

Corporal Walter Alfred White

Regimental number: 624903

126th Brigade, Honourable Artillery Company (Artillery Section)

born: about 1894 - died: 9 September 1918

Corporal Walter Alfred White was born in about 1894 in Romford, Essex, the son of Daniel and Naomi White.¹ Daniel was born in about 1851 in Leyton, Essex, the son of John, a gardener,² and his wife, Mary.³ John's wife, the former Naomi Elizabeth Towns, was born in 1856,⁴ the daughter of William Towns, a farmer,⁵ and his wife, Matilda.⁶ John and Naomi were married on 24 May 1888 in the church of St John of Jerusalem in South Hackney, Middlesex. They had four sons: Daniel (born in about 1890),⁷ William T. (born in about 1892),⁸ Walter, and Herbert James (born in 1899).⁹

In 1891, Daniel and Naomi were living with their first son at 6 Wyebridge Cottages in Romford, where Daniel was a nurseryman. Ten years later, they were living on Branscombe Road in the Hornchurch,, near Romford. Then in 1911, they were living at "Oakwood" on Brentwood Road, Romford. By then, Daniel, age 60, was a retired nurseryman and Walter Alfred¹⁰ was a caterers' clerk.

Walter enlisted in the Honourable Artillery Company in London¹¹ on 13 January 1915¹² and went overseas on 20 June 1917. The Honourable Artillery Company, which was established in 1537, is the oldest regiment in the British Army.¹³ About 13,000 members served with the HAC during the Great War and over 4,000 of these were commissioned into other units. The Company lost about 1,650 men who were serving either with HAC or other units of the armed forces. Walter was one of them. He was serving with the 126th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery when he died.

On 9 September 1918, Walter was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his legs, arm and face.¹⁴ He died the same day and was buried the following day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row H, Grave 44) with the chaplain W. F. O'N Fisher presiding. Walter was a member of the Church of England. There was no identification of his next-of-kin when he died, but his father received the monies owing to him from the army after his death.¹⁵

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.¹⁶ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.¹⁷ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September.

Walter was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).¹⁸

His younger brother, Herbert, had died in the war about fifteen months earlier. Herbert served initially with the Queen's Regiment.¹⁹ He was



Grave of Daniel and Naomi White (Romford, Essex)
(Source: Find a Grave (www.findagrave.com))

serving with the 12th Battalion of the London Regiment (Regimental number 52243) when he died near Ypres, Belgium on 14 June 1917. He is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial (Panel 6 and 8).²⁰ Like his brother, Herbert was XXX was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.²¹

Walter's parents are both buried in the Romford Cemetery.²² Daniel died at the age of 82, on 30 September 1932 and his wife, Naomi, aged 83 on 20 March 1940. The two sons they lost in the Great War are remembered on their gravestone.

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¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Walter White, Registration district: Romford, Registration District Number: 191, Sub-registration district: Romford, ED, institution, or vessel: 1, Household schedule number: 190, Piece: 9825

² "London, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Daniel White, Parish: St John of Jerusalem, South Hackney, Borough: Hackney, Register Type: Parish Register

³ "1861 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Daniel White, Registration district: West Ham, Sub-registration district: Leyton, ED, institution, or vessel: 3, Household schedule number: 40, Piece: 1060, Folio: 43, Page Number: 8

⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Naomi Towns, Registration district: Stow, Inferred County: Suffolk, Volume: 4a, Page: 483

⁵ "London, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921," entry for Daniel White

⁶ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 23 October 2015), entry for Naomi E. Towns, Registration district: Shoreditch, Sub-registration district: St Leonard, ED, institution, or vessel: 5, Household schedule number: 321, Piece: 441, Folio: 134, Page Number: 53

⁷ "1911 England Census," entry for Walter White

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Herbert James White, Registration district: West Ham, Inferred County: Essex, Volume: 4a, Page: 301

¹⁰ Walter Alfred is shown in different documents as Walter or Alfred or both.

¹¹ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Walter Alfred White

¹² "HAC World War One record cards 1914-1919," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 23 October 2015), entry for Walter Alfred White, Record set: British Army, Honourable Artillery Company

¹³ "Honourable Artillery Company," (<http://www.hac.org.uk/>: accessed 22 October 2015)

¹⁴ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 644

¹⁵ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Walter Alfred White

¹⁶ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org: accessed 7 October 2015)

¹⁷ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIN&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G: accessed 17 June 2015)

¹⁸ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Walter A. White

¹⁹ Herbert died Gt War "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Herbert James White

²⁰ "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 22 October 2015), entry for White, Herbert James, Service No: 52243

²¹ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Herbert J. White

²² "Find a Grave," (www.findagrave.com; accessed 22 October 2015), entry for Naomi Elizabeth White