

**Havelock Cemetery,
Southall, Greater London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2725 PRIVATE

W. H. READ

50TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

22ND JANUARY, 1917 Age 25

*One Thing
Death Cannot Sever
Love And Remembrance
Lasts Forever*

William Herbert READ

William Herbert Read was born at Caurnamont, River Murray, South Australia on 13th March, 1891 to parents Henry & Bridget Jessie Read (nee Delahunty). His birth was registered in Talunga, South Australia to Henry & Jessie Read.

William Herbert Read attended school at Purnong, South Australia. The South Australian School Admissions Register recorded William Read (born 6 March, 1891) being admitted on 13th September, 1897 & discharged on 28th March, 1902. His father was Henry Read, Labourer. (School name not listed on Ancestry). The South Australian School Admissions Register recorded William Read (born 6 March, 1891) being admitted on 7th April, 1902 & discharged on 13th December, 1905. His father was Henry Read, Labourer. (School name not listed on Ancestry).

William Herbert Read was a 25 year old, single, Telegraph Operator from Eurola, South Australia when he enlisted at Adelaide, South Australia on 7th July, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Bridget Read, Mannum, South Australia. William Read stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with 23rd Light Horse for 9 months & was still serving. According to information supplied by his mother for the Roll of Honour William's calling was "Signal Porter East-West Railways."

Private William Herbert Read was posted to "C" Company, 2nd Depot Battalion on 7th July, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 50th Battalion at Mitcham on 27th September, 1916.

Private William Herbert Read, Service number 2725, embarked from Adelaide, South Australia (*Note: as per Embarkation Roll & Casualty Form – Active Service, however one of the Statement of Service forms & Purport form recorded he departed from Fremantle, Western Australia on 23rd October, 1916 on A.16 Port Melbourne*) on HMAT *Port Melbourne (A16)* on 23rd October, 1916 with the 50th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 28th December, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private William Herbert Read was admitted to 2nd Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Southall, London, England on 11th January, 1917 sick with Pneumonia. He was reported to be seriously ill on 15th January, 1917.

Base Records advised Mrs B. Read, Mannum, South Australia, on 19th January, 1917 that her son Private William H. Read was dangerously ill with Pneumonia. She was advised on 24th January, 1917 that her son had been admitted to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital on 15th January.

50th Battalion

The 50th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 26 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were veterans from the 10th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 10th, the 50th was predominantly composed of men from South Australia. The battalion became part of the 13th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division and was dubbed "Hurcombe's Hungry Half Hundred", after its first CO, Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hurcombe.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private William Herbert Read died on 22nd January, 1917 at 2nd Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Southall, London, England from Lobar Pneumonia & Heart failure.

A death for William H. Read, aged 25, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private William Herbert Read was buried on 25th January, 1917 in Havelock Cemetery, Southall, Greater London, England – Grave No. 11 Cross Section.

Base Records wrote to Mrs B. Read on 20th April, 1920 with the following: *"With reference to my communication of the 17th October, 1917, regarding the regrettable loss of your son the late No. 2725 Private W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from Grave No. 11, Cross Section, Southall Cemetery, and re-interred in grave No. 1 Cross Section 2, of the same Cemetery. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain."*

Private William Herbert Read's place of burial is now recorded by CWGC as Plot number X2.1. and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private William Herbert Read contains a request from the Red Cross on behalf of the relatives to obtain details of the sufferings, death and burial. K. M. Fletcher, Australian Red Cross Store, replied with the following: *"I have not been able to glean much regarding young Read but have had a talk with the Sister who nursed him to-day. Everything possible was done for him. We had a special day nurse and special night nurse and Sister told me his Doctor was most attentive, and that everything possible in the way of nourishment was plentifully supplied, but that he was very very ill when he came in, and every means failed to bring the temperature down, moreover he was very despondent about himself from the first, and several times said to Sister "Oh Sister I know I'll never get better." Strange to say he never lost his appetite, and took his nourishment well right to the last. Sister says he never as far as she knows mentioned his people, but may have done to the Padre who used to come over from Harefield to visit him. He had a Military funeral. The body was taken to the Cemetery on a gun carriage the firing party following with Arms reversed and then his medical officer, some members of the unit and a number of patients bringing up the rear, after the firing of the volley the "Last Post" was sounded."*

F. P. Keats, Solicitor, Orroroo, South Australia, wrote to Base Records on 1st June, 1917 with the following letter: *"I have been instructed by Miss Ellenor Gertrude Hall of Eurelia in the State of South Australia, the sole Executrix of William Herbert Read a Private No 2725 in the 50 Battalion who died at London England on the 22nd day of January 1917 to write to & claim on behalf of the Estate in which she is the Sole Beneficiary all the goods & chattels left by the said deceased which would be un your charge & custody. My client is particularly anxious concerning a certain Wristlet Watch & a ring belonging to the deceased & I would be glad if in your reply to this note, you would inform me, if such articles are with the other belongings. Trusting you will afford me an early reply herein & I will produce any evidence of Title to such belongings you require on request therefore."*

Base Records replied to F. P. Keats, Esq., Solicitor, Orroroo, South Australia, on 12th July, 1917: *"With reference to your communication of the 1st ult., concerning the case of the late No. 2725 Private W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, I am now in receipt of certain personal effects from abroad, which I am holding against the time you supply me with sufficient evidence in support of the claim of Miss Ellenor Gertrude Hall of Eurelia, to be the sole beneficiary. A certified copy of deceased's Will or Probate will meet the case."*

F. P. Keats, Solicitor, Orroroo, South Australia, replied to Base Records on 18th July, 1917: *"Referring to your letter of the 12th inst re No 2725 Private W. H. Read 50th Battalion I herewith forward you Probate of the Will of the said Deceased showing my Client Miss Ellenor Gertrude Hall of Eurelia sole Executrix & beneficiary under the said Will. If you forward me the personal effects I will deliver same as desired & forward you receipt therefore as you may desire."*

Base Records replied to F. P. Keats, Esq., Solicitor, Orroroo, South Australia, on 1st August, 1917 with *"I return herewith the Probate of the Will of the late No. 2725 Private W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, which has been noted. I am transmitting per separate registered post one package of personal effects which is not to hand, as per inventory enclosed, and I shall be glad if you will acknowledge receipt on the printed form forwarded herewith."*

F. P. Keats signed as receipt of one package of personal effects of the late No. 2725 Private W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, on 18th April, 1917 & 23rd April, 1918.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

IN THE SUPREME COURT

TESTAMENTARY CAUSES JURISDICTION

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me WILLIAM HERBERT READ Telegraph Operator now on active service of Eurelia in the State of South Aus made the 21st day of Oct 1916 I REVOKE all other Wills made by me I APPOINT ELLENOR GERTRUDE HALL of Eurelia to be my Executrix and direct that my funeral and testamentary expenses and all my debts shall be paid as soon as conveniently may be after my decease I GIVE unto DEVISE & BEQUEATH unto ELLENOR GERTRUDE HALL of Eurelia absolutely all my property both real & personal whatsoever & wheresoever IN WITNESS whereof I the said WILLIAM HERBERT READ have to this my last Will and testament set my hand the 21st day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and sixteen - W. H. Read - SIGNED by the said William Herbert Read the testator on the day and year aforesaid in the presence of us present at the same time who at his request in his presence and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses.

Alfred Metters S. A. Bowker. --

The above Will of William Herbert Read late of Eurelia in the State of South Australia - Telegraph Operator, a member of the Australian Imperial Forces deceased who died at London in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland on the 22nd day of January 1917 was proved in the Supreme Court of South Australia on the fourteenth day of March 1917 by ELLENOR GERTRUDE HALL of Eurelia aforesaid Spinster, the sole Executrix therein named.

DATED this 14th day of March 1917

W. T. Stuart.

Registrar

Court No. 23222

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

Base Records contacted Mrs B. Read, Mannum, South Australia on 5th May, 1921 stating she was noted as the registered next-of-kin but desired to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked if his father was still alive due to 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.

Mrs B. Read replied to Base Records on 30th May, 1921 advising that his father was still living – Mr H. Read, Mannum, PO. River Murray. The eldest sister – Mrs Robert Hood, Borrika Bore, Paring Line & eldest brother – Mr C. H. J. Read, Mannum P.O., River Murray were also listed.

The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Co. Ltd, Sydney, NSW wrote to Base Records on 18th April, 1917 requesting a certificate of death with identity particulars for William Herbert Read, No. 2725, 50th Battalion, South Australia (as well as William James Hill, No. 3797, 6th Battalion, Victoria).

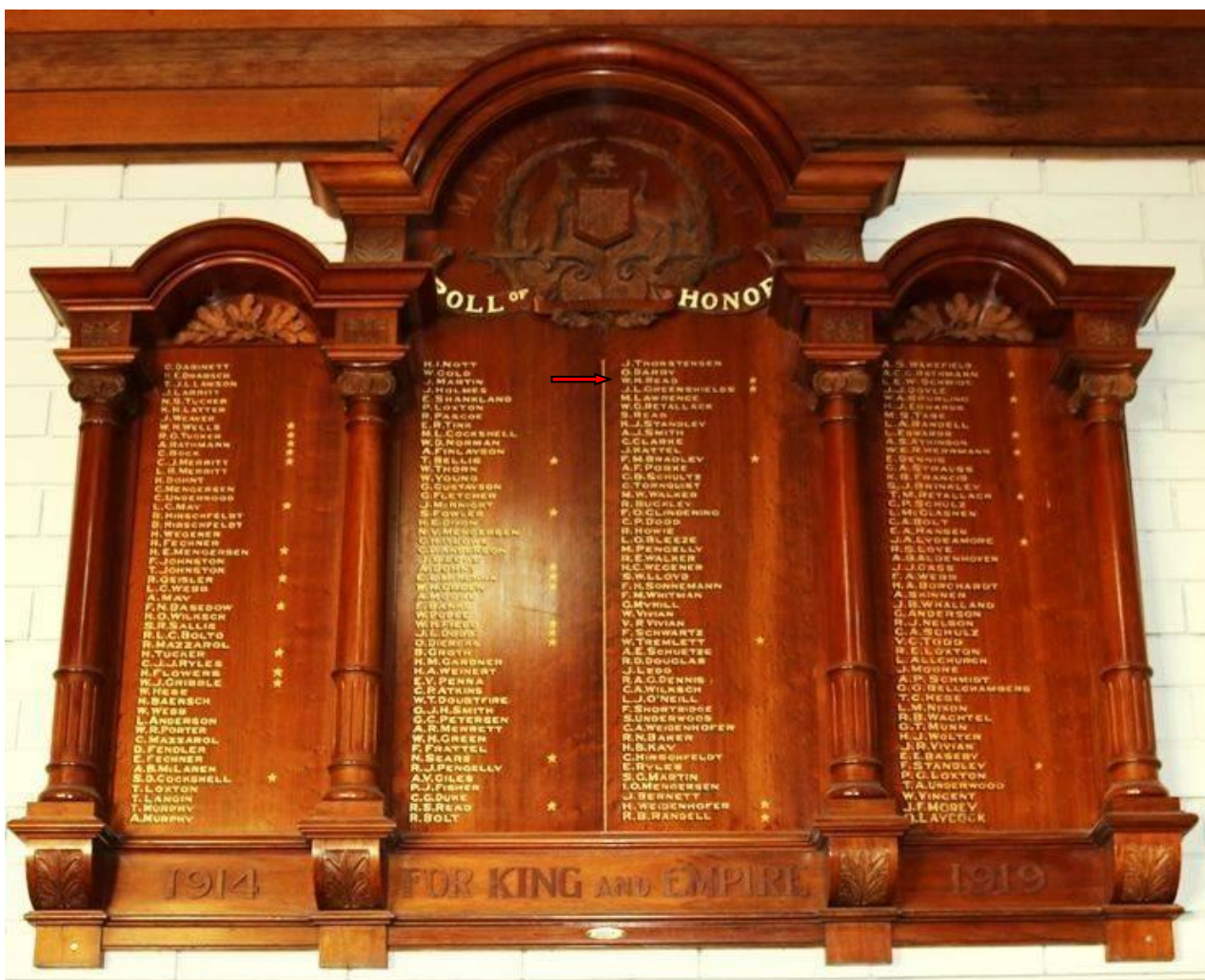
Base Records replied to The Actuary, Mutual Life and Citizens' Association on 25th April, 1917 enclosing a certificate of report of death of the late No. 2725, Private W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, together with identification particulars.

The Engineer-in-Chief & Acting Commissioner, Commonwealth Railways, wrote to Base Records on 3rd September, 1917 with the following: "*Information has been received that William Herbert Read, who, prior to his enlistment with the A.I.F. in June, 1916 was engaged as an Operation Porter at Port Augusta, was killed in action during the recent fighting in France. Will you kindly advise if conformation of the death of Read has been received.*"

Private William Herbert Read was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Read's father – Mr H. Read, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent 28 July, 1922 & Plaque sent 27 July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private William Herbert Read – service number 2725, aged 25, of 50th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Henry & Bridget Jessie Read, of Mannum, River Murray, South Australia.

W. H. Read is remembered on the Mannum Roll of Honour, located in Mannum Leisure Centre, 54 Adelaide Road, Mannum, South Australia.



Mannum Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Bryan Cole)

W. H. Read is remembered on the Mannum War Memorial, located at Randell Street, Mannum, South Australia.



Mannum War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Bryan Cole)



W. H. Read is remembered on the Mannum District Roll of Honour, located in Mannum RSL Club, River Lane, Mannum, South Australia.



Mannum District Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – Bryan Cole)

W. H. Read is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

Private W. H. Read is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 151.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(47 pages of Private William Herbert Read'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





THE LATE PTR. W. H. READ,

(*Observer*, Adelaide, South Australia – 17 February, 1917)



Newspaper Notices

EURELIA

July 24 – A rather unfortunate accident occurred at the local railway station to Porter W. H. Read. While in the execution of his duty Mr Read had the misfortune to slip to one side, and very easily misplaced his kneecap. Luckily for the temporarily injured person Ganger Page was close at hand and witnessed the accident. Mr Page very quickly and effectively rendered first aid to the sufferer, and he is now progressing favorably.

(*Daily Herald*, Adelaide, South Australia – 27 July, 1914)

FAREWELL AT EURELIA

On August 25 a well-attended social was held in the Eurelia Institute to bid farewell to Private W. H. Read and P. Brown, who are to leave for the front shortly. Eulogistic references were made to the departing soldiers by Messrs M. P. Daly, C. G. Wilks, F. Page, and E. H. Hall, after which the chairman (Mr Daly) presented each soldier with a wristlet watch. These were buttoned on by Misses E. G. Hall and Brown respectively. Dancing was afterwards indulged in, and supper was provided by the ladies. Violet Day was also celebrated un connection with the above, and the flowers sold realised about 12/.

(Daily Herald, Adelaide, South Australia – 6 September, 1916)

269th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dangerously Sick

2725 Pte W. H. READ, Mannum

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 30 January, 1917)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

READ – Died of pneumonia and heart failure (London), January 22, Private W. H. Read, third beloved son of H. and J. Read, Mannum (late of Cournamont), aged 25 years and 10 months (late of Commonwealth railway). “May he rest with Thee, sweet Jesus, In Thy own sweet sacred heart.” – Inserted by his sorrowing parents, sisters, and brothers.

(The Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, South Australia – 1 February, 1917)

RETURN THANKS

Mr and Mrs H. READ and FAMILY, Mannum and Miss GERTIE HALL, Eurelia, tender their sincere THANKS to all kind relatives, friends, and neighbours for telegrams, letters, cards and personal expressions of sympathy, in the loss of their dear son, brother, and sweetheart, Private William Herbert Read, who died in London, January 22.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 8 February, 1917)

ROLL OF HEROES

CASUALTY LIST NO. 271

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Died of Sickness

2725, Pte W. H. READ, Mannum (Jan 22)

(Daily Herald, Adelaide, South Australia – 9 February, 1917)

DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

READ – On the 22nd January (London), of pneumonia and heart failure, Private W. H. Read, Mannum, late of Eurelia and Commonwealth Railways.

To-day as I glance at your photo,
In likeness so kind and true,
Do you know how my heart is aching
And longing, dear one for you.

Loved by all who knew him. – Inserted by his loving friend, Gerr.

(*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 10 February, 1917)

THE LATE PTE W. H. READ

EURELIA, February 7 – Regret was expressed in the Eurelia district when news was received of the death of Pte W. H. Read, third son of Mr and Mrs Read, of Mannum. Pte Read was porter at the local railway station for about three years. His genial and obliging disposition made him popular. Pte Read resigned his position in the S.A. Railway



THE LATE PTE W. H. READ,

Service to take up a position as operating porter on the East-West Railway, where he remained for almost a year. He enlisted on June 9, and sailed for the front on October 23. He was taken ill shortly after arriving in England, and was sent to a London Hospital on January 15 suffering from pneumonia, which in addition to heart failure, caused his death on January 25. Two brother, Ptes C. H. and R. S. Read are serving with the forces.

(*Observer*, Adelaide, South Australia – 17 February, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

READ – In loving memory of Pte W. H. Read, died of illness on the 22nd January, 1917.

I pictured your safe returning,
I longed to clasp your hand;
But God has postponed our meeting, Will,
It will be in a better land.

-Inserted by his loving friend Gert.

(*The Register*, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 January, 1918) & (*The Journal*, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 January, 1918)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

READ —In fond and loving memory of Private W. H. Read, third beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Read, Mannum, who died at Southall Military Hospital, January 22, 1917.

Our thoughts they often wander to a soldier's grave,
Your name is often spoken in the home you died to save;
For our hearts are still united with the same fond love for you,
And loving thoughts are cherished of one so brave and true.
Your cheery sunny countenance will not from memory fade,
Nor yet will we forget the noble sacrifice you made,
And when our hearts are sore for you we seem to hear you say,
'Break not your hearts, dear parents, we will? meet on the eternal day.'

—Inserted by his loving parents.

READ —In fond and loving memory of our dear brother, Private W. H. Read, third beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Read, Mannum, who died at Southall Military Hospital, January 22, 1917.

We often think of you, dear brother, when we are all alone,
For memory is the only friend that grief can call its own;
So dearly loved, so sadly missed.

—Inserted by his loving sister and brothers, Alice, Jack, and Charlie, on active service.

READ —In loving memory of our dear brother, Will, who died in England of pneumonia, January 22, 1917.

We pictured your safe returning,
And longed to clasp your hand,
But God has postponed our meeting, dear Will,
It will be in a better land.

—Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Jane and Jack Hood.

(*The Advertiser*, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 January, 1918) & (*Chronicle*, Adelaide, South Australia – 26 January, 1918)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

READ -In sad and loving memory of our dear son, No. 2725, Private W. H. Read 50th Battalion, who died at 2nd Auxiliary Hospital, England, 22 January, 1917.

Our hearts are aching for you, dear son;
We seem to hear you say -
"Don't break your hearts, dear loved ones,
We will meet again some day "

Inserted by his loving parents, Mannum.

READ-In loving memory of our dear brother, No. 2725, Private W H Read, 50th Battalion.

Two sad years have gone past
Since our great sorrow fell.
And in our hearts we mourn the loss
Of him we loved so well

- Inserted by his sorrowing sister and brothers, Alice, Jack, and Charlie, on active service.

READ-In loving memory of our dear brother, Will, who died in England January 22, 1917.

Just two years have now gone past
Since that great sorrow fell.
Yet in our hearts we mourn the loss
Of him we loved so well.

-Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, _____ and Jack Mood, Mount Wedge.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 January, 1919)

HEROES OF THE GREAT WAR

READ.—In loving memory of our dear son, No. 2725, Pte. W. H. Read, 50th Battalion, who died in England, January 22, 1917. His memory lives within the hearts of those who knew his worth.—Inserted by his loving parents, H. J. Read, Mannum.

READ.—In loving memory of our dear brother, No. 2725, Pte. W. H. Read, of 50th Battalion, who died in England, January 22, 1917. Loved in life, honored in death, cherished in memory.—Inserted by his loving sister and brothers, Alice, Jack, and Charlie (Late A.I.F.).

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 January, 1920)

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)

Private W. H. Read has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone with the following inscription:

One Thing Death Cannot Sever

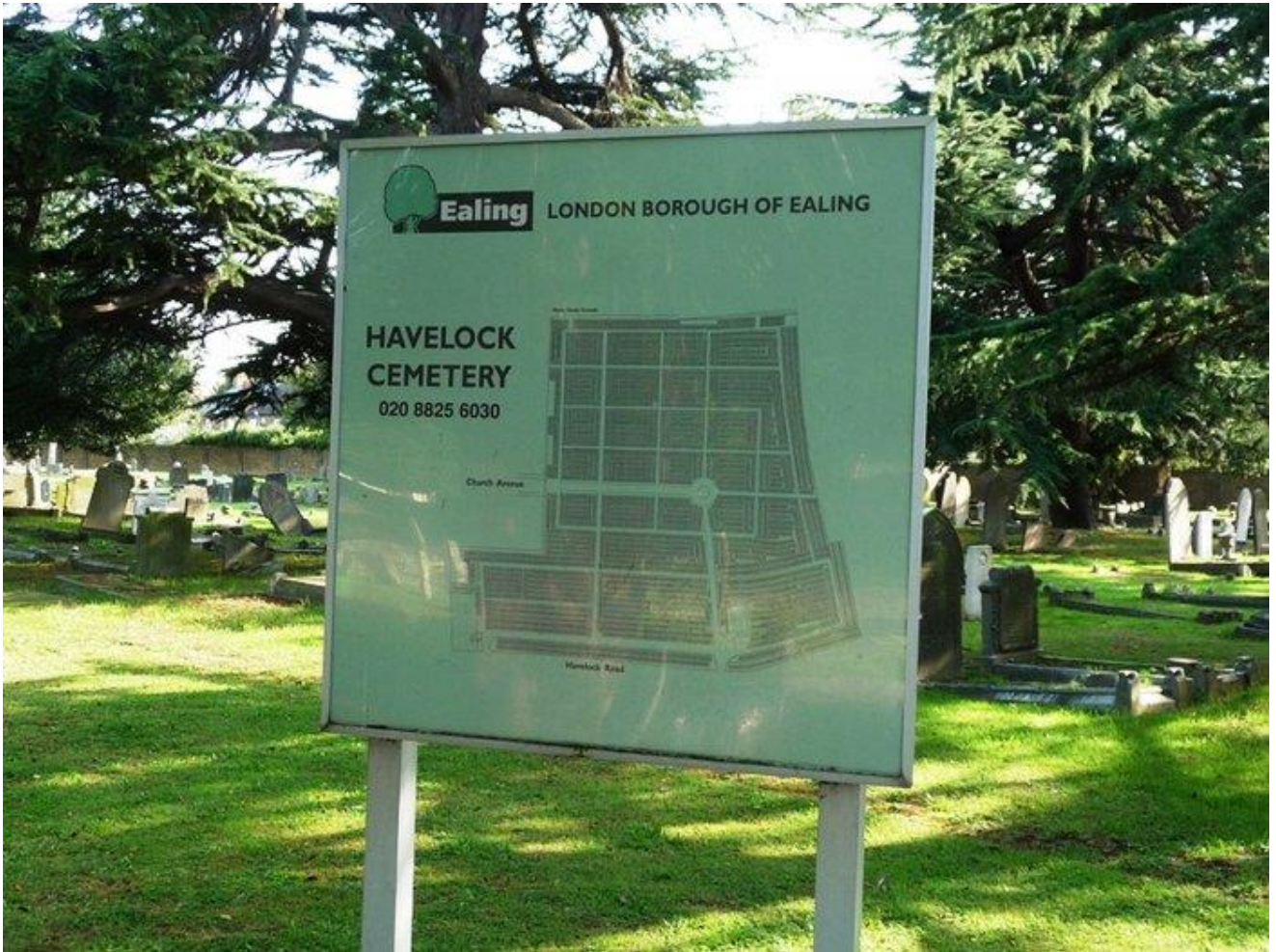
Love And Remembrance Lasts Forever

Havelock Cemetery (also known as Havelock Norwood Cemetery, Southall, Greater London, England)

There are 83 Commonwealth War Graves located in Havelock Cemetery, Southall – 39 from World War 1 & 44 from World War 2.



Havelock Cemetery – Church Avenue Entrance



(Photo from Find a Grave – DGLISH 2010)



Four WW1 Australian War Graves – Read, Alexander, Sanderson & Bennett

(Photo courtesy of Kevin – Portsmouth Remembers)

Photo of Private W. H. Read's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Havelock Cemetery, Southall, London, England.



(Photo courtesy of Kevin – Portsmouth Remembers)



Four WW1 Australian War Graves – Read, Alexander, Sanderson & Bennett

(Photo courtesy of Kevin – Portsmouth Remembers)