.A.F. Behind it there marched a score or more of R.A.F. officers, including a number of Australians.

The cortege moved from the little camp church, through the quaint old-world village of Hursley, to the village church of All Saints. The roads along were lined with American and English troops, who stood rigidly but reverently at the salute as the sombre procession passed.

The coffins were borne into the village church on the shoulders of officers – six to a burden. In the centuries-old church the burial service was read over, the remains of the two young men from the youngest of all the continents, and the bonniest of all the Empire's Dominions. The service was read by the vicar of All Saints', Hursley (the Rev. R. J. Husband, (M.A.) and the chaplain of the Australian Flying Corps (the Rev. G. W. R. Tobias).

"THE LAST POST"

At the village church the procession was joined by a squad of khaki girls —members of the W.A.A.C — who were in service at the camp. The draped coffins had been crowned by wreaths sent from the officers of the A.F.C. training squadron at Yatesbury; officers of the artillery and infantry school, Hursley Park; brother officers and students of the 45th course of instruction; the waitresses of the officers' mess (W.A.A.C.'s).

The bodies were not buried in the village churchyard, but in the little village cemetery nearby, that already held the bodies of two Australian soldiers. In the cemetery compound were assembled squads of British and of American troops.

It was a young American trumpeter who sounded "The Last Post" over the bodies of the dead Australian officers.

Base Records contacted Mr S. George, brother of the late Lieutenant L. George, on 26th April, 1921 enquiring if the parents of the late Lieutenant George were still alive & if so requested their present address as per the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Lieutenant Leslie George was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lieutenant George's father – Mr E. George, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent December, 1922 in England).

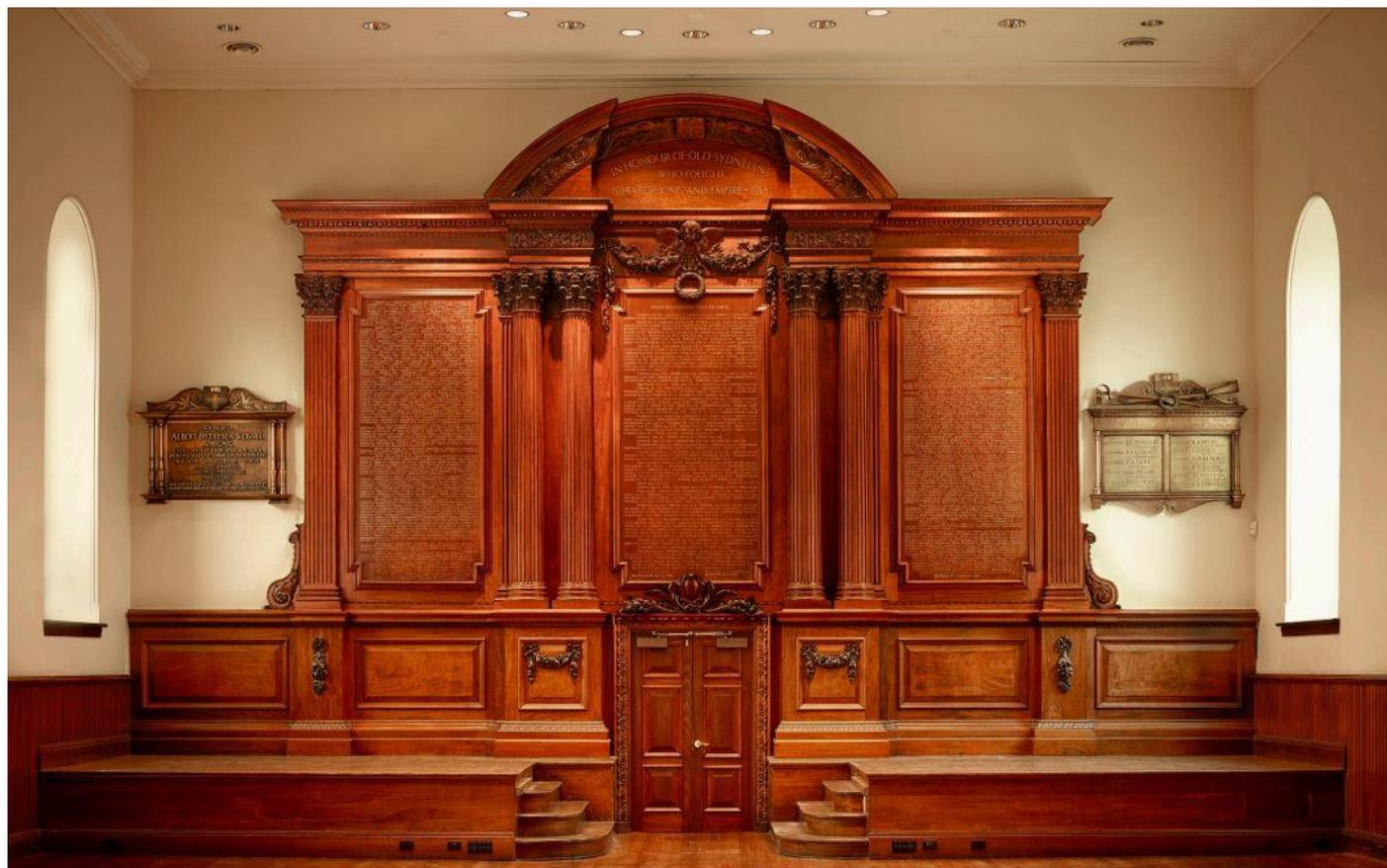
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lieutenant Leslie George, aged 25, of Australian Flying Corps. He was the son of Eden and Ada George, of Stanford Hotel, San Francisco, U.S.A. Born in New Zealand.

Lieutenant L. George is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 187.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Lieut. L. E. George is remembered on the Sydney Grammar School Honour Board (Middle Panel), located at Sydney Grammar School, College Street, Darlinghurst, Sydney, NSW.



Sydney Grammar School Honour Board (Image courtesy of Sydney Grammar School)

GAIR, PTE. J.H.H - GALE, PTE. B.C.L - GARLING, SGT. F.H.E. M.M - GARVAN, LIBUT. E.W.
GARVIN, LIBUT. W.M - GELME, LIBUT. R.W - GEORGE, LIBUT. L.E. - GIBLIN, LIBUT. L.
GIBSON, ONR. J.C.E - GIBSON, TPR. M.R - GILES, LIBUT. A.M - GOWENLOCK, LIBUT. E.S - GRAHAM, CAPT. S.M.
GREEN, 2ND. LIBUT. E - GRIFFITHS, SGT. H - GRIFFITHS, CAPT. J.N - GUTHRIE, LIBUT. F.A.
GUTHRIE, PTE. E.P.M - GUTHRIE, PTE. G.B - GREEN, SGT. E.W - GORDON-BAKER, CAPT. R.N. E.

(90 pages of Lieutenant Leslie George's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

NEW ITEMS

Two Airmen Killed – Lieutenant John Stone Lord and Lieutenant Leslie George, R.A.F., have been killed while flying.

(Daily Mirror, London, England – 14 May, 1918)

AUSTRALIANS KILLED

Lieutenant J. S. Lord and L. L. George, of Sydney, have been killed while flying in England.

They were buried with full Air Force honours. Many American troops attended, and an American trumpeter sounded the Last Post. The victims were close companions. Lord was killed owing to engine trouble. George ascended later, and fell almost on the same spot.

(Flight Lieut. Leslie L. George was a son of Mr Eden George (ex-M.L.A.) and Mrs Eden George, of Manly, and was previously in partnership with his brother, Mr Stanley George, in the Eden photographic studios in George-street, city. His parents left recently for England with the object of meeting him there, and it is feared that they will not be apprised of his death until their arrival. Flight Lieut. J. S. Lord was a son of Mr John Lord, of Messes David Cohen and Co. Ltd., and of Manly. He was 25 years of age, and was previously an engineer in the service of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. In January, 1915, he left with a Light Horse unit and served in Egypt, Gallipoli, Palestine and France. Last year he went to England in order to train for the aerial service, and last March his parents received a cable message announcing that he had obtained his certificate.)

(Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 20 May, 1918)

LOCAL AND GENERAL

One of the Australian airmen killed a few days ago was Flight Lieut. Leslie George, who left Australia as the mate of Trooper Jim Elworthy in the Light Horse Regiment. Lieut. George was on furlough with "Jim" and their heads photographed side by side, many of which are in this district, and an enlargement appears in Eden-George's studios in Sydney. After serving in Egypt some time Lieut. George was offered a position in the Flying Corps as aeroplane photographer, and was very loathe on leaving his mates, but as the position was such a good one he was persuaded to accept. He was making a great success of his position, but unfortunately his career ended too suddenly. His parents were on their way to England with the object of meeting their son, so the shock to them can better be imagined than described.

(The Gundagai Times and Tumut, Adelong and Murrumbidgee District Advertiser, NSW – 24 May, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOUR

GEORGE – Killed on May 13, 1918, Flight-Lieutenant Leslie George, Australian Flying Corps, beloved son of Mr and Mrs Eden George, and brother of Stanley George, Manly.

(Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 25 May, 1918)



The Late Lieut. Leslie George

Of the Australian Flying Corps, son of Mr and Mrs Eden George, of Manly. He was killed on May 12. Prior to enlisting he was in partnership with his brother, Mr Stanley George, Eden Photo studios, Sydney. In November, 1916, he left with the Light Horse, and served in Egypt. Last year he was sent to England in order to train for the aerial service, and in November, 1917, received his certificate.

(Sydney Mail, NSW – 5 June, 1918)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government. *(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)*

Lieutenant L. George does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

All Saints Churchyard Extension Cemetery, Hursley, Hampshire, England

All Saints Churchyard Extension Cemetery was made in 1865 & contains 15 Commonwealth War Graves – all from World War 1.



(Photo by David Key – Great War Forum)



Photo of the 3 Australian Headstones – Pte Moloney in front & 2nd Lieut. Lord (left) & Lieut. George (right)

(Photo by David Key – Great War Forum)



Photo of the 2 Australian Flying Corps Headstones – 2nd Lieut. Lord (left) & Lieut. George (right)

(Photo by David Key – Great War Forum)

Photo of Lieutenant L. George's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in All Saints Churchyard Extension Cemetery, Hursley, Hampshire, England.



(Photo by David Key – Great War Forum)