

**St. Peter's Churchyard, Cockett,
Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales**

War Grave



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1904 PRIVATE

C. NORRIS

12TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

4TH MAY, 1916 Age 22

Charles NORRIS

Charles Norris was born at Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America around 1893 to parents William and Harriet Emily Norris (nee Waldron).

Charles Norris, along with his mother Harriett Norris & siblings William, Albert & Edith were passengers on *Clyde* which arrived at the port of Southampton, England on 1st July, 1901 from Ensenada, Mexico.

The 1911 Wales Census recorded Charles Norris as an 18 year old Labourer in Fuel Works, living with his family at 9 Lynn St, Cwmbwrla, Swansea. His parents were listed as William Norris (Carter Carrier, aged 40, Jersey Resident) & Harriett Norris (aged 36, born Isle of Wight). William & Harriett Norris had been married for 13 years & had a total of 9 children – Charles then William (Labourer, aged 16, born Argentine Republic), Albert (Labourer, aged 15, born Argentine Republic), Edith (At School, aged 12, born Argentine Republic), George (At School, aged 10, born Portsmouth, Hants), Florrie (At School, aged 8, born Portsmouth, Hants), Harry (At School, aged 5, born Portsmouth, Hants), Elisa (aged 3, born Devonport, Devon) & Helena (aged 1, born Devonport, Devon).

According to information provided for the Roll of Honour by his father – Charles Norris came to Australia when he was 19 years of age.

Charles Norris was a 22 year old, married, Fireman from 16 Pultney Street, Adelaide, South Australia when he enlisted at Oaklands, South Australia on 16th January, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1904 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr W. Norris, 9 Lynn Street, Cambora, Swansea, South Wales. (Note: The Embarkation Roll lists the place of residence incorrectly for the next-of-kin – should be Cwmbwrla, Swansea). (Charles Norris stated on his Attestation Papers that he was born at Swansea, South Wales).

According to information provided for the Roll of Honour by his father – Charles Norris was previously a Stoker in Mercantile Marine. He had also been a Bugler Boy in Kings Shropshire Light Infantry.

Charles Norris married Muriel Gladys Hobbs on 18th March, 1915 in Adelaide, South Australia.

Charles Norris was posted to "E" Company, Base Depot on 16th January, 1915 for recruit training. Private Norris was written up for an Offence on 6th February, 1915 while posted at Oaklands – "*Breaking camp on February 6th & absent without leave until Sunday 4 pm 7th.*" This was admonished & he forfeited 2 days' pay.

Private Norris was written up for an Offence on 14th February, 1915 while posted at Oaklands - "*Drunk. Disorderly. Resisting Piquets. Obscene Language.*" He was remanded to Camp Commandant & was fined £2 & fined 1/6 for cab fare.

Private Charles Norris was written up for an Offence on 18th February, 1915 while posted at Glenelg – Drunk. Absent without leave from 9 am to 1.45 pm on 18th February, 1915. He was fined 5/- for drunkenness & awarded 4 days confined to Barracks & a loss of 1 days pay for being absent without leave. He had been drunk on 3 occasions since enlistment & his general character was listed as bad.

Private Charles Norris was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 12th Infantry Battalion on 17th February, 1915.

Private Charles Norris embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 20th April, 1915 with the 12th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements.

Private Charles Norris was taken on strength of 12th Battalion at Gallipoli on 22nd June, 1915.

Private Charles Norris was wounded at Gallipoli on 6th August, 1915. He was admitted to No. 1 Australian Casualty Clearing Station at Anzac on 6th August, 1915 with shell wound/s to left Leg then transferred the same day to Mudros. Private Norris was admitted to No. 15 Stationary Hospital at Mudros on 8th August, 1915 with Gunshot wounds to Back & Arm. (another entry on Casualty form – Active Service recorded he was admitted to 15th Stationary Hospital with G.S.W. Left leg). He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Rewa* on 31st August, 1915.

12th Battalion

The 12th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Half of the battalion was recruited in Tasmania, a quarter was recruited in South Australia, and a quarter from Western Australia. With the 9th, 10th and 11th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within three weeks of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving in early December. The 3rd Brigade was the covering force for the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 and so was the first ashore at around 4:30 am. Lieutenant Colonel L. F. Clarke, commander of the 12th Battalion, was killed by a sniper within hours of the landing. The battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC position, and in August contributed two companies to the attack on Lone Pine. It was the only battalion in the brigade to do so. The 12th served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 12th Battalion

ANZAC - 6th August, 1915:

Lieut. T. W. HASLAM and 133 other ranks of 6th and 7th reinforcements for 12th Bn (each State) arrived.

Bombardment of enemy trenches carried out all day.

5.30 pm – Attack by 1st Inf Bde made on LONE PINE Trenches

6.30 – message recd through 3rd Bde H.Q. Attack successful.

7.20 – 12th B'n H.Q. & 3 Coys ordered to reinforce 1st Bde (one Coy ("B") remained in reserve to 11th Battn)

7.42 – In position GUN LANE: from then onwards Coys were detailed to reinforce in various sectors of captured trench, & also to assist in ammn supply, also tools, & evacuation of casualties.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Charles Norris disembarked from Hospital Ship *Rewa* at Plymouth, England on 10th September, 1915 & was admitted to County of London War Hospital, Epsom, England the same day with shrapnel wound/s to left Thigh. He was severely wounded. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "Wounded in the Dardanelles Aug 6, 15. Arrived wound healed at Epsom." On 29th September, 1915 it was recorded that the patient was now well and fit for duty after a rest.

Private Charles Norris was absent without leave from 15th November, 1915 to 18th November, 1915. He was awarded 96 hours detention & forfeited a total of 8 days' pay.

Private Charles Norris was admitted No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield, Middlesex on 19th November, 1915 with G.S.W. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Wounded left thigh bullet came right through & of left fore finger. Three weeks Lemnos. Epsom 6 weeks furlough 3 weeks. There is a scar of exit in back of thigh with area of cutaneous anaesthesia over region by post cutaneous nerve. The end finger joint is stiff after _____*"

A Medical Report was completed on Private Charles Norris on 28th November, 1915 at Harefield Park regarding his disability – G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) that had originated on 6th August, 1915 at Gallipoli while on Active Service. His condition at the time of the Medical Report was recorded as "*Painful scar back of thigh. Stiff joint of first finger of left hand. End of finger anaesthesia. Anaesthesia of back of thigh.*" The Officer in charge of the case recommended that Private Norris was permanently unfit for Active Service. The Medical Board stated that the disability was not permanent & the probable minimum duration was six months. As a result they recommended that Private Charles Norris was permanently unfit for Active Service but fit for Home Service.

Private Charles Norris arrived at Depot at Weymouth, from Hospital on 22nd December, 1915.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire & Dorset. Later Training & Convalescing Units were combined under the one Command Depot.

Private Charles Norris was admitted to Verne Military Hospital, Portland on 3rd March, 1916 with Chancre. VD – total period 4 days. He was transferred on 6th March, 1916 to Cherry Hinton Military Hospital, Cambridge & discharged on 11th April, 1916.

Private Charles Norris died at 11.30 pm on 4th May, 1916 at Sydney Hall Military Hospital, Weymouth, Dorset, England from injuries received as a result of a motor accident – fractured skull.

A death for Charles Norris, aged 23, was registered in the June quarter, 1916 in the district of Weymouth, Dorset, England.

A Court of Enquiry was held on 6th May, 1916 enquiring into the death of Private Charles Norris – “he on 4.5.16 was knocked down by a motor car at Weymouth sustaining a fracture of the base of Skull. He was removed to Sidney Hall Military Hospital and died twenty minutes after admission.”

[Note: only 3 pages of the Enquiry are found in the Service Record file]

"and passed me on the left. It was travelling at a moderate speed, and the driver appeared to have full control of the car. I heard the motor sound before the car came round the corner. The car had two sidelights. I saw a soldier coming towards me - he was on the right hand side, but nearly in the middle of the road. He was about then 40 yards from the car. I saw the car swerve across to the right hand of the road, and lost sight of the man. I heard a scream, and ran up. The car was about 25 yards on - car stopped. I said to the driver, "Bring your lights". The body of the man was under the car - pushed car back, took up the man and put him in the car. I held him - went to Sidney Hall. He was quite unconscious. I did not see anything to blame the conduct of the driver. The driver was quite sober. It was very dark."

Taken on Oath
before me) (Sgd) H. DENNIS.

(Sgd) GUST. F. SYMES,
Coroner.

FREDERICK JAMES JONES on Oath
Royal Baths, St. Thomas Street.

"Driver for Bell, Franchise Street. I have driven since July last. On Thursday last I returned from Monte Video Camp about 10-30. I came round the Eye Hill Road. I sounded my horn at the corner, and was coming up the hill past Westville Cottages. I passed a man on my left - my right hand wheel on the crown of the road. I saw a soldier directly in front of me. I had only two side lights, obscured in accordance with the regulations. The man was about 15 yards away. I was driving 10 miles an hour, 3rd gear, uphill. He appeared to be wobbling. I swerved to the right and put on my brakes. The man jumped straight in front of the car. I pulled up the car. The left wing of the car struck him. His head and shoulders were under the car. I went to the right as there was no room to clear him on the left. The man was picked up and taken

"to the Sidney Hall. I think the injury was caused by the man's head striking the ground. We got to the hospital at 11 o'clock. We allow 20 minutes to get into Weymouth."

Taken on Oath)
before me)

(Sgd) F.J. JONES.

(Sgd) GUST. P. SYMES.

Coroner.

SAMUEL GREENWOOD on Oath

"Medical Officer in Charge of the Sidney Hall Military Hospital. On Thursday evening. About 11-10 the car brought deceased to the hospital. The deceased was bleeding from the nose, ear and mouth, and was paralysed. He was suffering from fracture of the base of the skull. He died in 20 minutes."

Taken on Oath)
before me)

(Sgd) S. Greenwood. Lt. RA.M.C.

(Sgd) GUST. P. SYMES.

Coroner.

CHARLES NORRIS DECD.

COPY of VERDICT.

"That the said Charles Norris died on the 4th May, 1916, at the Parish of Weymouth
"in the County of Dorset, in the Sidney Hall, Military Hospital, from a fractured
"skull and other injuries, the result of having been knocked down by a motor car in
"the Chickereell Road, in the said parish on the said 4th day of May and so the Jurors
"aforesaid, upon their Oaths, do further say that the said death was caused by accident
"and no blame is attached to any person, and the Jurors aforesaid, do further say that
"the said Charles Norris was a male person of the age of Twenty-three years, and a
"Private - Australian Infantry - Home Adelaide, Australia. Married man."

Finding:

"Death was caused by accident and no blame is attached to any person."

Private Charles Norris was buried on 11th May, 1916 in St. Peter's Churchyard, Cockett, Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales – Grave No. 1558. This is now recorded by CWGC as New Ground 119 and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

A War Pension was granted to Muriel Gladys Norris, 226 Commonwealth St., City, widow of the late Private Charles Norris, in the sum of £2 per fortnight granted from 10th July, 1916.

Base Records wrote to Mrs C. Norris, 173 South Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia, on 12th July, 1916 stating they had forwarded a communication dated 5th addressed to her c/o G.P.O. Sydney, but it had been returned as unclaimed by the Postal Authorities. This communication included an extract from the original letter which advised that No. 1904 Private C. Norris had died at 11.30 pm on 4th May, 1916 as a result of a motor car accident & included details of the funeral which had been held on 12th May. The current communication continued with *"I would add, Private Norris enlisted as a single man, but a British Army Form to hand contains information to the effect that the soldier leaves a widow. If you are identical with that lady and wish your name recorded in that relationship, it will be necessary for you to forward to this office your Marriage Certificate, or a certified copy of same, in support of your claim."*

Mrs Norris, 45 Premier Street, Marrickville, Sydney, NSW, widow of the late Private Charles Norris, replied to Base Records on 25th July, 1916 enclosing the *"Marriage Lines"* & requested that they be returned to her.

Base Records replied to Mrs Norris on 1st August, 1916 advising her that *"her name and the words "stated to be wife" have been endorsed on the records of the late No. 1904 Private C. Norris, 12th Battalion. Your enclosure is returned herewith under registered cover."*

Private Charles Norris was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to the late Private's next of kin. The Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were issued in England to his stated next-of-kin – Mr V. Norris in March 1922.

Base Records wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Pensions, Sydney, NSW on 1st October, 1920 stating the from the file of the late No. 1904, Private Charles Norris, a pension has been granted to Mrs Muriel Gladys Norris (widow), of 45 Premier Street, Marrickville, Sydney, NSW but communications forwarded to that address had been returned unclaimed. A request was made for the present address of Mrs Norris.

A reply was sent to Base Records on 9th November, 1920 stating that the present address of Mrs Muriel Gladys Norris was shown as 45 Enmore Road, Marrickville.

Base Records wrote to Headquarters, 2nd Military District Base on 19th May, 1922 requesting the address of the next-of-kin of the late Private Charles Norris.

A second request was sent to Headquarters, 2nd Military District Base by Base Records asking when a reply could be expected in regards to the address of Mrs M. G. Norris, widow of the late No. 1904 Private Charles Norris as communications sent to her address at Evaline Street, Campsie, NSW had been returned unclaimed.

A reply was received from 2nd District Base on 9th October, 1922 stating that the next-of-kin of the late Private Charles Norris – his widow, Muriel G. Norris' address was 54 City Road, City, Sydney.

Base Records wrote to Official Secretary (Military Section), Australia House, London, on 3rd March, 1922 advising *"In connection with the issue of the Memorial Plaque and Scroll in respect of the late No. 1904 Private C. Norris, 12th Battalion, it is noted from the nominal roll (Ref. No. 301729) that these mementos have been issued in England to deceased's brother, Mr V. Norris. According to the records at the office, however, next-of-kin is shown as (widow) Mrs C. Norris, 45 Enmore Road, Marrickville, NSW, and I should be glad if your Administration will accordingly arrange to re-call the memorials and forward same to this office for transmission to Mrs Norris."*

Lieutenant Colonel Buckley, Military Adviser, London, replied to Base Records on 29th April, 1922 advising *"...regarding the memorial plaque and scroll issued in respect of the late No. 1904 Pte C. Norris, 12th Bn., I have to advise that these mementoes have been returned by Mr W. Norris and they are being forwarded to you for disposal. The scroll is enclosed."*

Mrs M. G. Norris, 54 City Road, City, Sydney, New South Wales, widow of the late Private Charles Norris, replied to Base Records on 30th October, 1922 confirming that communications addressed to her as such would find her at the address listed in order that the Plaque & Scroll issuable in regards to her late husband's service could be forwarded.

Mrs M. G. Norris, "Frome", Govett Street, Katoomba, NSW, widow of the late Private Charles Norris, wrote to Base Records in January, 1923 to thank them for the Plaque, Scroll & Victory Medal.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Charles Norris – service number 1904, aged 22, of 12th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of William and Harriet Norris, of 9 Lynn St., Cwmbwrla, Wales.

Private C. Norris is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 67.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

C. Norris is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

(116 pages of Private Charles Norris'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



Newspaper Notices

SEVENTY-THIRD CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

WOUNDED

1904, Pte C. NORRIS, 12th Battalion (5th Reinforcements) (England), wounded

(The Journal, Adelaide, South Australia - 4 September, 1915)

SOLDIER'S DEATH AT WEYMOUTH

Charles Norris (23), an Australian soldier, four of whose brothers have been killed in the war, and who himself had been twice wounded in Gallipoli, has been run over by a motor-car at Weymouth and killed. He had been discharged from the Army as unfit, and was about to return to Australia.

(Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge Advertiser, England – 13 May, 1916)

170th CASUALTY LIST

KILLED

Pte C. Norris, England

(Saturday Mail, South Australia – 20 May, 1916)

THE ROLL OF HONOR

170th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Accidentally Killed

1904 Pte C. NORRIS, Eng., prev. rep. wounded.

(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 22 May, 1916)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

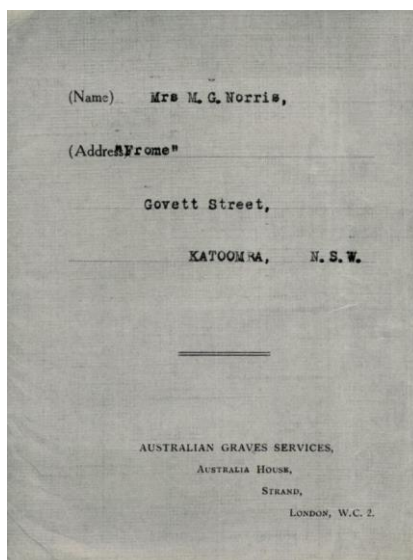
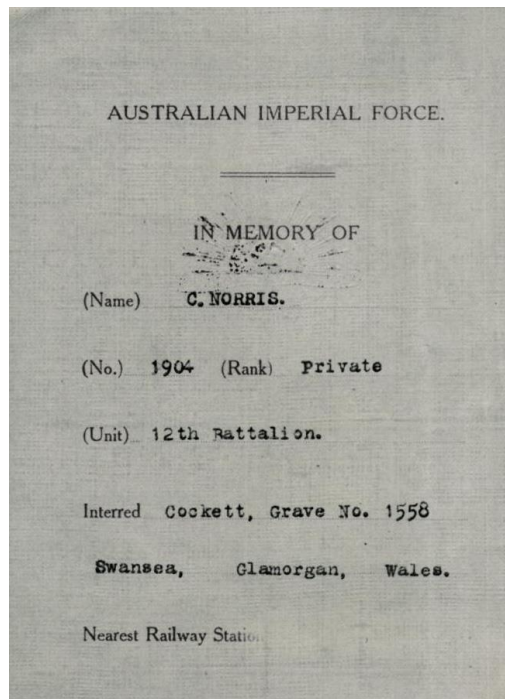
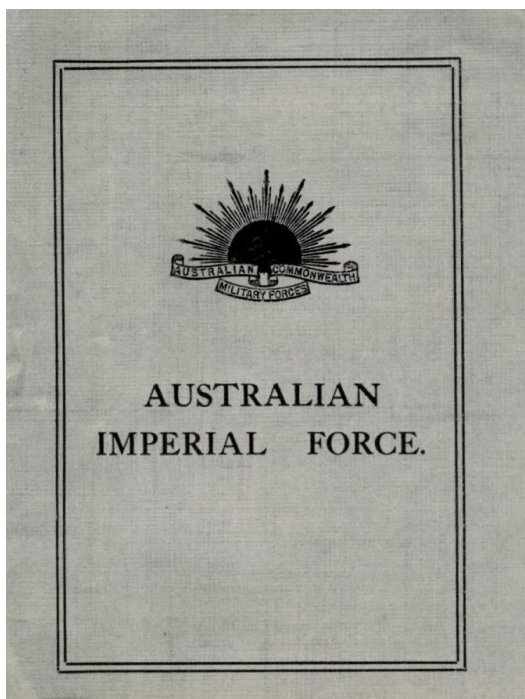
The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

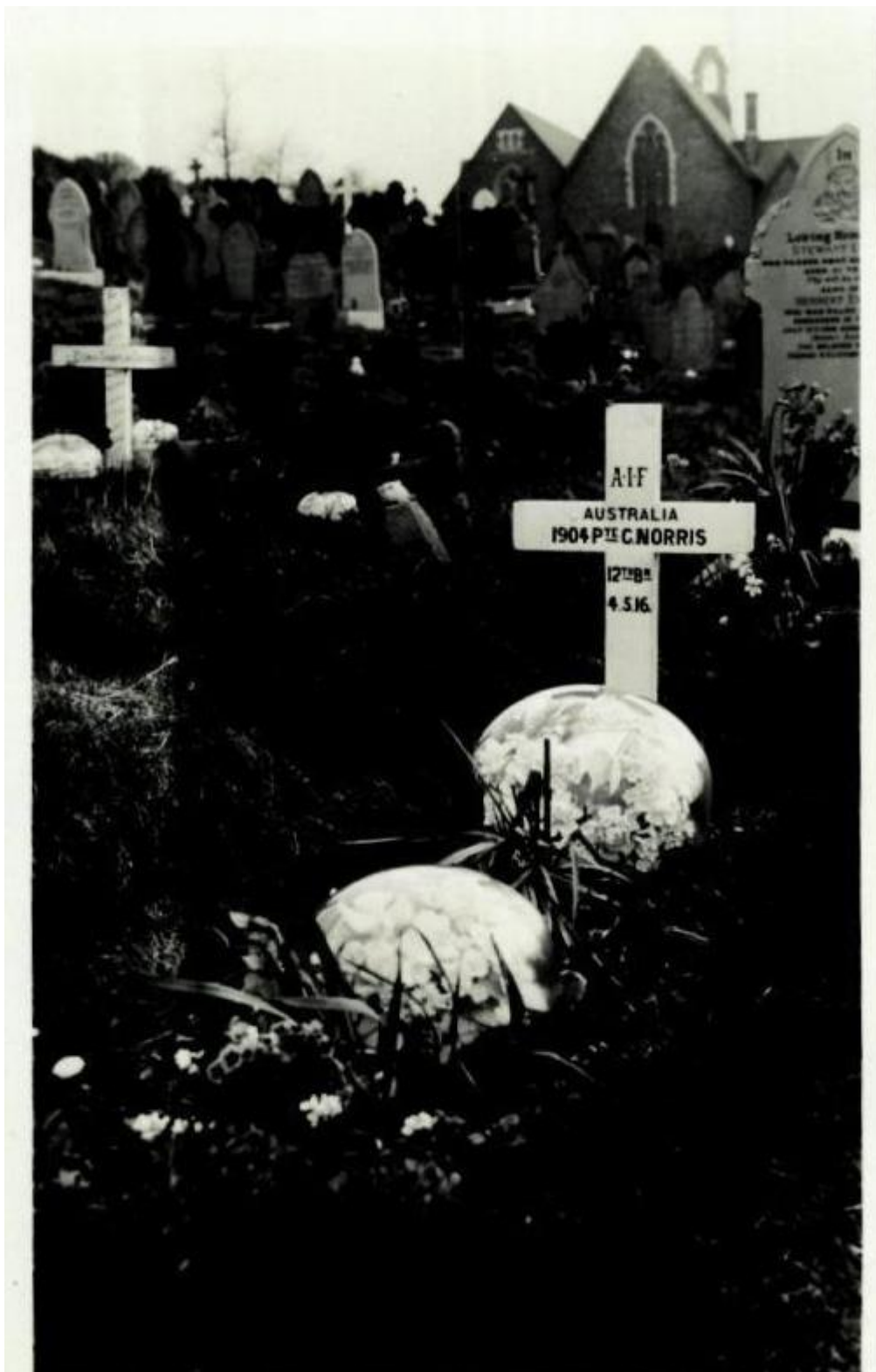
The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Base Records contacted Mrs M. G. Norris, Evaline Street, Campsie, NSW, widow of the late Private C. Norris on 4th April, 1922 enclosing Memorial Form "A" apprise the Imperial War Graves Commission of her wishes regarding the headstone to be erected over the grave of the late soldier.

Communications sent from Base Records to Mrs M. G. Norris, "Frome", Govett Street, Katoomba, NSW, widow of the late Private Charles Norris, in April, 1924 were returned unclaimed to Base Records. The contents included 3 copies of photographs of the Original Wooden Grave Marker of the late Private Charles Norris. As the photographs couldn't reach his widow they were included in his Service Record File.





Original Wooden Cross marking Private Charles Norris' Grave

Private C. Norris now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but has no inscription.

St. Peter's Churchyard, Cockett, Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales

St. Peter's Churchyard, Cockett contains 50 Commonwealth War Graves - 19 relating to World War 1 & 31 relating to World War 2.



(Photos from Find a Grave – (above) soulfriends237; (below) B)

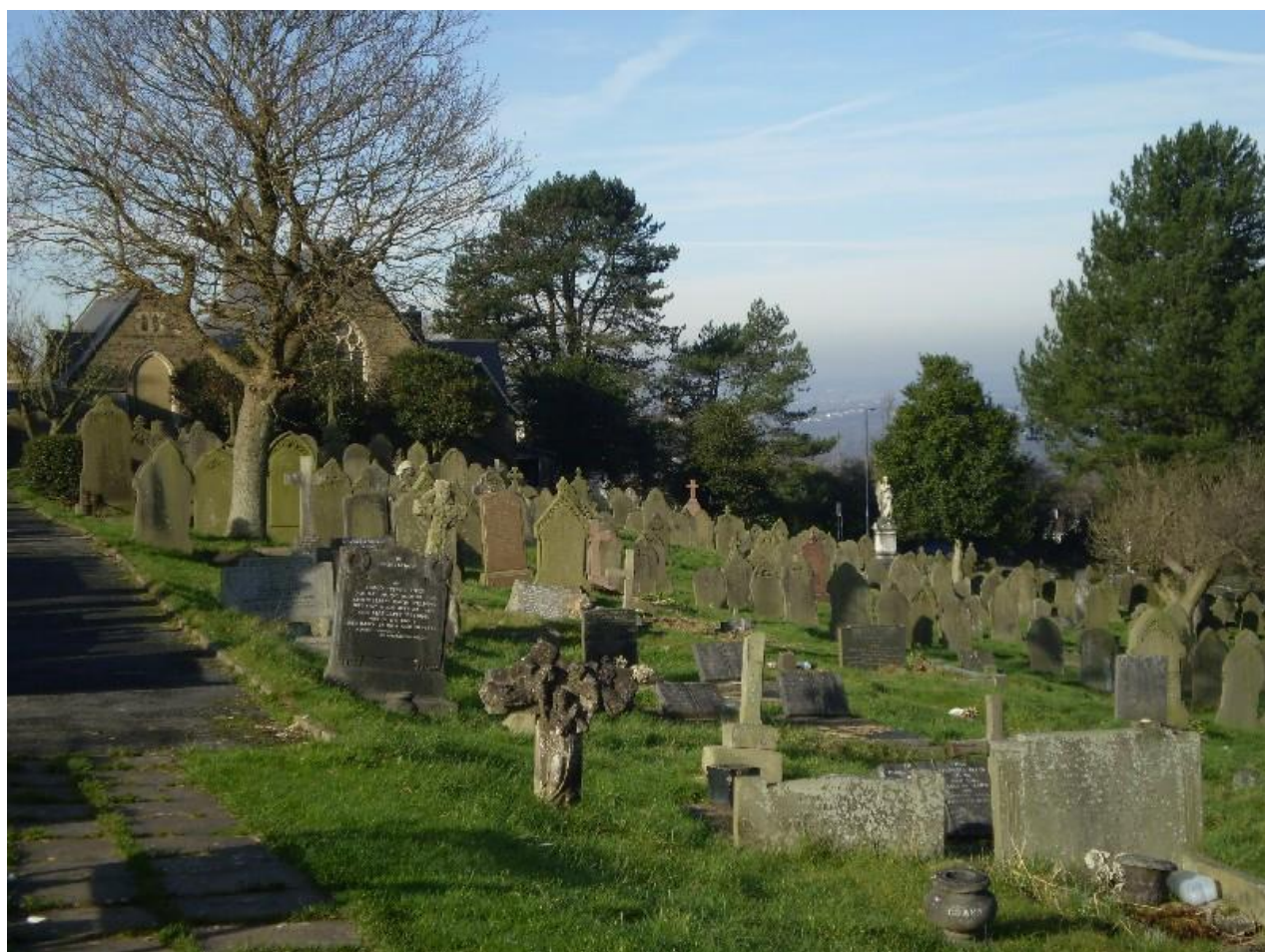


Photo of Private C. Norris' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Peter's Churchyard, Cockett, Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales.



(Photo courtesy of Rev'd Dr Jonathon Wright)



(Photo from Billion Graves)



Private Norris' CWGC Headstone (Photo from Find a Grave – TSGenghis)



(Photo from Find a Grave – Flibbidyjib)