

Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1766A LANCE CORPORAL

L. SKIDMORE

2ND BN. AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS

21ST NOVEMBER, 1916

Leslie SKIDMORE

Leslie Skidmore was born at Clifton Hill, Melbourne, Victoria in 1892 to parents Henry & Mary Skidmore (nee Murgatroyd).

Leslie Skidmore attended Fairfield State School & Wesley College, Melbourne, Victoria.

The 1914 & 1915 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Bourke, subdivision of Ivanhoe, Victoria recorded Leslie Skidmore, Clerk, of Rose Street.

Leslie Skidmore was a 22 year old, single, Clerk from Ross Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria when he enlisted on 1st February, 1915. He was attached to Q Company, Depot Infantry, Leslie Skidmore was discharged due to being medically unfit on 5th February, 1915.

Leslie Skidmore was a 23 year old, single, Clerk from Ross Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria when he re-enlisted on 18th May, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1766 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Henry Skidmore, Ross Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria. Leslie Skidmore stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with the A.I.F. Infantry Depot for 5 days but had been discharged as medically unfit.

Leslie Skidmore was posted to Training Depot on 28th May, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 2nd Reinforcements of 24th Battalion on 13th July, 1915.

Private Leslie Skidmore embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Demosthenes (A64)* on 16th July, 1915 with the 6th Infantry Brigade, 24th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Reinforcements.

Private Leslie Skidmore was taken on strength of 24th Battalion at Gallipoli on 29th September, 1915.

Private Leslie Skidmore was wounded at Gallipoli on 1st December, 1915. He was admitted to Hospital Ship *Oxfordshire* on 2nd December, 1915 with GSW (gunshot wound/s) to left arm. Private Skidmore was admitted to No. 1 Auxiliary Hospital at Heliopolis on 8th December, 1915 with Rheumatism.

Private Leslie Skidmore was admitted to Overseas Base at Ghezireh on 3rd January, 1916. He was transferred to Zeitoun on 28th January, 1916.

Private Leslie Skidmore was written up for being late for 7am Parade while posted at Base Details, Zeitoun on 28th February, 1916. He was awarded 3days C.B. (confined to Barracks).

Private Leslie Skidmore was transferred to & taken on strength of 2nd Pioneer Battalion at Moascar on 15th March, 1916.

2nd Pioneer Battalion

The 2nd Pioneers were established on 10 March 1916, at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt, and were subsequently assigned to the 2nd Division. Trained as infantrymen, they were also tasked with some engineer functions, with a large number of personnel possessing trade qualifications from civilian life. As such, they were designated as pioneer units. In early 1916, the Australian Army was reorganised ahead of its transfer to the Western Front in Europe. A total of five pioneer battalions were raised by the AIF at this time, with one being assigned to each of the five infantry divisions that the Australians deployed to the battlefield in France and Belgium. Tasked with digging trenches, labouring, constructing strong points and light railways, and undertaking battlefield clearance, the troops assigned to the pioneers required construction and engineering experience in addition to basic soldiering skills.

(Pioneer Battalion information from Wikipedia)

Private Leslie Skidmore proceeded to join B.E.F. from Alexandria on 19th March, 1916. He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 26th March, 1916.

Private Leslie Skidmore was promoted to Lance Corporal (Signaller) on 18th July, 1916 with 2nd Pioneer Battalion.

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was wounded in action. He was evacuated to Hospital on 1st August, 1916. Lance Corporal Skidmore was admitted to 4th General Hospital at Camiers on 4th August, 1916 with GSW (gunshot wound/s) to eye & skull. He was transferred to Calais on 12th August, 1916 & embarked for England on 13th August, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Dieppe*.

War Diary – 2nd Australian Pioneer Battalion

Poizieres

1st August, 1916

Extending and deepening CENTRE WAY through POZIERES.

Laid out and dug to average depth of 3ft about 600 yds of ADVANCED TRENCH between our front line and enemy line NW of BAUAUME ROAD on the N.E. of POZIERES. Guided infantry party on to the job to continue & deepen it.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was admitted to 3rd Northern General Hospital at Sheffield, England (no date recorded) with GSW to eyes & skull – severe.

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was reported to be progressing favourably on 1st November, 1916.

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore died at 3.20 am on 21st November, 1916 at 3rd Northern General Hospital (Royal Infirmary) at Sheffield, England from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wounds to both eyes & skull & Meningitis.

A death for Leslie Skidmore, aged 23, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Sheffield, Yorkshire West Riding, England.

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was buried on 23rd November, 1916 in Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England. Due to the number of deaths and lack of available space in some cemeteries, numerous burials took place in what are known as common or mass graves. Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was buried in a one of these common or mass graves. Behind the Cross of Sacrifice in plot JJ is a Screen Wall commemorating those First World War casualties whose graves could not be marked by headstones, most of them buried in the plot of ground immediately in front of it. A Granite Memorial Cross was erected by the Royal British Legion at the common grave site where Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was buried – Memorial F9. "C" 4. The names of those buried in this plot were engraved on the Granite Memorial Cross however, the names on the Granite Memorial Cross are not included on the CWGC Screen Wall. His death is still acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Skidmore's father – Mr H. Skidmore, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent September, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

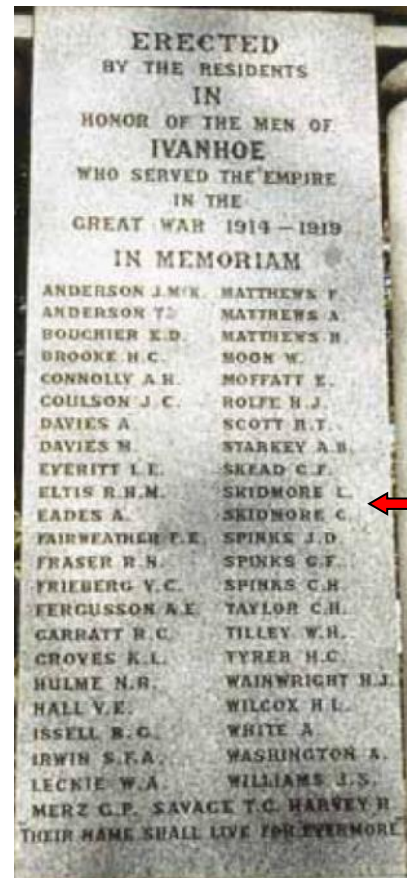
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore – service number 1766A, of 2nd Battalion, Australian Pioneers. He was the son of Henry and Mary Skidmore, of 24 Rose Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria, Australia.

Lance Corporal L. Skidmore is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 173.



Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

L. Skidmore & his brother C. Skidmore are both remembered on the Ivanhoe War Memorial, located in Memorial Park, Upper Heidelberg & Studley Roads, Ivanhoe, Victoria.



Ivanhoe War Memorial

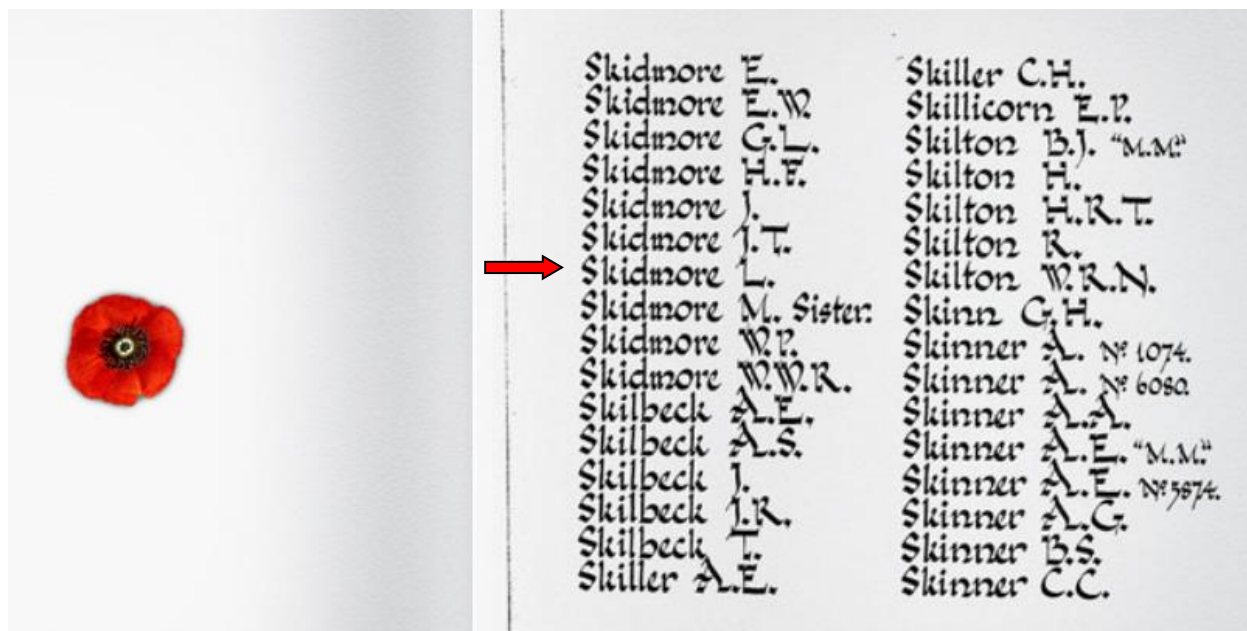
L. Skidmore is remembered on the Wesley Collegians Roll of Honour, located in Wesley College Memorial Chapel, Prahran, Wesley College, Melbourne, Victoria.



Roll of Honour in Wesley College Memorial Chapel, Prahran (Photos from Monument Australia)



L. Skidmore is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.



(44 pages of Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore'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) & National Archives



Connected to Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore:

Younger Brother Driver Clifton Skidmore – 157, 7th Battalion. Enlisted on 6th May, 1915 as a 21 year old Grocer. Embarked from Melbourne on RMS *Mooltan* on 18th May, 1915. Mentioned in Despatches in *London Gazette* – 20th June, 1916. Died 24th June, 1918 as a result of an accident with a water cart .Buried Ebbingham Military Cemetery, Ebbingham, France.



**Henry & Mary Skidmore & their children.
Leslie shown in middle back, Clifton shown back right.**



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

124th LIST ISSUED

Wounded

Pte L. SKIDMORE, Ivanhoe

(The Bendigo Independent, Victoria – 20 December, 1915)

GALLANT AUSTRALIANS

THIS WEEK'S CASUALTIES

WOUNDED

Corporal L. Skidmore, Ivanhoe

(Northcote Leader, Victoria – 14 October, 1916)

THIS WEEK'S CASUALTIES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Corporal L. Skidmore, Ivanhoe

(Northcote Leader, Victoria – 9 December, 1916)

Wesley College Notes

Our Honoured Dead

The following names have been inscribed upon the marble memorial tablets at the entrance to Adamson Hall, The years indicate the dates of enrolment as pupils at the College.....

L. Skidmore (1906)

(Spectator and Methodist Chronicle, Melbourne, Victoria – 18 April, 1917)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Due to the number of deaths and lack of available space in some cemeteries, numerous burials took place in what are known as common or mass graves. Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore was buried in a one of these common or mass graves. A Granite Memorial Cross was erected at the common grave by the Royal British Legion, on which the names of casualties who were buried there were engraved.

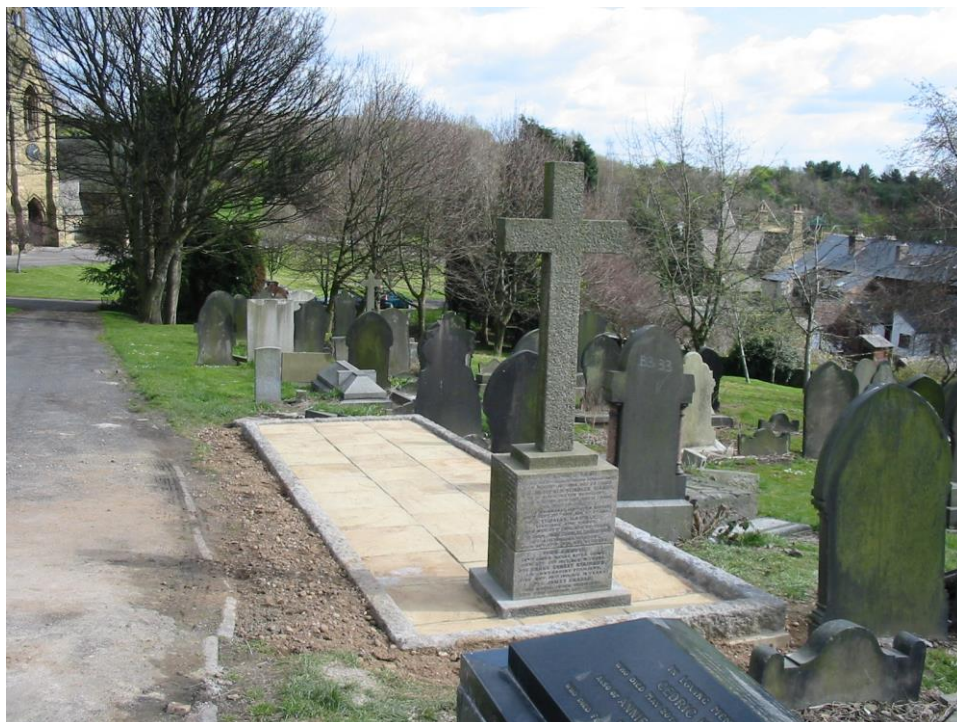
Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England

During the First World War there were two substantial war hospitals in Sheffield, the Wharncliffe, in the Wadsley Asylum, and the 3rd Northern General, housed in 15 separate buildings. The city, a centre for war industry during the Second World War, suffered heavy enemy air-raids during the Blitz with 600 people killed in a single raid in December 1940. Sheffield (Burngreave) Cemetery contains scattered war graves of both wars. Behind the Cross of Sacrifice in plot JJ is a Screen Wall commemorating those First World War casualties whose graves could not be marked by headstones, most of them buried in the plot of ground immediately in front of it. In front of the Screen Wall are a number of Special Memorial headstones for Second World War casualties buried elsewhere in the cemetery whose graves could not be marked. In all, the cemetery contains 235 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 57 from the Second. *(Information from CWGC)*



(Photo by Paula Lloyd – Find a Grave)

Photo of Lance Corporal Leslie Skidmore's name on the Granite Memorial Cross in Burngreave Cemetery, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England.



Granite Memorial Cross (Photos courtesy of Christine Steers)



(Photos courtesy of Wayne Tyke – taken 2019)



(Photo above courtesy of Wayne Tyke – taken 2019; below by Stephen Farnell – Find a Grave)



Corpl. LESLIE SKIDMORE

2nd Divisional Pioneers A.I.F.

Died Nov. 21st, 1916, Aged 23 Years

The CWGC was advised at the time of researching (2019) that the Cross on the Memorial was not attached (see photo below). CWGC have advised: “the cross will have been laid recumbent on the ground as a result of what is known as ‘topple testing’. This is a procedure undertaken by all local cemetery authorities in the UK, who regularly assess private memorials for safety. If any are viewed as possible health and safety hazards to the public, in that they could be pushed over and injure someone, then whether in the form of stone crosses, or any other privately owned memorial headstone of any shape or size, they are laid down recumbent on the graves. Today, we as the Commission are not responsible for the repair of the private memorials, such as the one concerned, however please be assured that this memorial will continue to be monitored during our scheduled 2-3 year inspection visits to ensure the legibility of the names.”



Granite Memorial Cross (Photos courtesy of Wayne Tyke – taken 2019)

Update – 24 April, 2022: The following photos were taken of the Granite Memorial Cross which now has the Cross re-attached.



(Photo courtesy of Wayne Bywater – 24 April, 2022)



(Photo courtesy of Wayne Bywater – 24 April, 2022)

Update – October, 2023: I was advised by Neil Jennions that the Memorial had been cleaned earlier this year by CWGC – EOHO Project (Eyes On, Hands On – where volunteers clean up CWGC Headstones & Memorials on behalf of the CWGC).

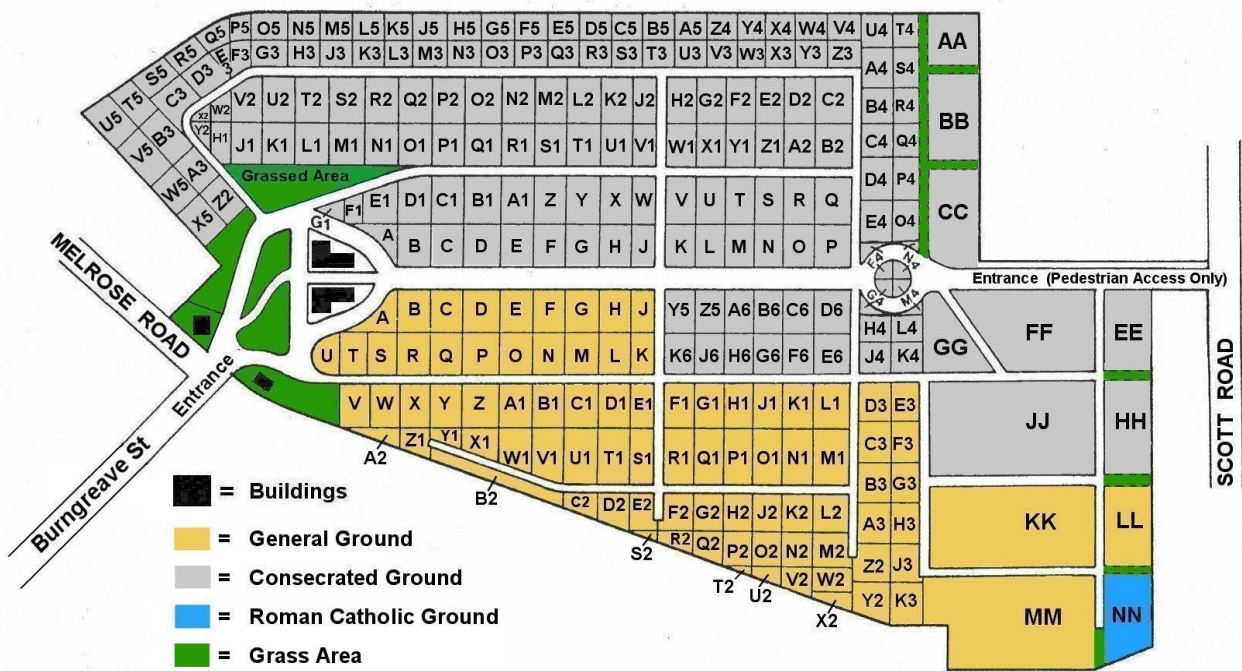


(Photo with permission from Neil Jennions – CWGC EOHO Volunteer for this section of the Cemetery)



Cross of Sacrifice & Screen Wall (Photo by Joaquin O’Ryan)

Burngreave Cemetery



(Photo from Meersbrook – Find a Grave)