

**All Saints Cemetery,
Nunhead, Greater London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2042 PRIVATE

R. L. WHITE

AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN CORPS

27TH AUGUST, 1916 Age 23

Not Dead

To Us That Loved Him

Not Lost

But Gone Before

Richard Leslie WHITE

Richard Leslie White was born on 4th February, 1894 at Cemetery Road, Warracknabeal, Victoria to parents Thomas and Ellen White (nee Urquhart). His birth was registered in 1894 in the district of Warracknabeal, Victoria. (Note: Richard listed his place of birth as Melbourne, Victoria on his Attestation Papers).

Thomas White, father of Richard Leslie White, died on 25th January, 1912. He was buried in Kojonup Cemetery, Western Australia.

Richard Leslie White was a 21 year old, single, Sleeper Hewer from Western Australia when he enlisted at Blackboy Hill, Western Australia on 26th January, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2042 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs E. White, Coombe Street, Collie, Western Australia.

Private Richard Leslie White was posted to 5th Reinforcements of 11th Battalion on 26th January, 1915.

Private Richard Leslie White embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 29th April, 1915 with the 11th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements.

Private Richard Leslie White was taken on strength of 11th Battalion at Dardanelles on 22nd June, 1915 from 5th Reinforcements.

Private Richard Leslie White disembarked at Alexandria on 7th January, 1916 from Empress of Britain (after the evacuation at Gallipoli).

Private Richard Leslie White was sent to Instructional School at Habieta from 6th February, 1916 & rejoined his Unit on 27th February, 1916.

Private Richard Leslie White was transferred from 11th Battalion to 3rd Infantry Brigade Machine Gun Company on 11th March, 1916. He was taken on strength of 3rd Machine Gun Company on 13th March, 1916 at Serapeum.

Private Richard Leslie White proceeded from Alexandria on 29th March, 1916 on HT *Corsican* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 5th April, 1916.

Private Richard Leslie White was reported Missing in France from 24th July, 1916 (as listed on Casualty Form – Active Service).

Private Richard Leslie White was admitted to 1st Field Ambulance on 23rd July, 1916 with Shrapnel wound/s to Skull. He was transferred to 6th M.A.C. the same day. Private White was transferred & admitted to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station on 23rd July, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) then transferred on 30th July, 1916 to 30th Ambulance Train.

3rd Machine Gun Company

Each Infantry Brigade had a Machine Gun Company under command. They were designated with the same number as the parent Brigade. The 3rd Brigade thus had the 3rd Machine Gun Company as part of "Brigade Troops" and the men in it were largely drawn from the Infantry Battalions in the Brigade, in this case, the 9th (Qld) 10th (SA), 11th (WA), and the 12th (Tas) Battalions.

Later in the war the Companies were aggregated into Machine Gun Battalions under Divisional command. However their employment was still on the basis of providing the formidable fire support that massed machine guns were capable of. The elements of the MG Battalions and Companies were allocated to sections of the line in detachments of varying sizes depending on the task, but generally as a minimum in pairs as a 'section'.

MG Companies and Battalions were equipped with the legendary Vickers Medium Machine Gun. This weapon was served by a crew of three and mounted on a tripod. It was not easily portable and was generally sited in a prepared

fixed position. Its direct counterpart on the German side was the Maxim 'Spandau' MG08, a weapon of similar appearance and capability.

(Information from Steve Larkins via VWMA)

War Diary - 3rd Machine Gun Company

Front Line – 22/7/16 to 25/7/16

Orders were received to attack Pozieres on night of 22nd – 23rd July. Attached is an Operation report covering the period 19th – 25th July.

Report on Operations connected with capturing Pozieres:

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Sunday 23rd inst was fairly quiet in the front line, No. 3 Section did some effective shooting at small bodies of the enemy retreating in Sq. 35 at about 1500. Capt Toslevin took two guns forward to X.5.C.9.8 where they were dug in. Other guns remained as they were 1250 rds were fired during the evening of the 23rd on enemy portions in X.5.b with good results. Heavy shelling, but few casualties to gunners.

Monday 24th inst At dawn the guns in the 2nd objective opened a severe fire on enemy reinforcements on the right flank & completely stopped them. The personnel of the guns in this line (excepting Nos 1 and 2) gave assistance during this day, and on the morning of the 25th inst., in carrying up bombs, water and ammunition to the Infantry, as well as carrying up their own rations.

During the night a continuous steady fire was applied from Black Watch Alley to the Area Sq. 35 & 36 C. & D. in the hopes of catching reinforcements.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Richard Leslie White was admitted to King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England on 1st August, 1916 with penetrating G.S.W. to Skull – severe. He was reported to be seriously ill on 23rd August, 1916.

Private Richard Leslie White died at 10 pm on 27th August, 1916 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England from wounds received in action in France – G.S.W. to Skull.

A death for Richard White, aged 23, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Base Records advised Mrs E. White, Coombe Street, Collie, Western Australia on 31st August, 1916 that her son Private Richard L. White who had previously been reported Missing was not Missing & had been admitted to Hospital.

Mrs E. White, "Glen Rose" Kojonup, wrote to Base Records on 1st September, 1916: *"I have just received advice that my son No 2042 Private R. L. White, 3rd Brigade Machine Gun Company (late 11th Battalion) has been reported missing. I would be grateful if you would forward me any further information to the above address as my letter was delayed in Collie Post Office."*

Mrs E. White was advised by Base Records on 2nd September, 1916 that her son Private Richard L. White was seriously ill with a gunshot wound to skull.

E. M. White, 12 Thomas St, West Perth sent a Telegram to Base Records on 6th September, 1916: *"Two nought four two White Machine Gun Section Eleventh Battalion Third Infantry wounded preciously reported Missing Wire condition and what Hospital please."* Another Telegram was sent by E. M. White on 8th September, 1916 – *"Re Lettergram sent Tuesday White Two Nought Four Two Waiting reply."*

Private Richard Leslie White was buried in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, London, England (no date recorded).

Base Records wrote to Mrs E. White, "Glen Rose" Kojonup, Western Australia on 20th April, 1920 with the following: *"With reference to my communication of 10th July, 1917, regarding the regrettable loss of your son, the late No. 2042 Private R. L. White, 3rd Machine Gun Company, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from Grave No. 32449 Square, 89, Nunhead Cemetery, Nunhead, and re-interred in Grave No. 9, Australian Section, Nunhead Cemetery, Nunhead. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain. The utmost care and attention is being devoted to the graves of our fallen soldiers, and photo graphs are being taken as soon as possible for transmission to next-of-kin."*

This is now recorded by Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Plot number 16.33431 I. and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Richard Leslie White requested in his Will dated 19th June, 1915 that in the event of his death the whole of his property & effects be given to T.R. White of Kojonup, Majongurup Farm, West Australia.

A War Pension was granted to Ellen White, "Glenrose" Kojonup, mother of the late Private Richard Leslie White, in the sum of 40/- fortnightly granted from 13th November, 1916 in lieu of 18th January, 1917.

Ellen White, "Glenrose" Kojonup, wrote to Base Records on 29th November, 1916 with the following letter: *"My son, No 2042 Pte R. L. White, 3 Mach Gun Coy (late 11th Batt) who died of wounds in King George Hospital London on Aug 27th 1916, was awarded a 1st Class Gunners Certificate. I would very much like to have it as I have not any of his Military belongings."*

Base Records replied to Mrs E. White on 13th December, 1916 stating *".... If the certificate you refer to was in his possession, it will in due course be returned together with any personal effects of sentimental value which he may have had with him on active service. Your change of address is noted."*

Base Records contacted Mrs E. White, Glen Rose, Kojonup, W.A., on 24th June, 1920 stating she was noted as the registered next-of-kin of the late No. 2042 Private R. L. White, 3rd Machine Gun Company, but in order that their files may be brought up to date desired to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked if his father was still alive. (Note: "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" 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.)

Base Records wrote to Headquarters, 5th Military District on 8th October, 1920 with the following: *"On the 24th June last, a communication was forwarded to Mrs Ellen White, of Glen Rose, Kojonup, W.A., asking her to advise me whether the father of the late No. 2042 Private R. L. White, 3rd Machine Gun Company, is still living, and if so, to furnish me with his present address. As no reply has so far been received I shall be obliged if you will endeavour to obtain the information required and advise me as soon as possible, as it is desired to dispose of the 1914/15 Star and other War Medals etc., issuable on account of the abovementioned late soldiers' service."*

Headquarters, 5th Military District, Perth, replied to Base Records on 8th November, 1920: *"In reply to your memorandum of 8th October, relative to the father of the late No. 2042 Private R. L. White, 3rd M.G.Coy. The Postmaster, Kojonup, was asked if he could furnish any particulars and reported as follows:- "In reply to your memo of 29th October, the father of the late No. 2042 Pte Richard Leslie White, 3rd Machine Gun Coy. has been dead some years. Mrs Ellen White, "Glen Rose" Kojonup, is mother of the late Pte R. L. White."*

Private Richard Leslie White was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private White's mother – Mrs E. White, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent August, 1921 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Richard Leslie White – service number 2042, aged 23, of 3rd Coy., Australian Machine Gun Corps. He was the son of Thomas and Ellen White of Kojonup, Western Australia.

R. L. White is remembered on the Kojonup War Memorial, located outside RSL Hall, Albany Highway & Spencer Street, Kojonup, Western Australia.



Kojonup War Memorial (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Harry Frochter)



R. L. White 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.

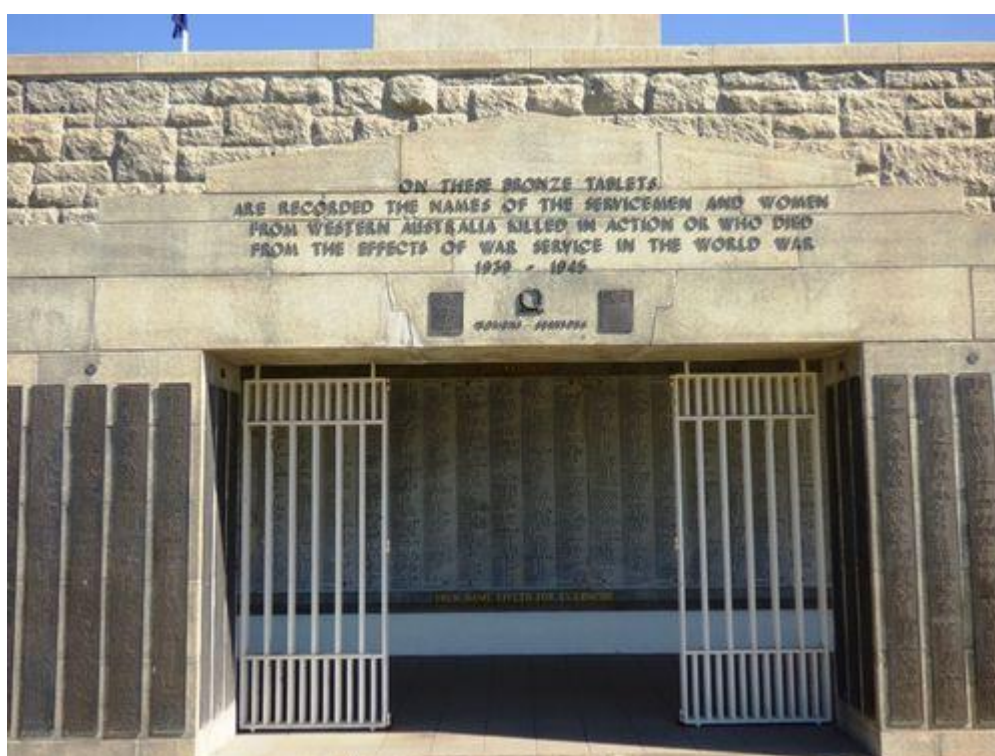
The heavy concrete foundations are supplemented by heavy brick walls which enclose an inner chamber or crypt. The walls surrounding the crypt are covered with The Roll of Honour; marble tablets which list under their units the names of more than 7,000 members of the services killed in action or as a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



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

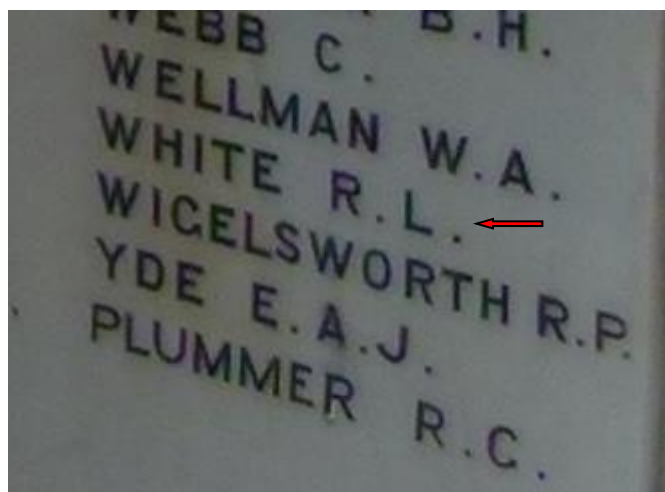
& (below) The Crypt with the Roll of Honour names

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





(Photo courtesy of Gordon Stuart)



Private R. L. White is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 179.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(59 pages of Private Richard Leslie White's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

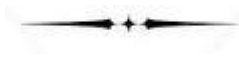
Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives





Private Richard Leslie White

(Photo with permission from Paul West)



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

TWO CASUALTY LISTS

...

The 200th list is as follows:-

WEST AUSTRALIA

MISSING

R. L. White, Collie

(Kalgoorlie Western Argus, Western Australia – 5 September, 1916)

KILLED IN ACTION

WHITE – On August 27, died of wounds, previously reported missing, Gunner Richard Leslie White, aged 23, the dearly loved brother of Don, Tom and Will, all on active service, also the dearly loved brother of L. Highams and brother-in-law of H. Highams and E. M. White.

Greater love hath no man that he lay down his life for his friends.

(The West Australian, Perth, W, Australia – 15 September, 1916) & (Western Mail, Perth, W. Australia – 22 September, 1916)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

212th and 213th CASUALTY LISTS

212th LIST

5th MILITARY DISTRICT

WOUNDED

R. L. White, Collie

(The West Australian, Perth, Western Australia – 16 September, 1916)

AUSTRALIANS IN ACTION

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

TWO CASUALTY LISTS

The 215th lists is as follows

WEST AUSTRALIA

DIED OF WOUNDS

R. L. White, Kojonup, previously reported wounded and seriously ill

(*Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, Western Australia – 26 September, 1916)

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HEROES



GUNNER R. L. WHITE, 11th
Bat. (Died of wounds. Mother
resides at Kojonup.)

(*Western Mail*, Perth, Western Australia – 29 September, 1916)

KILLED IN ACTION

WHITE – In loving memory of our dear brother, Gunner Richard Leslie White, 3rd Machine Gun Section, 11th Battalion, died of wounds received in action, somewhere in France.

His King and country called him,

The call was not in vain,

For on Britain's roll of honour

Your will find our hero's names.

-Inserted by his loving sisters, L. Highams and E. White.

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 27 August, 1917) & (*Western Mail*, Perth, W. Australia – 31 August, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

WHITE – In loving memory of our dear brother, Gunner Richard Leslie White, who died from wounds, August 27, 1916. Ever remembered.

Inserted by his loving brother Donald, on active service, and sister-in-law E. White.

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 27 August, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

Anzac Heroes

WHITE – In loving memory of Gunner Richard Leslie White, died from wounds received at Pozieres, August 27, 1916.

Time changes many things,

But memory like the ivy clings.

Inserted by his loving brother Donald, (returned) and sister, L. White.

(*The West Australian*, Perth, Western Australia – 27 August, 1919)

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 R. L. White does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Not Dead To Us That Loved Him

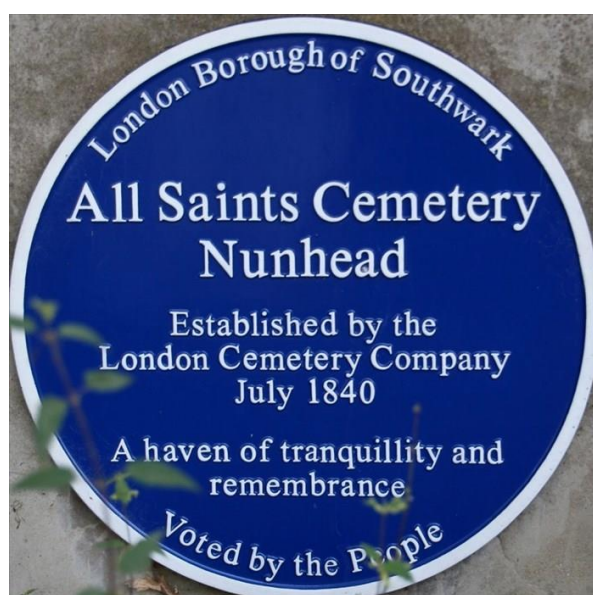
Not Lost But Gone Before

All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, Great London, England (also known as Nunhead Cemetery)

Nunhead (All Saints) Cemetery contains 592 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war. The majority are in three war graves plots; the United Kingdom plot (in Square 89) has 266 graves, the Australian plot (near the main entrance) has 23 and the Canadian plot (in Square 52, also containing New Zealand and South African burials) has 36. The graves in the Australian and Canadian plots are marked with individual headstones. The graves in the United Kingdom plot and the remaining war graves scattered throughout the cemetery could not be marked individually; the casualties buried in these graves are therefore commemorated by name on a Screen Wall inside the main entrance gate to the cemetery.

A second Screen Wall commemorates the 110 burials of the 1939-1945 war in a further war graves plot in Square 5 and elsewhere in the cemetery whose graves could not be marked by headstones.

There is also 1 Belgian burial of the 1914-1918 war and 7 Non-war Service burials, all commemorated on the Screen Wall. *(Information from CWGC)*



All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead



All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J00776

The Australian area at Nunhead Cemetery. The grave in the centre front is 27 Lance Corporal Eric Lyndon Lowe, 18th Battalion, from Clarence Town NSW, who died on 10 September 1915 aged 18 years. The grave to the right is 1560 Private (Pte) Leslie Raymond Talbot Gilbert, 14th Battalion, born in England, from Kogarah West NSW, who died on 20 January 1916 aged 19 years. The grave 2nd row right side is 1019 Sergeant (Sgt) Victor Ronald Coombe, 15th Battalion, of Campbelltown, Tas, who died on 29 September 1915 aged 26 years. From the collection of Mr Alfred Thomas Sharp. Mr Sharp was the Commonwealth Immigration Officer of Victoria and was based in the London Office during the First World War. He and his wife hosted and visited many soldiers, particularly those from Victoria, who were recuperating in London. He also photographed many Australian graves in English cemeteries. His photograph collection relating to this period in London was bequeathed to the Memorial in 1922 after his death. During his time in London he was a member of the British Volunteer Regiment, serving with the Willesden Battalion, Middlesex Volunteer Regiment.



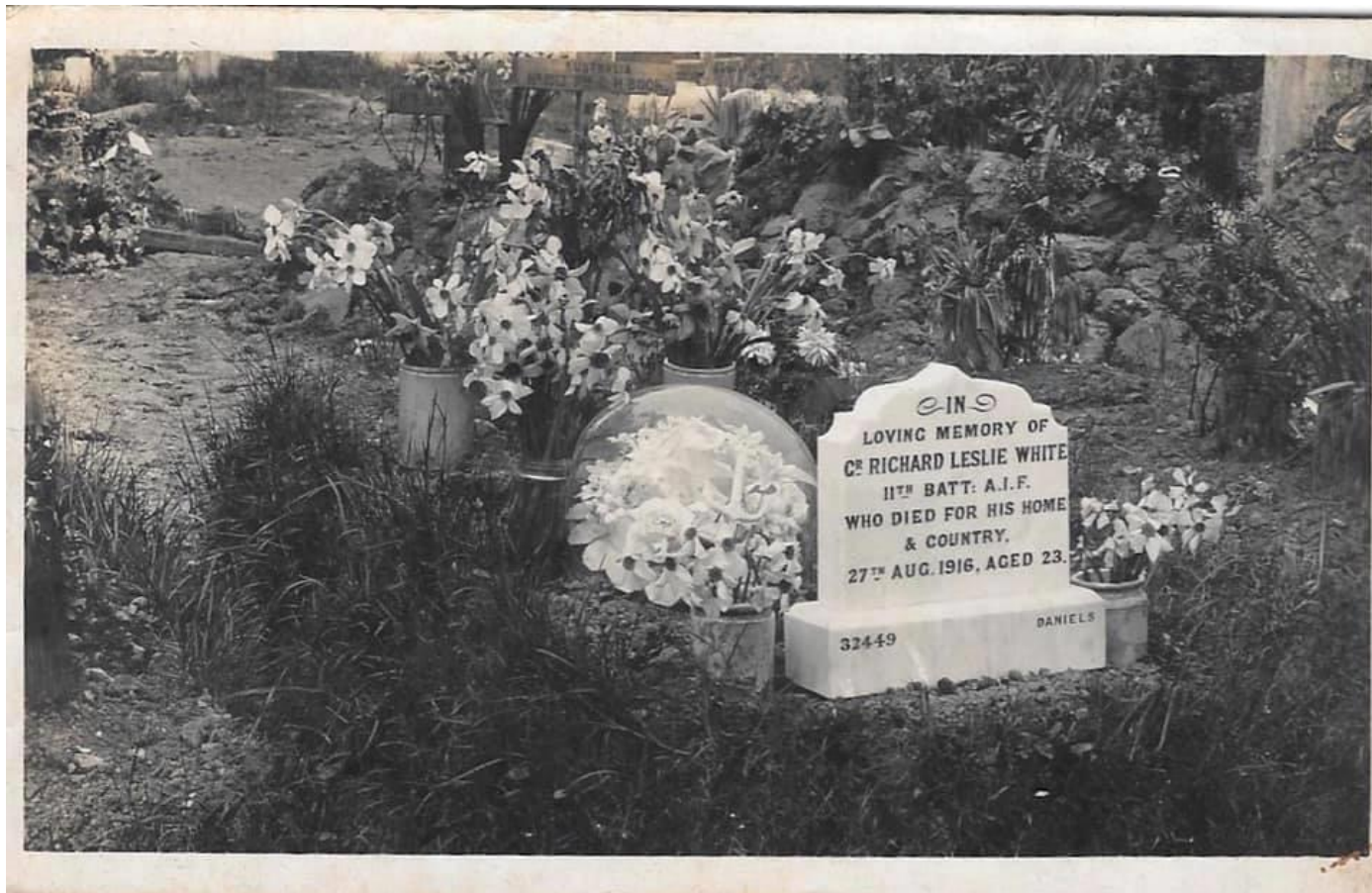
Australian War Graves in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead *(Photos courtesy of Neil Bright)*



Photo of Private R. L. White's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in All Saints Cemetery, Nunhead, Greater London, England.



(Photo courtesy of Roberto Lagnado)



(Photo with permission from Paul West)