

Alfred White

Lance Corporal 7682297, Military Foot Police, Military Police Corps

Died January 25th 1921, aged 40

Commemorated at Cologne Southern Cemetery, Germany

Alfred Charles White was born at Reading in 1880 to Charles and Mary White, where he was the youngest of 8 children. He was still living with them at Reading in 1901, where his father was a Postman and he was a plumbers' labourer. There was also a younger brother and sister living with them, so he was one of 10 children. Alfred married Harriet Mary Bishop in 1902. She was born at Port Isaac in 1879 to Warwick Bishop. In 1901 she was working as a servant in the Royal Naval Hospital in Plymouth. In 1911 they were living in St Minver at 'Treswaydon' (probably Tresweden, just past by Gutt Bridge as you go towards Wadebridge) with their three children; Janie and Dora, both 4 years old and presumably twins, along with Lilian who was just 1.

Alfred was formerly a private in the Army Service Corps. The Army Service Corps was responsible for transport, administration, and food and clothing, now part of the Royal Logistics Corps. Even if they had a less common name, researching their soldiers is very difficult as they could be sent anywhere and not attached to a particular fighting unit. The Royal Military Police website says that he first served abroad in France July 8th 1915 with number TS2R/01043. He transferred to the Military Foot Police on July 31st 1919, originally with service number P/17632 but after 1920 it became 7682297. He was serving in Cologne when he died of Encephalitis lethargica, otherwise known as 'sleepy sickness' (not to be confused with the tropical disease sleeping sickness transmitted by the Tsetse Fly). This disease attacks the brain to leave the victim in a statue-like condition, motionless and speechless. It is still not known for certain what causes the disease, which might be an immune reaction. There was an epidemic of Encephalitis lethargica spread throughout the world between 1915 and 1926, and Alfred was one of its victims.

Alfred's death was probably after our war memorial was first erected, which would explain his omission.

Lance Corporal Alfred White has his grave in Cologne Southern Cemetery.

This Commonwealth War Graves Commission document confirms Alfred is one of many British servicemen buried in Cologne Southern Cemetery.



The grave of Lance Corporal Alfred White

As part of the Versailles Peace Treaty, Cologne was occupied until 1926. For this purpose, a new army unit was set up called the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR). It was reported that the British acted with more tact towards the local population than the previous French occupiers. The mayor of Cologne from 1917 until 1933 and future West German chancellor Konrad Adenauer acknowledged the political impact of this approach, especially that the British had opposed French plans for a permanent Allied occupation of the Rhineland.

Sources

Army Service Corps: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Army_Service_Corps
 Corps of Military Police: <http://www.corpsformilitarypolice.org/soldier/13013/> and <http://www.corpsformilitarypolice.org/soldier/5088/>
 Encephalitis lethargica: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encephalitis_lethargica
 Cologne and British Army of the Rhine: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cologne> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Army_of_the_Rhine

COLOGNE
 RHINE PROVINCE
 GERMANY.

Army Form W. 3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

REPORT No. 1 SCHEDULE No. 32.C.

PLACE OF BURIAL South Cemetery - COLOGNE
 Rhine Province - Germany.

Map Reference
 This report cancels Report No. 1/47.C. to 1/61.C. and 1/71.C. to 1/76.C. inclusive, for Plots 30.A, 30.B., and 30.C., & 40.A.
 The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
		PLOT 7. ROW A.				
5/Tank Corps B.Co.	7869917	GRANT	Pte. G.A.	30-12-20	(Y.A.1) E.	2 1
R.E.att.R.T.E.	100730	LYNCH	Spr. J.	29-12-20	(Y.A.3) E.	3 2
165/Co.R.A.S.C. (H.T.)	ET/51045	DRUMMOND	Dvr. F.	8-1-21	(Y.A.4) E.	4 2
M.F.P.	7682298	WHITE	L/Cpl. A.	25-1-21	(Y.A.5) E.	5 2
3/Midd'x R.	6189782	BALDWIN	Pte. H.J.	24-1-21	(Y.A.6) E.	6 0
585/M.T.Co. R.A.S.C.	52947	FOSTER	Pte. F.	29-1-21	(Y.A.7) E.	7 2
1/R.Ir.Rifles.	32599	MURPHY	Pte. J.	3-2-21	(Y.A.8) E.	8 2
R.A.O.C. att. I.A.C.C.		HOLMES	Maj. W.J.	5-2-21	(Y.A.9) E.	9 0
Ches.R.		BENGOUGH	Maj. L.	7-2-21	(Y.A.10) E.	10 0
47/R.Fus.	6451252	BOTTOMLEY	L/Cpl. H.	10-2-21	(Y.A.11) E.	11 0

Certified complete and correct,
 Registration Officer,
 Rhine Area.

Date: 5/8/23