

**St. Womar Churchyard,
Minwear, Wales
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3123 PRIVATE

H. D. JOHN

AUST. FIELD ARTILLERY

30TH OCTOBER, 1918 Age 26

Hugh Davies JOHN

Hugh Davies John was born at St. Florence, near Tenby, Wales on 19th July, 1892 to parents William Davies John and Sarah Catherine John (nee Davies). His birth was registered as Griffith Hugh Davies John in the September quarter, 1892 in the district of Narberth, Pembrokeshire, Wales.

William Davies John, father of Hugh Davies John died on 5th July, 1893.

The 1901 Wales Census recorded Hugh D. John as an 8 year old, living with his Aunt & Uncle at Elm Grove, St. Florence, Pembroke, Wales. Hugh's Uncle & Aunt were listed as Thomas John (Justice of the Peace, aged 51, born Begally, Pembroke) & Emma J. John (aged 52, born St. Pancras, Middlesex). Also listed were 2 nieces of Thomas & Emma John – Louise L. Andrews (aged 24, born Brentford, Middlesex) & Blanche Andrews (aged 20, born Brentford, Middlesex). Hugh John & his older brother George D. John (aged 10) were both listed as being born at Jeffreston, Pembroke. Also listed in the household were – May G. Lewis (Governess, aged 22, born Cardigan) & 3 servants – Elizabeth Harries (Cook, aged 37, born St. Issells, Pembroke), Mary J. Griffiths (Housemaid, aged 29, born St. Issells, Pembroke) & Mary J. Davies (Housemaid, aged 19, born Begally).

Hugh Davies John attended Tenby County / Greenhill School, Tenby, Pembrokeshire, Wales. Hugh John & his brothers George & Thomas, of Elm Grove, St. Florence, were admitted to the school on 24th September, 1902.

Information from the Roll of Honour, completed by Emma Jane John (Aunt), stated that Hugh John came to Australia when he was 17 years old. Hugh D. John & George John, Labourers, were listed as passengers on *Omrah*, which departed from London on 19th February, 1909 bound for Fremantle, Western Australia.

Hugh Davies John was a 23 year old, single, Farmer from Dylialing, Warren Road, East Katanning, Western Australia when he enlisted at Black Boy Hill, Western Australia on 25th June, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3123 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his uncle – Mr T. John, of Elm Grove, Penally, Pembrokeshire, Wales. Hugh John stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for Light Horse.

Private Hugh John was posted to 15th Depot Company from 25th June, 1915. He was transferred to 10th Reinforcements, 16th Battalion on 16th July, 1915.

Private Hugh John was admitted to Hospital while stationed at Blackboy Hill Camp from 14th August, 1915 to 20th August, 1915 with Measles then re-admitted the same day again for measles. He was discharged on 6th September, 1915, after 17 days in hospital.

The Australian Electoral Roll for 1916, division of Swan, subdivision of Katanning, Western Australia listed Hugh Davies John as a farmer from Gnarlbine, Katanning. His brother was listed as George Davies John, farmer from Gnowangerup.

Private Hugh Davies John embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Themistocles* (A32) on 13th October, 1915 with the 16th Infantry Battalion, 10th Reinforcements.

Private Hugh John was admitted to No. 1 Auxiliary Hospital, Luna Park, Cairo on 23rd November, 1915 with diarrhoea & was discharged to Base Details on 3rd December, 1915.

Private Hugh John was taken on strength of 16th Battalion on 5th February, 1916 at Ismalia.

Private Hugh John was transferred from 16th Battalion to 48th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 3rd March, 1916.

Private Hugh John was transferred to 4th Division Artillery on 17th March, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir. He was taken on strength of 24th Howitzer Brigade & posted to 112 Battery on 17th March, 1916.

Private Hugh John was taken to New Zealand Field Ambulance on 9th April, 1916 then admitted to No. 1 Australian Stationary Hospital at Serapeum on 10th April, 1916 with Scabies. He was discharged to duty & rejoined his Unit from Hospital on 18th April, 1916.

Private Hugh John was taken on strength with 4th D.A.C. (Divisional Artillery Column) at Serapeum on 19th April, 1916 & posted to No. 3 Section.

Private Hugh John was mustered as Driver on 1st May, 1916.

Driver Hugh John was transferred from 11th F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade) to 4th D.A.C. on 27th May, 1916.

Driver Hugh John proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 6th June, 1916 on *Oriana* & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 13th June, 1916.

Driver Hugh John was taken to 13th Field Ambulance on 26th June, 1916 suffering from Bronchitis. He was transferred on 27th June, 1916 to No. 3 Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France. Driver Hugh John was invalided to England on Hospital Ship *Cambria* from Boulogne on 3rd July, 1916 due to Bronchial Catarrh.

Driver Hugh John was admitted to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Middlesex on 12th July, 1916 suffering from Bronchitis. He was transferred to Military Convalescence Hospital, Epsom on 14th July, 1916 & discharged on 10th August, 1916.

Driver Hugh John proceeded on furlough from Hospital. He reported back from furlough & was placed in Class A at No. 1 Command Depot on 29th August, 1916.

Driver Hugh John was written up for an offence at Bulford, Wiltshire on 27th August, 1916 – He was Absent without leave from midnight on 26th August, 1916 till 28th August, 1916. He was awarded 7 days confined to barracks & forfeited 2 days pay.

Driver Hugh John was transferred to Park House, Wiltshire. He was marched in to A.A.T.D. (Australian Army Training Depot) at Bulford, Wiltshire from Parkhouse on 1st September, 1916.

Driver Hugh John was marched out to 3rd Divisional Artillery on 10th November, 1916.

Driver Hugh John proceeded overseas to France on 24th November, 1916.

Driver Hugh John was sent to Hospital on 15th December, 1916 & admitted to 11th D. R. (Divisional Rest) Station the same day with Influenza. He was discharged to duty on 4th January, 1917. Driver Hugh John rejoined his Unit in the field on 5th January, 1917.

Driver Hugh John was re-mustered Gunner on 24th June, 1917.

Gunner Hugh John was transferred to 7th F.A.B. (Field Artillery Brigade) on 7th July, 1917 from 3rd D.A.C.

Gunner Hugh John was wounded in action on 4th August, 1917. He was taken to 4th Australian Field Ambulance with shrapnel wounds to right Buttock then transferred to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station. Gunner John was transferred by Ambulance Train 16 & admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Rouen on 7th August, 1917. He proceeded for transfer to England on 9th August, 1917 & embarked on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle* on 11th August, 1917.

Gunner Hugh John was admitted to Norfolk War Hospital, Thorpe, Norwich, England on 12th August, 1917 with gunshot wounds to left buttock. He was transferred to No. 3 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Dartford, Kent on 4th September, 1917 recovering from his previous wounds.

Gunner Hugh John was on furlough from 13th September, 1917 to 27th September, 1917 & was then to report to Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Gunner Hugh John was admitted to Observation Hospital at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 29th September, 1917 & discharged on 3rd October, 1917. He was transferred to Classification Hut on 4th October, 1917 & medically classified as B1 A 4 (fit for Overseas Training camp when passed dentally fit).

Gunner Hugh John was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot, Hurdcott on 7th November, 1917 with Scabies & discharged on 21st November, 1917. Gunner John had been reclassified as A 3 (Fit for Overseas Training Camp, to which transferred for hardening prior to rejoining unit overseas) on 15/16 November, 1917.

Gunner Hugh John was marched out to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 5th December, 1917 from No. 3 Command Depot, Hurdcott.

Gunner Hugh John was marched out from Overseas Training Brigade to R.B.A.A. (Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery) at Heytesbury, Wiltshire on 17th December, 1917.

Gunner Hugh John was written up on 23rd January, 1918 for an offence at Heytesbury, Wiltshire – Overstaying leave from midnight on 22nd January, 1918 until reporting to N.C.O. in charge Guard at 9.50 pm on 23rd January, 1918. He was awarded 7 days confined to barracks with a total forfeiture of 5 days' pay.

Gunner Hugh John proceeded overseas to France from Heytesbury, via Southampton on 31st January, 1918. He was marched in from England to A.G.B.D. (Australian General Base Depot) at Rouelles, France on 1st February, 1918. Gunner John was marched out of A.G.B.D. on 4th February, 1918 & rejoined his Brigade (from being wounded) on 6th February, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was detached to Mobile Battalions on 12th February, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was taken to 10th Australian Field Ambulance on 15th February, 1918 then transferred to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station on 16th February, 1918. He was discharged to duty on 3rd March, 1918 after being treated for Balanitis (non venereal). Gunner Hugh John rejoined his Brigade on 4th March, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was admitted to 12th Australian Field Ambulance on 15th March, 1918 with Scabies. He was transferred to 13th Australian Field Ambulance then transferred to 4th Australian Field Ambulance. Gunner Hugh John was admitted to 1st Australian Field Ambulance with Scabies on 24th March, 1918 & rejoined his Unit on 26th March, 1918. Another line on the Casualty Form – Active Service reads “rejoined from sick” - 15th April, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was admitted to 11th Australian Field Ambulance on 9th May, 1918 with Scabies & was discharged to duty the next day. Gunner John rejoined his Unit on 10th May, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was admitted 41st Stationary Hospital on 18th May, 1918, again suffering with Scabies. He was returned to his Unit on 30th May, 1918 & rejoined his Brigade on 31st May, 1918.

Gunner Hugh John was wounded in action (2nd Occasion) on 17th October, 1918. He was admitted to 76th Field Ambulance on 17th October, 1918 with gunshot wounds to left foot. He was transferred to 41st Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Gunner Hugh John was transferred by Ambulance Train to 1st S. A. General Hospital at Abbeville on 18th October, 1918 & invalided to England on 21st October, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Jan Breydal*.

Private Hugh John was admitted to Central Military Hospital, Chatham, England on 21st October, 1918 suffering from gunshot wounds to left foot. He was transferred to Red Cross Hospital, Sittingbourne, Kent on 22nd October, 1918.

Gunner Hugh Davies John died at 11.30 pm on 30th October, 1918 at Red Cross Hospital, Sittingbourne, Kent, England from Bronchial Pneumonia following Influenza.

A death for Griffith H. D. John, aged 26, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Milton, Kent, England.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Gunner Hugh Davies John contains a letter from A.I.F. Headquarters which reads: “*Adm. Central M. Hpl Chatham 21-10-18 – fractured wound left foot & severe influenza & pneumonia. Trans. Sittingbourne Red X Hpl. 22-10-18 – died 30-10-18. Pneumonia – buried old Churchyard Minwear near Pembroke family grave.*” Another letter from O. L. Honeyball, Commandant, Whitehall Hospital, Sittingbourne, Kent reads: “*We find admission here of the above soldier on Oct. 22nd 1918. He evidently had caught a severe chill crossing from France; that same night he became exceedingly ill, developing on the following day to double pneumonia, from which he died on Oct. 30th. I am glad to tell you his Uncle was here during his last days, and was very aware that there was no possible chance of this soldier's life. Also the Australian Red X namely, Mr Robert Short, saw tis soldier during his extreme illness, and was well aware there was little to be done. There is little else I fear I can tell you because this person was very ill the whole time he was with me, I was immensely grieved to think I*”

could not save him. The body was sent through to Wales and was buried by the Uncle there as doubtless you know. Any further questions I feel sure would be answered by Mr Robert Short from the Australian Red X. who attended at the end with me, and was acquainted with every fact during his illness."

Gunner Hugh Davies John was buried on 5th November, 1918 in St. Womar Churchyard, Minwear, Wales – south east part in the family grave. He has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Gunner Hugh Davies John - *Coffin was polished Elm with brass mountings. The deceased soldier was interred privately by relatives in Pembrokeshire. Relatives who were present at the Funeral - Mrs John (Aunt), Mr John (Cousin), Miss May John, Mr T. John (Next-of-kin).*

Gunner Hugh Davies John was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner John's uncle – Mr T. John, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque both sent November, 1922).



Memorial Plaque or "Death Penny" for Gunner Hugh Davies John

The Memorial Plaque (also known as "Death Penny") issued on account of the service of the late Gunner Hugh Davies John was sold at auction on 6th May, 2022 for £140 through Wessex Auction Rooms, England.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner Hugh Davies John - service number 3123, aged 26, of 7th Bty., Australian Field Artillery. He was the son of William Davies John and Sarah Catherine John. Born at Cresselly, Pembrokeshire, Wales. (Next-of-kin – Mr T. John, uncle, of 6 Croft Terrace, Tenby, Pembrokeshire).

H. D. John is remembered on the Katanning War Memorial, located at Prosser Park, corner of Carew & Cliff Streets, Katanning, Western Australia.



Katanning War Memorial (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – James Wills)



(Photo courtesy of Stephen Bowes)

Gunner H. D. John is remembered on the Western Australia State War Memorial which is located at the top of Kings Park and Botanic Garden escarpment, ANZAC Bluff, Fraser Avenue, Perth, Western Australia. The memorial was developed around an 18 metre tall obelisk as the principal feature, which is almost a replica of the Australian Imperial Force Memorials erected in France and Belgium.

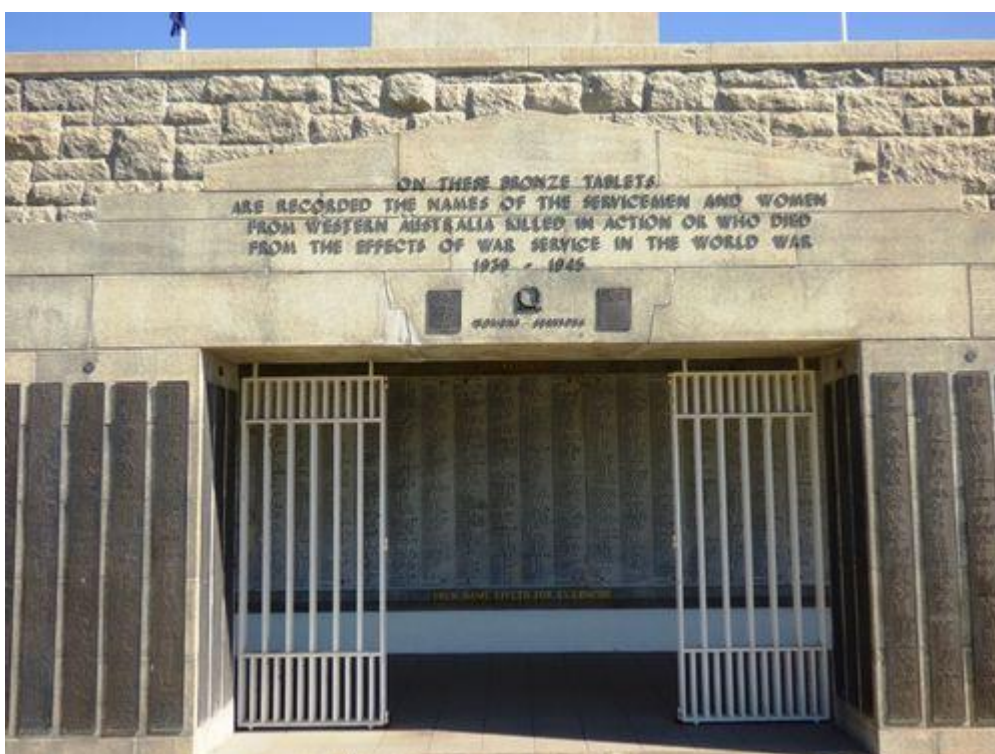
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a result of World War One.



Western Australia State War Memorial Cenotaph, Kings Park (above)

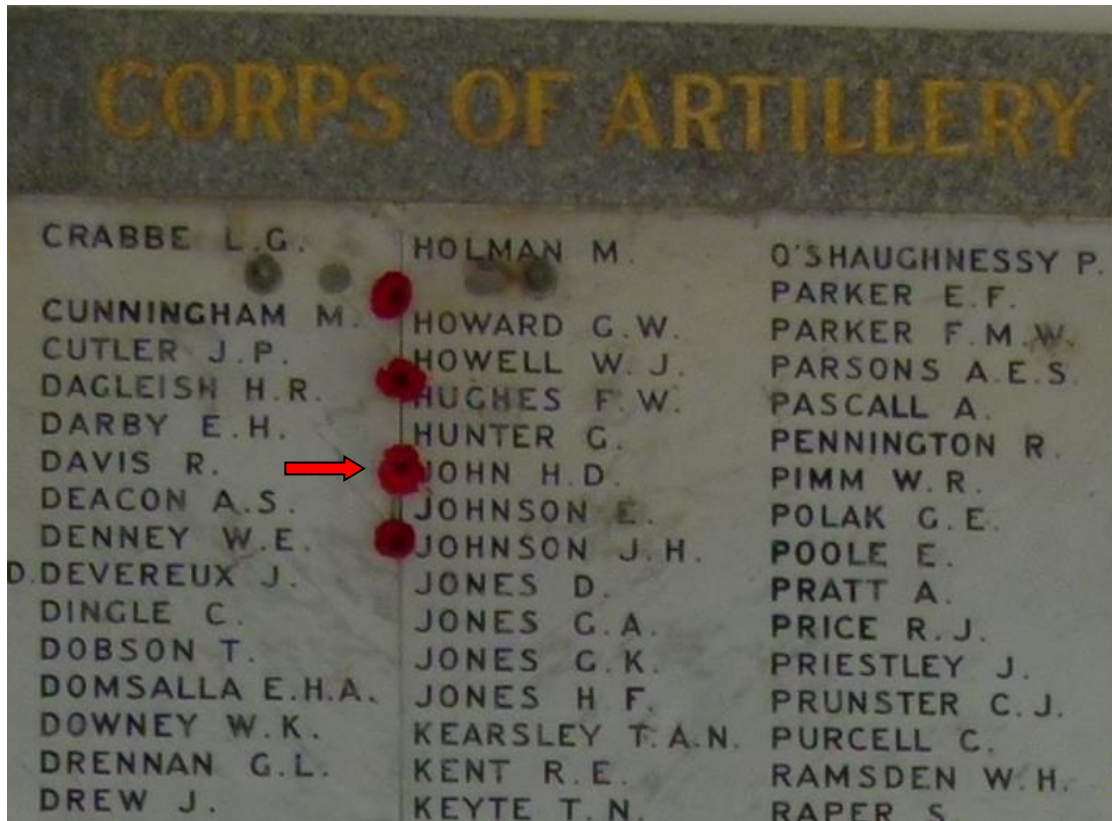
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

(Photos from Monument Australia – Kent Watson/Sandra Tattersall/Graeme Saunders)





Corps of Artillery Panel (Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)



Gunner H. D. John is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 15.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Hugh John is remembered on the Greenhill Grammar School War Memorial located in The Green Hill School, Heywood Lance, Tenby, Wales.



Greenhill Grammar School War Memorial (Photo from War Memorials Online)

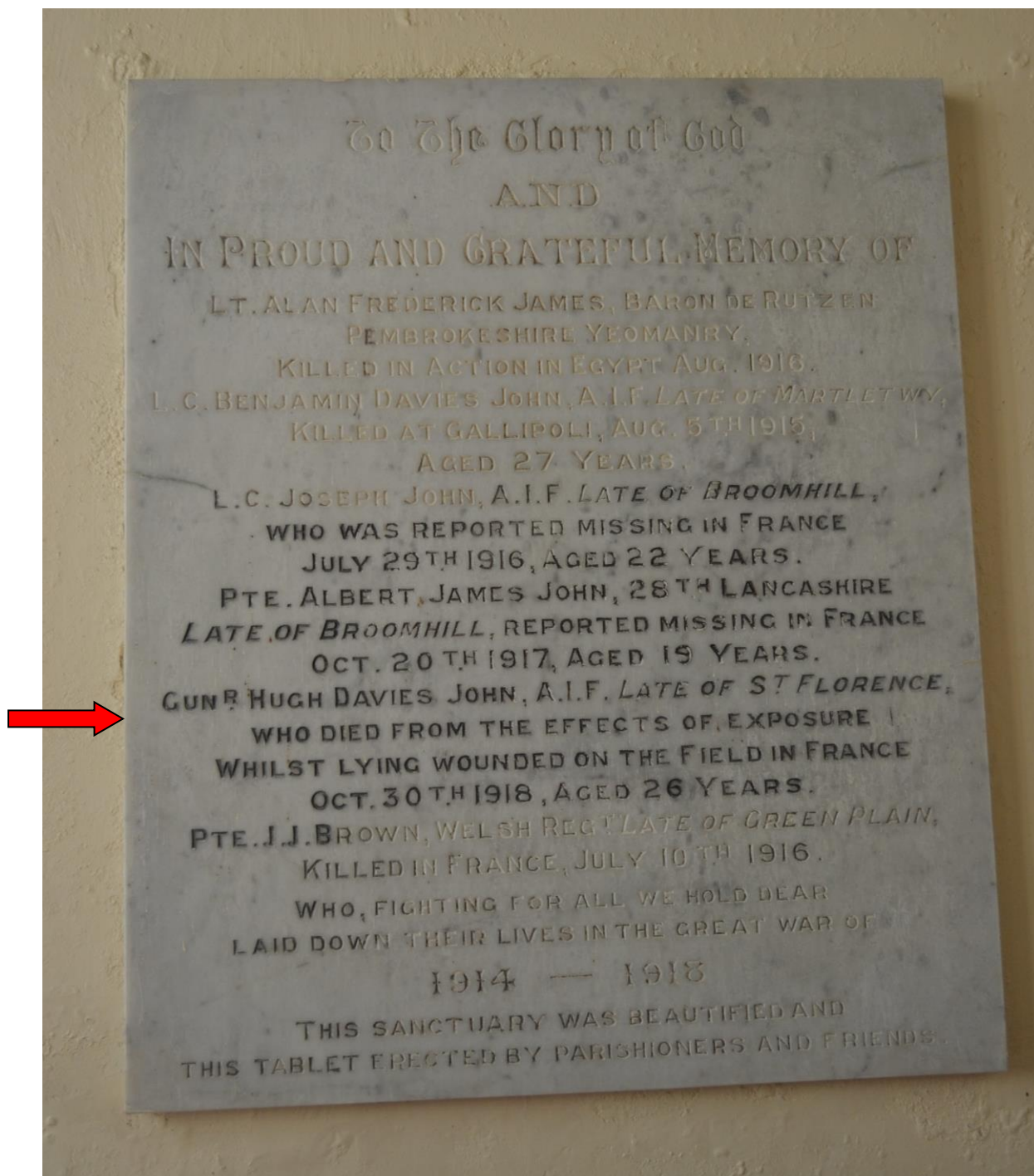
Hugh John is remembered on the St. Florence War Memorial which is located in the Churchyard of St. Florence, South Pembrokeshire, Wales.



St. Florence War Memorial (Photos from War Memorials Online)



Gunner Hugh Davies John is remembered on the Minwear Memorial which is located inside St. Womar Church, Minwear, Wales & is dedicated in memory of the men of the parish who fell in the Great War.

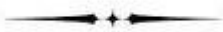


Minwear War Memorial (Photo courtesy of Deborah Tilley)

GUNR. HUGH DAVIES JOHN, A.I.F. LATE OF ST. FLORENCE
WHO DIED FROM THE EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE
WHILST LYING WOUNDED ON THE FIELD IN FRANCE
OCT. 30TH 1918, AGED 26 YEARS.

(76 pages of Gunner Hugh Davies John'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



Australian soldiers "somewhere" in France.

The picture, which was taken on a summer's day, shows, reading from left to right—
Front row: Drivers H. H. Hopkinson (Vic.), J. M. Hutchinson (N.S.W.), O. Brown (N.S.W.), N. M. Nixon (N.S.W.), J. W. Rickerby (W.A.). Back row: Driver H. D. John (W.A.), Gunner B. Berecrys (N.S.W.), Drivers F. Slater (Vic.) and H. C. Rutherford (Vic.).

(*Australian Town & Country Journal*, Sydney, NSW – 8 August, 1917)

AUSTRALIANS SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE



AUSTRALIANS SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE.

Top Row.—H. D. Johns (West Australia), B. Berereze (N.S.W.), F. Slater (Victoria), H. C. Rutherford (Victoria).

Sitting.—H. H. Hopkinson (Victoria), J. Hutchinson (N.S.W.), W. M. Nixon (N.S.W.), W. J. K. Rickerby (West Australia). ———

(*Punch*, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 August, 1917)

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

JOHN – Gunner Hugh Davies John, Australian Imperial Force (late of Elm-grove, St. Florence, Pembrokeshire), died at the Red Cross Hospital, Sittingbourne, on October 30th, from wounds received a few days previously in France. Funeral at Minwere, on Tuesday, at Two p.m.

(*Western Mail*, Cardiff, South Glamorgan, Wales – 4 November, 1918)

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

W.A. ROLL OF HONOUR

WOUNDED

Gnr. Hugh Davies John, England, second occasion

(*Kalgoorlie Miner*, Western Australia – 23 November, 1918)

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

Died of Other Causes

H. D. John (England)

(*Sunday Times*, Perth, Western Australia – 1 December, 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)

Gunner H. D. John does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St. Womar Churchyard, Minwear, Wales

St. Womar Churchyard, Minwear, Wales contains only one Commonwealth War Grave.



Minwear Church *(Photo by welshbabe)*

Photo of Gunner H. D. John's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Womar Churchyard, Minwear, Wales.



(Photo courtesy of Deborah Tilley)