

ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON

WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Richard Edwin White

Name: Richard Edwin White

Rank: Battery Quarter Master Sergeant

Service Number: 49652

Regiment: Royal Horse Artillery

Battalion/Unit number: B Battery

Date/year of Birth: 1888

Place of Birth: Nynehead, Somerset

Place of Residence: 42 Richmond Road, Taunton

Date of Death: 17th February 1919

Place of Death: Woolwich

Burial/Memorial: Greenwich Memorial Screen Wall

Richard Edwin White was the son of Alfred White and Jane Hawkins. He was born in Nynehead the third youngest in a family of at least nine children of three boys and six girls. In 1891 the family lived in Corfe, where Alfred was styled as a Butler, but it is not clear in which household he was employed. By 1901 the five older children are not living at home and the family had moved to Park Street in Taunton where they had a lodging house.

By 1911 his father and mother and two daughters were living at Bank House where Alfred at 62 was employed as a Bank caretaker; and in 1914 Richard's enlistment address is given as 42 Richmond Road.

Richard must have joined the army in the early 1900s; by 1911 he is in the Royal Horse Artillery and the 1911 census places him in India serving with R Battery. The enlistment records show that he served in all for 12 years in the army, 10 months of which were in France and Germany. While we do not have any enlistment papers to identify where exactly he served, he is designated as being with B Battery on his medal card. He may have retired from the army in 1912 and then re-enlisted; this would make sense of the fact that he did not receive the 1914 or 1915 Star.

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Former NCOs were needed as this poster indicates.

As a Battery Quartermaster Sergeant Richard would have held a responsible position within the Battery. Each RHA Battery had six 13 pounder guns with two ammunition wagons. The QMS would be responsible under the Quarter Master for the issue and supply of equipment to the men in the battery (likely to be over 100 men).

B Battery was present in the Gallipoli Campaign, the Somme Offensive and was involved throughout the Western Front battles. Richard's original Battery R was amalgamated with another (P) to become a Training battery based at Woolwich. It may have been that this was where Richard was based and that he only latterly was posted to B Battery In France / Germany.

Richard died three months after the war finished in Woolwich – all that is known is that he died while he was on leave from Germany and his death was registered in Woolwich. His name is inscribed on the Greenwich War memorial, presumably because he died while still a serving soldier. Cause of death is unknown at this time.

Richard's older brother Alfred William White may also in the forces as there is a Captain of that name registered on the Taunton Deane Enlistment records.

