

The Great War for civilisation

1914 - 1919

Commemorating the men of Stoke Gifford
who died in the conflict.

Compiled by Bill Webb



The Great War for Civilisation

1914 - 1919

Commemorating the men of Stoke Gifford
who died in the conflict
and took the lives of 13 young men of Stoke Gifford
We will remember them.



I decided to research these soldiers as a project during my period of 'Lockdown' in the Coronavirus' crisis and I was living at Stoke Gifford Retirement Village. If anyone has more information about any of them and is willing to share it, please get in touch and I will include it

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The stories of the men of Stoke Gifford who died in The Great War

All I really had to start were a list of names on the war memorial, I thought it would be nice to find out what they did in the war. The stories will hopefully give the background to the relationship the individual soldiers and sailors have with the local area, their family and family background, where they lived and what they did. It will also give a description of their Regiment and the battles they and their Regiment fought in as well as where (and if we know it) how they died I hope it will be more than a memorial but give an account of who they were, who their families were and how they fitted into the local community.

When the 'boys came home' there was uncertainty about 'commemoration'. There were essentially two groups of people - Those who had served at the front and those who had not. Those who had served at the front wanted to get back to normal and wanted to forget the war and were not really interested in memorials (which is why the phrase so often heard was "my father/grandfather fought in the war but never talked about it) however the 'civilian' population felt there should be memorials to those who had fought and died in the war. Many servicemen were unhappy with the role the church had played in the conflict and often War Memorials were placed away from the church.

The men of Stoke Gifford who died in the Great War.

Harry Adams	Royal Army Service Corps
Herbert Bowley	Monmouthshire Regiment
Howard Cook	Rifle Brigade
George Thomas Everett	Royal Marine Artillery
William Alfred Everett	Gloucestershire Regiment
Frederick Gupwell	Royal Field Artillery
Herbert Henry Hartnell	West Yorkshire Regiment
Henry Bolton Hooper	Worcestershire Regiment
Norman Oakhill	Gloucestershire Regiment
Frederick Guy Pitt	Royal Field Artillery
Jesse Halford Wicks	Royal Berkshire Regiment
Alfred John Winstone	Royal Engineers
Frank Wood	North Staffordshire Regiment.

The war to end all wars

August 4th 2014 is the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War (First World War). August 4th 1914 was the date when Great Britain and the Empire declared war on Germany in response to Germany's invasion of Belgium. The Great War started when, on 28 July, the Austro-Hungarians fired the first shots of the war as preparation for the invasion of Serbia. While the Russians mobilised, the Germans invaded neutral Belgium and Luxembourg, which brought Great Britain into the war.

It is not really appropriate to celebrate an event which led to the deaths of so many people. It is perhaps a time to commemorate those young men of the area who gave their lives in a conflict they thought was just and right and consider that they were part of our community. 100 years on we still 'remember them' and value the sacrifice they made. It is also a time to reflect on the conditions at the time, it was a rural community and this was seen as a 'great adventure' and it would all be over by Christmas, the young men enlisted voluntarily in huge numbers at Kitchener's appeal for volunteers. They did not want to miss the boat.

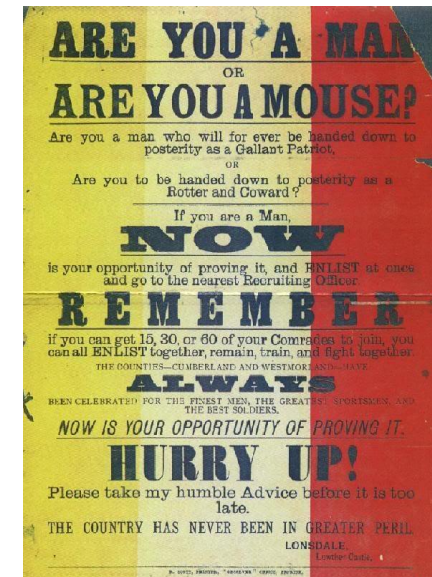
On August 7th 1914, Kitchener made his first appeal for 100,000 volunteers. To begin with the adverts in the newspapers were very staid with the royal crest with "Your King and Country need you" followed by "A Call to Arms". The adverts stated clearly an age range

of 19 to 30. However, these adverts were replaced by Alfred Leete's legendary poster that showed Kitchener pointing at the reader with "Your Country Needs You". The response overwhelmed the army. In 18 months, 2,467,000 men joined up only to find that the army did not have enough rifles or uniforms.



It is interesting to see they wanted men from 19 to 30 and 'old soldiers' up to 42. By 1916 this had changed a great deal with men from 18 (officially) up to 50 wanted. A lot went in at 17 and many over 50 but still the official minimum age to serve overseas (active service) was 19 but this was clearly not strictly enforced and even locally young men of 18 were being sent to the front.

But local recruitment posters could be more intimidating - here is one for the Lonsdale Pals (11th Border Regiment).



The Great War

The starting point of the first World War was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, on 28 June 1914 by the Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo, it triggered a diplomatic crisis when Austria-Hungary subsequently delivered an ultimatum to the Kingdom of Serbia. Several alliances formed over the previous decades were invoked. Within weeks, the major powers were at war and, via their colonies, the conflict soon spread around the world. In Britain and the Empire it started in earnest on 4th Aug 1914.

The Great War saw huge changes in the way conflicts were fought. On land horses were a major part of the armies with over 6 million being used as well as 213,000 mules and 60,000 camels and oxen but machine guns, artillery and poison gas took a heavy toll and by the end of the war lorries and tanks were replacing them.



A German lancer.

This illustrates the changes, he has a carbine, steel helmet and gas mask (C20th) and sitting

on a horse with a lance (unchanged for several hundred years).

At sea

There were a number of battles - Coronel, Falklands, Heligoland Bight and Jutland but no conclusive ones, the main difference in sea warfare was the use of submarines to enforce a blockade of Britain in the Atlantic.

The war in the air.

When war broke out the number of aircraft on all sides and all fronts was very small. France, for example, had less than 140 aircraft at the start of the war. By the end of the war she fielded 4,500 aircraft, more than any other protagonist. While this may seem an impressive increase, it does not give a true indication of the amount of aircraft involved. During the war France produced no less than 68,000 aircraft. 52,000 of them were lost in battle, a horrendous loss rate of 77%.

Some of the Key Battles

The Race to the Sea was conducted from September-November 1914, ended with the onset of trench warfare in the Western Front. It was the last mobile phase of the war on the Western Front until March 1918. Allied attempts to force a German retreat after the Battles of the Marne and Aisne failed as the Germans dug in behind formidable trench lines. Both sides tried to gain an advantage by pressing their attacks further north in Flanders the only flank open for manoeuvre. This led into **1st Ypres**. The first battle of Flanders October/November 1914. These actions saw the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in action

for the first time. The Old Contemptibles (The Kaiser was reputed to have referred to Britain's small army as "A Contemptible little army" and the name was taken up with pride by the troops; sadly it was not true, it was a piece of propaganda thought up in the War Office, London). Britain's army in France had 163,000 men, France had 3,989,000 and Germany 5,400,000 but the British army was all volunteer, very well trained and battle hardened in India and South Africa. When they met the mainly conscripted German army which had trained troops but with a large number of students and young inexperienced men the result was casualties not seen before. The Germans called the battle The Massacre of the innocents of Ypres. The total casualties on both sides were estimated at 280,000.

Loos (The Big Push) 25th Sept - 18th Oct. 1915. Compared with the small-scale British efforts of spring 1915, this attack of six Divisions was a mighty offensive indeed - so much so that it was referred to at the time as The Big Push. Taking place on ground not of their choosing and before sufficient stocks of ammunition and heavy artillery had arrived. The opening of the battle was noteworthy for the first use of poison gas by the British Army. Despite heavy casualties, there was considerable success on the first day in breaking into the deep enemy positions near Loos and Hulluch. But the reserves had been held too far from the battle front to be able to exploit the successes.

Mediterranean Expeditionary Force

The Middle East. Of interest locally as The Herefordshire Regiment and The King's Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI) featured heavily in this theatre of war.

Gallipoli is the most frequently used name for the peninsula to the west of the Dardanelles Straits, and the fighting that took place there between British and French troops of the Allies against Turkish troops between April 1915 and January 1916. Most famously, it was where the soldiers of the first ANZAC - the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps - first went into action during the Great War.

Once the fighting on the Western Front in France and Flanders settled into siege warfare, it defied attempts by both sides to break through; some British politicians became entranced by the idea of attacking Germany by the back door. Despite pre-war Naval planning that suggested a passage of the Dardanelles Straits was impossible, the lure of an easier route to the defeat of Germany became irresistible. The pro-Westerners in the high Army command were overruled and eventually acquiesced.

Gallipoli was evacuated and the army relocated to Egypt and fought the Turkish army through Egypt into Palestine. At the same time another army was in **Salonika**, in 1915 a Franco British force landed at Thessaloniki to assist the Serbians against Bulgarian Aggression. The fighting continued until an armistice in September 1918.

Mesopotamia (Iraq) had been part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Lying along its eastern border was Persia, generally friendly to the British. The Arab Sheiks of nearby Kuwait

and Muhammerah also supported Britain; the Arab tribes of coastal Mesopotamia often changed sides. Germany had for many years before the war assiduously developed Turkey as an ally, which it saw as an important part of the *Drang nach Osten* (Thrust towards the East: Germany wanted new lands, new markets, lebensraum). After three years of fierce fighting an armistice was signed with Turkey 1st October 1918. Britain had suffered 93,000 casualties in this theatre.

Jutland. 31st May/1st June 1916. Between the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet. It was the only major clash of Battleships in the war. 14 British and 11 German ships were sunk with great loss of life. Both sides claimed victory but by the end of 1916 Germany turned away from fleet to fleet action policy and started unrestricted submarine warfare which led to America coming into the war in April 1917.

The Somme. July-Nov 1916



The first day of the Somme July 1st 1916 saw the worst casualties ever sustained by a British Army 60,000 casualties on one day (20,000 dead).

It was a baptism of fire for Britain's new volunteer armies. Many Pals Battalions,

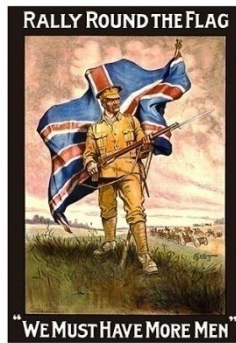
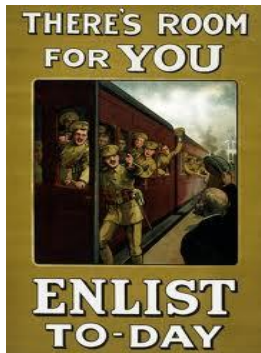
comprising men from the same town, had enlisted together to serve together. They suffered catastrophic losses: whole units died together and for weeks after the initial assault, local newspapers would be filled with lists of dead, wounded and missing. By the end of the battle 13th Nov. Britain had 420,000 casualties, France 195,000 and Germany 650,000.

Passchendaele. Jun-Nov 1917. This battle had the Empire lined up against Germany, in addition to British troops were armies from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, India, South Africa plus armies from Belgium and France. It was a dreadful battle fought in appalling conditions of mud and resulted in huge casualties estimated at about 400,000 on each side.



Cambrai Nov-Dec 1917. This was the first time that tanks had been used in large numbers. On the first day the British attack broke deeply and quickly into apparently impregnable defences with few casualties. But a later counter attack reversed the success. a "*harum-scarum affair, ill-planned and feebly directed, yet in military history it stands as the most significant battle of the First World War*".

Prosecution of the war required fighting men and the Government used propaganda and pressure to persuade men to volunteer and when that was not enough in 1916 introduced conscription. We have included a number of posters illustrating different aspects of the war and the way posters were used to good effect.



Two simple posters encouraging men to 'join up' as a patriotic duty.

One reason Britain declared war on Germany was when Germany invaded "Poor Little Belgium" and the rumours of Germans bayoneting Belgian women and children.



The Poster Campaign

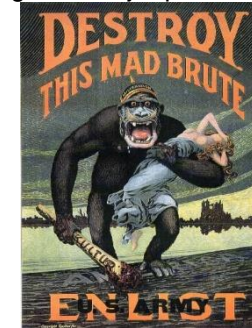


An effective way to get men to enlist was to pressure them through the women of the country.

Britain was not alone in its fight against Germany it was a truly 'Empire' effort and all the countries of the Empire responded.

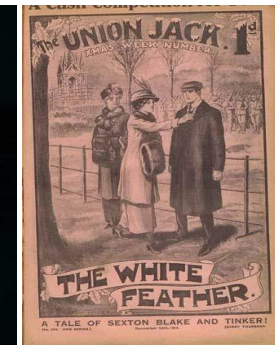


Different countries took different approaches to recruitment. The USA 'King Kong' approach looks frightening by today's standards and the Canadian appeal to the Jewish community is again a major patriotic approach.



White Feathers

Chiefly a phenomenon of Britain, white feathers were typically handed over by young women to men out of uniform during wartime, the implication being that the man concerned was a shirker or a coward. The co-called Organisation of the White Feather was initiated by Admiral Charles Fitzgerald in the opening month of the war and was encouraged by a number of writers, including Mary Ward. The organisation was founded as a means of applying pressure to able bodied men to enlist with the British Army.



Animals in the Great War

At the start of the Great War the world's armies still used horses as the main means of transport, 'pulling power' and for cavalry. The part played by a huge variety of animals during the war is often overlooked as are the numbers which were killed.

Signaller Jim Crow, Royal Field Artillery, summed it up: 'We knew what we were there for; them poor devils didn't, did they?'

Horses, mules, donkeys and Camels



8 Million military horses died in the Great War

A most heart-wrenching account of a draught animal's plight was recorded by Lt R.G.Dixon RGA.

"Heaving about in the filthy mud of the road was an unfortunate mule with both of his forelegs shot away. The poor brute, suffering God knows what untold agonies and terrors, was trying to get to its feet which weren't there. Writhing and heaving, tossing its head about in its wild attempts, not knowing that it no longer had any front legs.

I had my revolver with me, but couldn't get near the animal, which lashed out at us with its hind legs and tossed its head unceasingly. Jerry's shells were arriving pretty fast - we made some desperate attempts to get the mule so I could put a bullet behind its ear into

the brain, but to no avail. By lingering there, trying to put the creature out of its pain I was risking not only my life but also my companions'. The shelling got more intense - perhaps one would hit the poor thing and put it out of its misery".

At the end of the war all but the very best horses The 'standard' and 'poor quality' animals were either auctioned off at rock-bottom prices or sold to French butchers, a terrible fate given the services these brave beasts had performed.

Dogs. Dogs had a vital part to play in World War One as the complexes of trenches spread throughout the Western Front. It is estimated that by 1918, Germany had employed 30,000 dogs, Britain, France and Belgium over 20,000 and Italy 3000. America, at first, did not use dogs except to utilise a few hundred from the Allies for specific missions. Later, after a chance stowaway, the USA produced the most decorated and highly-ranked service dog in military history, **Sergeant Stubby.**



He entered combat on February 5, 1918 at Chemin Des Dames, north of Soissons, and was under constant fire, day and night for over a month. In April 1918, during a raid to take Schieprey, Stubby was wounded in the foreleg by the retreating Germans throwing hand grenades. He was sent to the rear for

convalescence, and as he had done on the front was able to improve morale. When he recovered from his wounds, Stubby returned to the trenches.

After being gassed himself, Stubby learned to warn his unit of poison gas attacks, located wounded soldiers in no man's land, and — since he could hear the whine of incoming artillery shells before humans could — became very adept at letting his unit know when to duck for cover. He was solely responsible for capturing a German spy in the Argonne. Following the retaking of Château-Thierry by the US, the women of the town made Stubby a chamois coat on which were pinned his many medals. He also helped free a French town from the Germans. At the end of the war he was smuggled home.

Lots of dog breeds were used during World War One, but the most popular type of dogs were medium-sized, intelligent and trainable breeds. Two in particular were used because of their superior strength, agility, territorial nature and trainability; Doberman Pinscher's and GSDs, both native to Germany. Other breeds associated with WWI were smaller breeds such as terriers, who were most often employed as 'ratters'; dogs trained to hunt and kill rats in the trenches.

Pigeons. Pigeons played a vital part in World War One as they proved to be an extremely reliable way of sending messages. Such was the importance of pigeons that over 100,000 were used in the war with an astonishing success rate of 95% getting through to their destination with their message.

The last day of the war 11/11/1918

It is frequently thought that the Great War ended at Eleven o'clock on the 11th November 1918. This is true in that a 'cease fire' started then which did hold. But that is not the full story.

Nov. 11th 1918 - The Armistice was signed at 5.10am and came into force at 11am to give time for the information to get to all the front line troops but technology meant that the cities throughout the world knew by 5.40am.



So despite November 11th being the last day of the war, on many parts of the Western Front fighting continued as normal. This meant, of course, that casualties occurred even as the people of Paris, London and New York were celebrating the end of the fighting. In particular, the Americans took heavy casualties on the last day of the war. This was because their commander, General John Pershing, believed that the Germans had to be severely defeated at a military level to effectively teach them a lesson. Pershing saw the terms of the

Armistice as being soft on the Germans. Therefore, he supported those commanders who wanted to be pro-active in attacking German positions – even though he knew that an Armistice had been signed.

The respected American author Joseph E Persico has calculated a shocking figure that the final day of WWI would produce nearly 11,000 casualties, more than those killed, wounded or missing on D-Day 1944.

In other parts it was different:

The morning of November 11 was extremely cold and a white frost covered the Front. Sgt. Walter Sweet marched his platoon from the Monmouthshire Regiment to the next village and was billeting them in a barn when the colonel walked in.

'He wished us good day and looked at his watch. "It is 10am. Men, I am pleased to tell you that in one hour the Armistice comes into force and you will all be able to return to your homes." But the news of the imminent German surrender was greeted with silence. 'We did not cheer,' Sweet recalled. 'But just stood, stunned and bewildered.'

He continued: 'Then, on the stroke of 11am the CO raised his hand and told us that the war was over. That time we cheered, with our tin hats on and our rifles held aloft. For old hands like me, it was funny realising that this day we had waited so long for had come at last.'

From- The Soldier's war - Richard Van Emden.

US soldier Henry Gunther was the last man killed in the Great War; he was shot in a charge against the astonished Germans, they all knew the cease fire was about to start. He died at 10.59am His record shows "*Almost as he fell, the gunfire died away and an appalling silence prevailed.*"

Although the Armistice was signed and effected on 11th November 1918 the War did not officially end until the Treaty of Versailles 28th June 1919. This led to a situation where many churches and war memorials refer to the Great War of 1914 - 1918 and many to 1914 - 1919.

The total losses throughout the war were horrific. Total casualties in the fighting:

British Empire : 1,100,000 soldiers killed; 1,500,000 wounded

France : 1,400,000 soldiers killed; 2,500,000 wounded

Belgium : 50,000 soldiers killed

Italy : 600,000 soldiers killed

Russia : 1,700,000 soldiers killed

America : 116,000 soldiers killed

Those who had fought against the Allies suffered heavy casualties as well:

Germany : 2,000,000 soldiers killed

Austria-Hungary 1,200,000 soldiers killed

Turkey : 325,000 soldiers killed

Bulgaria : 100,000 soldiers killed

Remembering the dead.

There were a number of pitfalls over the issue of Commemoration and the dead of the war. The driving force behind the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was Sir Fabian Ware neither a soldier nor a politician, Ware was nevertheless well placed to respond to the public's reaction to the enormous losses in the war. At 45 he was too old to fight but he became the commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross. Saddened by the sheer number of casualties, he felt driven to find a way to ensure the final resting places of the dead would not be lost forever. His vision chimed with the times. Under his dynamic leadership, his unit began recording and caring for all the graves they could find. By 1915, their work was given official recognition by the War Office and incorporated into the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission.

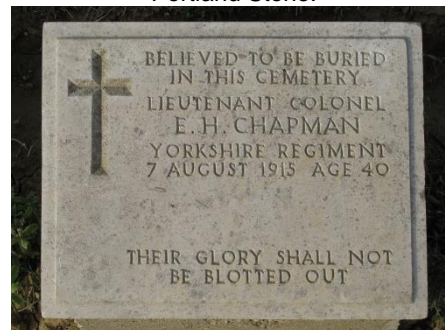
The decision was made that the dead would be buried 'where they fell' and would not be repatriated.

"Of the million British dead of the First World War only one - the unknown Soldier - was ever returned to his native land". After considerable debate "the commission felt it would be inadvisable to leave the provision of memorials to private initiative. If memorials were allowed to be erected in War Cemeteries according to the preference, taste and means of relatives and friends, the result would be that costly monuments put up by the well-to-do over their dead would contrast unkindly with those humbler ones which would be all the poorer folk could afford. The result was a uniform headstone for all, which was regimental in character. No embellishments were allowed, only -Regimental badge, name, rank, regiment, date of death and a short inscription supplied by the next of kin. Permanence was vital It was envisaged that these monuments would still have relevance to people 300 years hence so suitable material needed to be

found for them. The Headstones were to be cut from Portland Stone but in some areas soil conditions, climate and chemicals meant other materials were needed. In Gibraltar it was Cornish Granite, in Basra it was Indian sandstone and Welsh Penrhyn Slate and local quarry stone at Gallipoli.



Portland Stone.



Gallipoli headstone

Remembering the missing.

By 1918 587,000 graves had been identified and 559,000 casualties had been identified as 'missing'. How to commemorate these 'missing dead' led to great debate. The Australians felt each should have a named headstone but the view in Britain was this would lead to people thinking their relative was buried there (false graves). It was decided to have monuments of some sort but whether they should be 'regimental' or 'geographical' led to further debate. Winston Churchill persuaded the cabinet to pay for general memorials to the army as a whole to be erected on the principal battlefields of the war - at Ypres, Mons, Arras, the Hindenburg Line, The Somme, Gallipoli and Jerusalem' with the names of the missing engraved on them. The Dominions and Colonies had their own memorials.



Thiepval memorial - to the missing of the Somme.

Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

There were also 187,861 men buried but having no known name. Their headstone says simply

A Soldier of the Great War

Known unto God.

Medals and awards.

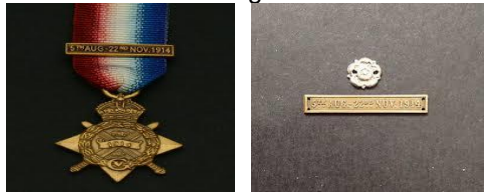
I have not listed all the medals available, such as eg. Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Military Cross just the ones awarded to the men of Whitchurch and Ganarew.



The Armlet for the Volunteer Training Corps: for those in 1914 deemed medically unfit for service. Did other war work but were not in uniform.



Badge for members of the Territorial Force who volunteered to fight overseas



1914 (Mons) Star & Clasp and Roses. The Star was awarded to those who served in France or Belgium between 5th August and 22nd November 1914. The Clasp & Roses was awarded to those in the same period who were within range of enemy mobile artillery.



1914-15 Star the British War Medal The Victory Medal

The 1914–15 Star was approved in 1918, for issue to officers and men of British and Imperial forces who served in any theatre of the War between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915 (other than those who had already qualified for the 1914 Star).

Recipients of this medal also received the British War Medal and Victory Medal – it was never awarded singly. The Victory Medal reverse states "The Great War for Civilisation 1914-1919" The trio of medals were known by the troops as Pip, Squeak & Wilfred after the Daily Mirror cartoon characters.



The two medals British War Medal and Victory Medal were again known as 'Mutt & Jeff' after two more cartoon characters popular at the time.



Mention in Despatches
A spray of Oak Leaves in bronze for those mentioned in despatches but not given a medal. Worn on the Victory Medal.



Military Medal.

The Military Medal (MM) was awarded to warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks for gallantry in action against the enemy (it is inscribed "for bravery in the field'). It ranked below the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

The Silver War Badge, sometimes erroneously called the Silver Wound Badge, was authorised in September 1916. The badge was awarded to all of those military personnel who were discharged as a result of sickness or wounds contracted or received during the war, either at home or overseas. This had come about because it had been the practice of some women to present white feathers to apparently able-bodied young men who were not wearing the King's uniform.



The Memorial Plaque was issued after the First World War to the next-of-kin of all British and Empire service personnel who were killed as a result of the war.

The plaques (more strictly described as plaquettes) were made of bronze, and hence popularly known as the Dead Man's Penny,



The Regiments and units. With the exception of Leading Seaman Jones (Royal Navy - Submarines) all the men of the area who died in the Great War served as soldiers. Able Seaman Berry was in the Navy but served as a soldier in France with the Naval Brigade.

The Army had two 'arms' the Regular Professional Army and the Territorial Force (TF). At the start of the war most of the regular army were sent to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). Territorial Units were sent to parts of the empire such as India, Singapore, Hong Kong to take over from and release regular battalions for the fight in France. In September Lord Kitchener made his appeals for men and large numbers of local men answered the call. Many volunteered for specific units (Herefords, KSLI, Monmouth Regt etc and many of these were TF battalions) but many were part of Kitchener's new armies and allocated to regiments. Over time many of these men were transferred from TF and training battalions to new and newly formed units to fight overseas. Local examples are the 300 men of the Herefords transferred to the 11th Border Regt after the losses of the first day of the Somme, also men of the 2nd and 3rd Bn Herefords were transferred into the 1st Bn to fight and make up the losses in Gallipoli and then Palestine. So many men had several different units on their records and medal cards. Their numbers also changed the TF had short (usually four digit) numbers which were specific to their own unit but as the army grew the TF were re-numbered with 6

digit numbers in 1917; this feature is seen on many medal cards.

Local Regiments. The officers went to units generally where they had some sort of affiliation but local men seemed to have been enlisted into more local regiments such as the Herefordshire Regt. The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, The Monmouthshire Regt. The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, The South Wales Borderers, The Worcestershire Regt and the Gloucestershire Regt. Many of these regiments took part in some of the fiercest fighting on the war and suffered dreadful losses. 1/1st Herefordshire Regt. left Devonport in July 1915 with 998 officers and men en route to Gallipoli - on 12th December they were evacuated from Suvla Bay with less than 100 fit men.

The war also saw the formation of units to meet special circumstances and I have included a few of them here.

The Royal Naval Division.



At the declaration of the war on 4 August 1914, there was a surplus of some 20-30,000 men of the reserves of the Royal Navy who would not find jobs on any ship of war. It was recognised that this was sufficient to form two Naval Brigades and a Brigade of Marines for operations on land. They fought with great distinction in France in 1914, at Gallipoli in 1915 and then from 1916 fought at the Somme, Arras, Cambrai, St Quentin, Albert,

Canal-Du-Nord. They suffered 47,900 casualties.

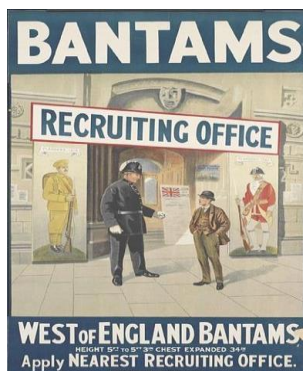
The Pals Battalions

The Pals battalions of World War I were specially constituted units of the Army comprising men who had enlisted together in local recruiting drives, with the promise that they would be able to serve alongside their friends, neighbours and work colleagues ("*pals*"), rather than being arbitrarily allocated to regular Army regiments. The problem came when large numbers of men from the same community were casualties in one battle. The 700 Accrington Pals at the Somme had 235 killed and 350 wounded in twenty minutes. The policy of drawing recruits from amongst the local population ensured that, when the Pals battalions suffered casualties, whole towns, villages, neighbourhoods and communities back in Britain were to suffer disproportionate losses. The effect on a small community was devastating the Newfoundland Regt attacked on 1st July 1916 with 778 men the following day only 68 were left for Roll Call. Many local Regiments had Pals Battalions eg. the 14th Gloucester and the 6th KSLI

The Bantam Battalions

British Army's minimum regulation height was 160 cm. in 1914. The first bantam battalions were recruited in Birkenhead, Cheshire, after Alfred Bigland, MP, heard of a group of miners who, rejected from every recruiting office, had made their way to the town. One of the miners, rejected on account of his size, offered to fight any man there as proof of his suitability as a

soldier, and six men were eventually called upon to remove him. Bantam applicants were men used to physical hard work, and Bigland was so incensed at what he saw as the needless rejection of spirited healthy men, he petitioned the War Office for permission to establish an undersized fighting unit. When the permission was granted, news spread across the country and men previously denied the chance to fight made their way to Birkenhead, 3,000 successful recruits being accepted for service into two new "Bantam battalions" in November 1914. The requirement for their height was between 4 ft 10in (147 cm) and 5 ft 3in (160 cm). Chest size was one inch (2.5 cm) more than the army standard.



Two whole divisions, the 35th and the 40th, were formed from 'Bantam' men, which were virtually annihilated during the Battle of Bourlon. Heavy casualties, transfers to specialized Army tunnelling companies and tank regiments and the introduction of conscription eventually led to Bantam units becoming indistinguishable from other British divisions.

The Cyclist Battalions.



Volunteer cyclist units had been formed as early as the 1880s, with the first complete bicycle unit (the 26th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers) being raised in 1888. Cyclists were employed on an intermittent basis during the South African War - whilst they were not deployed as organised combat formations, the bicycle was found to be invaluable for reconnaissance and communications work, being lighter, quieter, and logistically much easier to support than horses. When the Haldane reforms in 1908 reorganised the volunteers into the Territorial Force, nine battalions of cyclists were formed - one from the 26th Middlesex, five from volunteer infantry battalions, and three newly raised.

The Camel Corps

The camel companies consisted of a small headquarters and four sections, each of seven groups of four men. The establishment of a company was 130 men, all armed with the standard British bolt action rifle of the time, the Lee-Enfield. However the move from patrol to a more combat role in August 1916 led to a re-organisation. Each company added a machine-gun section of fifteen men with three Lewis guns; the company headquarters also received extra staff. All this increased company

strength to 184 men. The four companies were expected to operate as independent units that travelled by camel but then dismounted to fight as infantrymen. Following the practice of cavalry and mounted infantry units, one man of each group of four held the camels when the team was in action, which reduced a team's firepower by a quarter. However it was soon discovered that camels were not as nervous as horses when faced with artillery and rifle fire, and one man would look after twelve to sixteen camels once the troopers had dismounted.

The Tank Corps.



The *Tank Corps* was formed from the Heavy Branch MGC on 27 July 1917. Tanks were used for the first time in action on the battlefield of the Somme on 15 September 1916. 36 Mark 1 tanks of C and D Companies arrived on the start line for the renewal of the Somme offensive. Although they brought fear to the Germans their effectiveness was limited by unreliability and poor performance in the mud. On 4 July 1918 at Le Hamel and in front of Amiens on 8 August 1918, tanks played a central role in the crushing success of the Allied attack.

1296 Corporal Herbert Bowley



3rd Battalion

Monmouthshire Regiment

Herbert Bowley

He was born on September 12th 1893 and baptised on 24th December 1893 in St Michael's Church, Stoke Gifford. They were living at Eastville.

His parents were

Halford Bowley and Eliza Ada Curtis



In 1901 Herbert was living in Harry Stoke with his parents Halford and Eliza (nee Curtis) Bowley. At the home of his grandparents Henry and Ruth Curtis

. (*1901 Census*)

On 19th December 1908 His father Halford came to Liverpool returning from Canada where had had been working as a labourer. (*UK&Ireland incoming passenger lists 1878-1960*)

In 1911 Herbert was working as a collier (hewer) at the Powells Tillery Steam Coal Co. Colliery at Aberstruth (*Grace Guide to British Industrial History*). His Father was

a general labourer with the Gas Company. They were living at Six Bells, Lancaster St, Abertillery. His parents had six children and at 1911 census four were living and two had died. (*1911 Census*)

Army service

1296 Private Herbert Bowley enlisted into the Army (Monmouthshire Regiment) about March 1912 at abertillery. *Service records National Archives. (most of which were burnt in WW2 bombing) show that 1318 Pte Cook joined in May 1912 and 1380 Pte Childs joined in June 1912.* The Monmouthshire Regiment was a Territorial Force unit.

From the 3rd Monmouthshire Regt. War Diaries (national Archives)

4th August 6.10pm. Orders were sent out to Officers and Coys to mobilise and on following day Coys reported themselves at Headquarters in Abergavenny throughout the day. At 9.15pm the Battalion (with 2 horses only) left by train for Pembroke Dock. On 6th and 7th it was routine and training and 8th and 9th August they moved to Oswestry, billeted at Cross Market and the National School, Headquarters was the Queens Hotel, Oswestry. On the 12th August the Battalion was paraded and inspected by the Brigadier who made a strong appeal for volunteers to serve overseas.

(Territorial units were not obliged to serve out of the UK). The remainder of the year the Battalion was involved in routine and training, musketry practice and a great deal of entrenching practice. The regiment had now moved to Cambridge. (*Full details of this period of service are in the Wartime Memories Project (online).*)

1915. January consisted of entrenching and musketry training at the University Range. On 11th February his Majesty the King inspected the Division on Parker's Piece, Cambridge. On 13th Feb. the Battalion (with Corporal Bowley) left for Southampton and embarked on S.S. Chybassa which then sailed for France next day 14th Feb. They arrived at Le Havre at 9.00am on 15th. They moved to Cassell arriving at 5pm and marched in heavy rain to the town where they were billeted.

From the 3rd Mons Website - below

After a gruelling journey by train and forced march, the battalion reached billets at Steenworde. Here they were to stay for the next ten days for their final training in the techniques of trench warfare. A detachment were sent to form a tunnelling unit. Meanwhile, having been transported to Bailleul in a fleet of 100 London omnibuses, the rest of the unit was posted to the 83rd Brigade of the 28th Division

under the overall command of Major General Bulfin on March 6th. On the night of March 12th, 1915 the battalion was sent into the front line near a small village called Wulverghem about 5 miles south of Ypres. They were responsible for about 1000 yards of the trenches known as 10a and 10b. They stayed here for five days and were under heavy fire almost continually. Private A. E. Jones, of the Machine Gun Section (under Lieutenant Martin of the Hill) wrote home:

"The Gun Section has been in the trenches. We went in last Friday week and came out on Wednesday night . . . We had two killed and eight wounded out of our battalion, so you can guess we had it a bit rough . . . The trench I was in had it the worst, I think, as they knew we had the machine gun there. I thought our number was up, as they shelled us for an hour and ten minutes. I don't think I want to go through the same thing again. One good thing was we had fine weather during the time we were there . . . On April 8th, the battalion was transported by bus to Ypres, the 3rd Mons had moved straight into the front line. They were to relieve French troops to the east of Polygon Wood and spent the next four days in the firing line. Private Reg Pritchard wrote home to his sister:

"It is much worse fighting where we are now to what it was in the last place. One

of the chaps out of the same section as I am got wounded in the leg yesterday morning as we were leaving the trenches. One man got killed in our company by a trench mortar shell, he was in the same platoon as dad."

From the War diaries.

18th Marched to Steenvoorde and billeted. 19th Trench digging and route march, 40 Officers and men sent for trench work around Ypres (these men were actually involved in digging the mine which eventually was blown at Hill 60 - they were joined by mining experts from Monmouth who had been digging the London Tube systems.). 20th Trench digging, 21st Long route march and practice 'advance under artillery fire and attack'. Same work and practice until 28th Feb. when route marched to Caestre and then by motor to Bailleul. Billeted at St Jans Cappel.

March. 1st Marched to Ravelsburgh and billeted. 2-11th March. Training, bombing practice, attached to other units for trench experience. 12th. Proceeded to the trenches for duty on a 500 yards frontage. In the trenches until 17th. 8 casualties, one KIA 7 GSW. (Gunshot wounds). Relieved on 17th. 18-23rd training, physical exercise, divine service etc. Then back in the trenches relieving King's Own Royal Lancasters at Wulverghem. 23-26th in trenches fairly

quiet 1 man killed 2 men wounded. 27th March. Battalion in trenches, heavily shelled by enemy's guns in the morning, great precision was made by the enemy in searching where the men were taken, following them, it must be presumed that good observation was being carried out. 7 Men Killed in action. 5 men wounded and transferred to the Field Ambulance at Drancoutre. 28th March. Battalion rested in billets. 29th. Officers and 500 men sent to Wulverghem as working parties 30th. drill and inspection of arms. 31st Batt. relieved K.O.R.L in the trenches.

Private A. E. Jones, of the Machine Gun Section (under Lieutenant Martin of the Hill) wrote home: "The Gun Section has been in the trenches. We went in last Friday week and came out on Wednesday night . . . We had two killed and eight wounded out of our battalion, so you can guess we had it a bit rough . . . The trench I was in had it the worst, I think, as they knew we had the machine gun there. I thought our number was up, as they shelled us for an hour and ten minutes. I don't think I want to go through the same thing again. One good thing was we had fine weather during the time we were there .

April. 1st Considerable shelling on both sides. 2nd. Relieved by South Staffs considerable shelling during relief. 3-7th Rest, training, divine service. 8th

Motorbus to Zonnebeke to relieve 146 French Regiment. 9th 'B' Coy suffered a good deal from bomb throwing 'D' Coy also suffered some shrapnel damage 2 dead 12 wounded. 10th April Trenches suffered from shrapnel and good deal of parapets blown down, 1 man KIA 5 wounded and sent to 83rd Field Ambulance. *(The Field Ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit (it was not a vehicle - www. The longlong trail)* Private Reg Pritchard wrote home to his sister: "It is much worse fighting where we are now to what it was in the last place. One of the chaps out of the same section as I am got wounded in the leg yesterday morning as we were leaving the trenches. One man got killed in our company by a trench mortar shell, he was in the same platoon as dad."

11th A hostile aeroplane flew over the dugout and dressing station dropping two bombs neither of which exploded. Sgt Hailstone had his feet blown off in trenches, had his feet amputated by M.O. but died later, one other wounded and one man wounded by his own rifle shooting him in the arm. 12th Battalion relieved and marched back to billets. 12-17th Battalion rested. 17th evening Battalion proceeded to trenches.

From the 3rd Mons Website - below
The gas attack of April 22nd had caused widespread panic among French troops and German forces swept through the

gaps which opened up in the front line. Canadian and British troops struggled to hold back the attack but, after suffering constant shelling and very high casualties, they were forced to retreat to a new defensive line. The 3rd Mons evacuated Polygon Wood on the night of May 2nd/3rd and reformed on the new G.H.Q. line at Potizje.

From the war diaries.

17-28th April in trenches near Polygon Wood a fierce battle was fought with bomb throwing, artillery barrages, trench mortars throughout this period. Casualties were: 9 Killed in action 55 wounded. 29th April Very quiet day.

3rd Mons website

May 1915.

The evening of May 4th saw the beginning of a terrible German bombardment followed by a fresh attack. Casualties were horrendous and the front line troops soon became exhausted. The next morning (May 5th) Capt. Steel led half of C Company up to reinforce the front line. They were caught by German machine gun fire and suffered terrible casualties.

On the morning of May 8th, the battalion had three companies in the front line and one in support. Half a mile to the north, the 1st Monmouths were fighting with the 83rd Brigade. The German bombardment

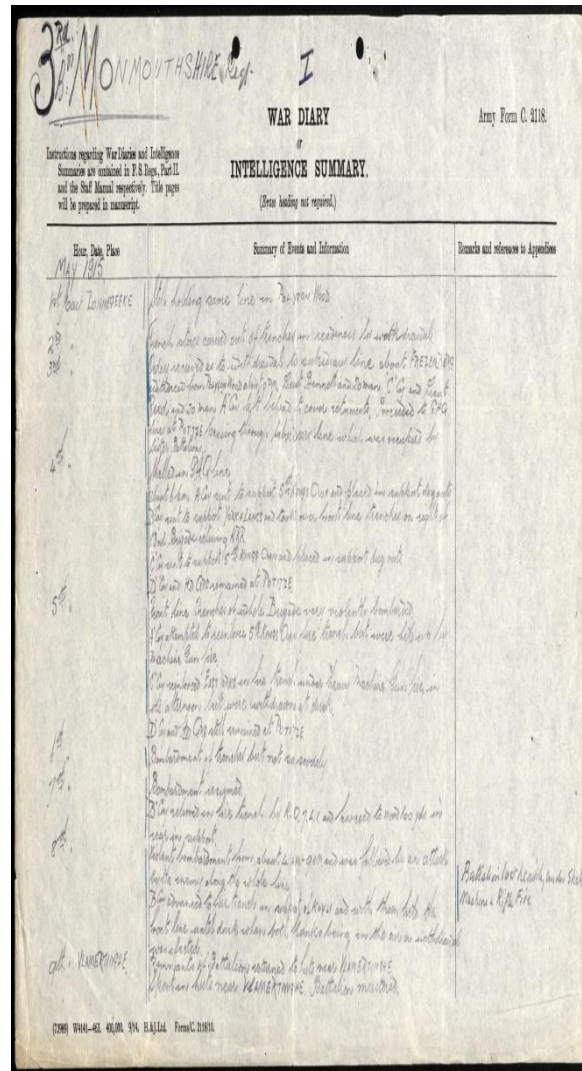
began at 5.30 a.m. followed by the first infantry attack at 8.30. This was driven off. Almost immediately, the shelling started again and, at 9.00 a.m., the Germans attacked again and were again driven back. This was to be the pattern throughout the day. After another hour of shelling, the front line was virtually destroyed and there were few survivors from A and D Companies. Those that were left were wiped out by machine gun fire trying to evacuate the front line trenches. Of the 500 men in A and D Companies only 29 were left.

On 8th May 1915 during the 2nd Battle of Ypres, the battalion made one of the most gallant stands in military history when in obeying the order to stand to the last man in, the battalion was practically annihilated, without giving an inch of ground to the enemy, the battalion lost 703 in killed and wounded; all but a handful of officers and men remained. *(From CWM & Waunlwyd community archive).*

Casualties between April 22nd-May 8th had been horrendous. Of the 1020 soldiers of the 3rd Battalion the Monmouthshire Regiment who had arrived in France in February 1915, only 134 were left alive on the morning of May 10th. On May 14th, what was left of the battalion was moved to the village of Winnezele in France for a period of rest and re-organisation.

War diaries.

9th May 1915 Remnants of Battalion returned to huts near Vlamertinghe. Composite Battalion mustered. 10th at Potijze in trenches 3rd Mons in GHQ line. 11th Composite Battalion relieved by Cavalry, Mons by Queen's Bays. 12-15th moved to Poperinghe then Winnezele, in billets, had baths and reformed. War Diary entry for 3rd Monmouthshire Regt. Early May 1915.



11th May 1915 Herbert Bowley **died?** and was buried in Poelcapelle British Cemetery.

The Army had rules on description KIA killed in action meant you were killed in a battle, DOW died of wounds usually meant you were taken from the trench or immediate area but died shortly after. Died as is the case with Cpl Bowley means you died either of illness or a while after the battle, in his case he almost was wounded in the battle of earlier in May and died from his injuries.

The inscription on his grandparents headstone says he died on 7th May 1915 CWGC (Commonwealth War Graves Commission) gives his date of death as 11th May 1915

The Register of Soldiers effects gives his date of death as 'early in May'. It seems most likely that he actually died in the dreadful battle on the 8th May when they lost over 700 men and there would have been such confusion that times and dates would easily have become lost or misunderstood in transit. (Bill)

Name		Corps	Rank	Regt. S.A.
BOWLEY Herbert.		Monmouth R	Cpl	1296
Serial	Roll	Page	Remarks	
15	7/1/14 B	735	Vn. Rvg 173 23.5.17.	
Theatre of War first served in		Date of entry therein		
0)		13.2.15		

Correspondence.

Address.

He was awarded the



1914/15 Star, The British War Medal and the Victory Medal

owley's grave in Poelcapelle and his parents in Stoke Gifford. Halford has been inscribed as Alfred on the stone.







St Michael's Church Stoke Gifford.
Poelcapelle cemetery

In Memory of
Corporal
H Bowley

1296, 3rd Bn., Monmouthshire Regiment who died on 11 May 1915 Age 21

Son of Halford and Eliza Bowley, of Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
Poelcapelle British Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

S/28492 Rifleman Howard Cook



3rd Battalion
Rifle Brigade
"The Prince Consort's
Own"
(Previously 95th Rifles)

Howard Cook

He was born in Alderton, Wiltshire on 6th June 1896 and baptised on 6th September same year. His father was Thomas John Cook a farm labourer and his mother

Florence Curtis and they had married on 9th December 1893 at Alderton. At 1901 census they were living at Alderton and they were still there in 1911 where Howard was a Stable Boy, they had six children: at 1911 four were still living two had died.. At some stage after 1911 the family moved to Little Stoke, Patchway which was where Howard was living when he joined up in 1915.

Army Service The Great War

22906 Private Howard Cook enlisted into the 11th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment and was attested on 13th November 1915 he was put on the reserves list on 14th Nov. and Mobilised on 23rd June 1916. He gave his occupation as Farm Labourer from Little Stoke.



He was posted on 24th June to the 11th Battalion Gloucesters. and transferred to the 16th Battalion on 1st September 2016
11th (Reserve) Battalion Formed in Abbey Wood (Woolwich) in October 1914 as a Service Battalion of K4 and came under command of 106th Brigade, original 35th

Division. Moved to Cheltenham. 10 April 1915 : became a Reserve battalion. Moved to Belhus Park (Grays) and in September 1915 went to Seaford. 1 September 1916 : converted into 16th Training Reserve Battalion of 4th Reserve Brigade.

On 2nd December 1916 he was posted to the 12th Battalion Rifle Brigade and attached to the 178 Tunnelling Company and posted permanently to them on 23rd December. The first nine companies, numbers 170 to 178, were each commanded by a regular Royal Engineers officer. These companies each comprised 5 officers and 269 sappers; they were aided by additional infantrymen who were temporarily attached to the tunnellers as required

After its work at Fricourt, 178th Tunnelling Company moved up to try to mine enemy positions in High Wood, as the advance progressed in July 1916. In late summer of 1916, the unit drove a mine at High Wood at just 7.6 metres (25 ft) depth, 98 metres (320 ft) long, which they charged with 1,400 kilograms (3,000 lb) of ammonal. It was blown thirty seconds before Zero Hour on 3 September 1916. After advancing British infantry had failed to capture the crater permanently, 178th Tunnelling Company reopened the gallery,

charged it with another 1,400 kilograms (3,000 lb) of ammonal and blew the mine again on 9 September. This time the crater was successfully held.

On 3rd January 1917 he reported sick with Trench Feet and was sent to 15 CMDS (Main Dressing Station - front line Medical unit).



Dressing station

Then moved on to 2/2 London CCS (Casualty Clearing Station) situated at Grovetown, Meaulte, Somme.

Arrived France 23 August 1916;
Grovetown Sep 16 - Apr 17;
Peronne-la-Chapelle briefly in
Apr 17; Tincourt Jul 17 - Aug 17;

Known as
2/2nd
London

Mar 18 - Apr 18; Longpre Apr 18 - Aug 18;	CCS
--	-----

He was then sent on 5th January 1917 to No 10 General Hospital, Rouen with Trench Feet. On 10th January 1917 Rifleman Cook was evacuated back to England on HMHS Glenart Castle. He spent 20 days in Northampton/Duston War Hospital and then 42 days in VAD Kettering (*Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) The VAD system was founded in 1909 with the help of the British Red Cross and Order of St John. By the summer of 1914 there were over 2,500 Voluntary Aid Detachments in Britain. Of the 74,000 VAD members in 1914, two-thirds were women and girls*)



Rushton Hall, Kettering (VAD in WW1)
He was discharged on 13th March 1917.
24th March he was posted back to the 6th (Reserve) Rifle Brigade at Sheerness.
On 16th June 1917 he was sent back to France disembarking at Le Havre. He

was posted to 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade and joined them in the Field on 12th July 1917.

From the War Diaries. At Cremarest.
12th July 1917 2nd Lts Roderick and Munday arrived with 164 ORs.
13th Brigade sports.
14th Battalion open shooting competition
16th Battalion cross country competition.
17th Left Cremarest marched 15 miles to Nielles le Bequin and billeted.
18th Marched to camp at Lumbres.
19th Marched to camp at Renescure
20th Marched to Caste
21st Marched to Eecke
22nd Marched to Steenevoorde. 10 OR reinforcements arrived
24th Battalion paraded for address by Archbishop of York.
25th Marched to Micmac camp.
26th. 12 OR reinforcements arrived
28th 2/Lt Birch arrived
29th 2/Lt Farmer arrived.
30th. Battalion marched to trenches for attack.
31st. Attack at Zillebeke, Pilckem Ridge.

*Passchendaele
The Battle of Pilckem Ridge (31 July – 2 August 1917) was the opening attack of the Third Battle of Ypres in the First World War. The British Fifth Army, supported by*

the Second Army on the southern flank and the French 1^{re} Armée (First Army) on the northern flank, attacked the German 4th Army, which defended the Western Front from Lille northwards to the Ypres Salient in Belgium and on to the North Sea coast. On 31 July, the Anglo-French armies captured Pilckem (Flemish: Pilkem) Ridge and areas on either side, the French attack being a great success. After several weeks of changeable weather, heavy rain fell during the afternoon of 31 July.



Stretcher bearers at Passchendaele
The British Official History recorded Fifth Army casualties for 31 July – 3 August as 27,001, of which 3,697 were fatal
 Rifleman Cook was wounded in action on 31st July 1917, he was reported as wounded and missing and a little later

same day as unofficially reported as Killed in Action.

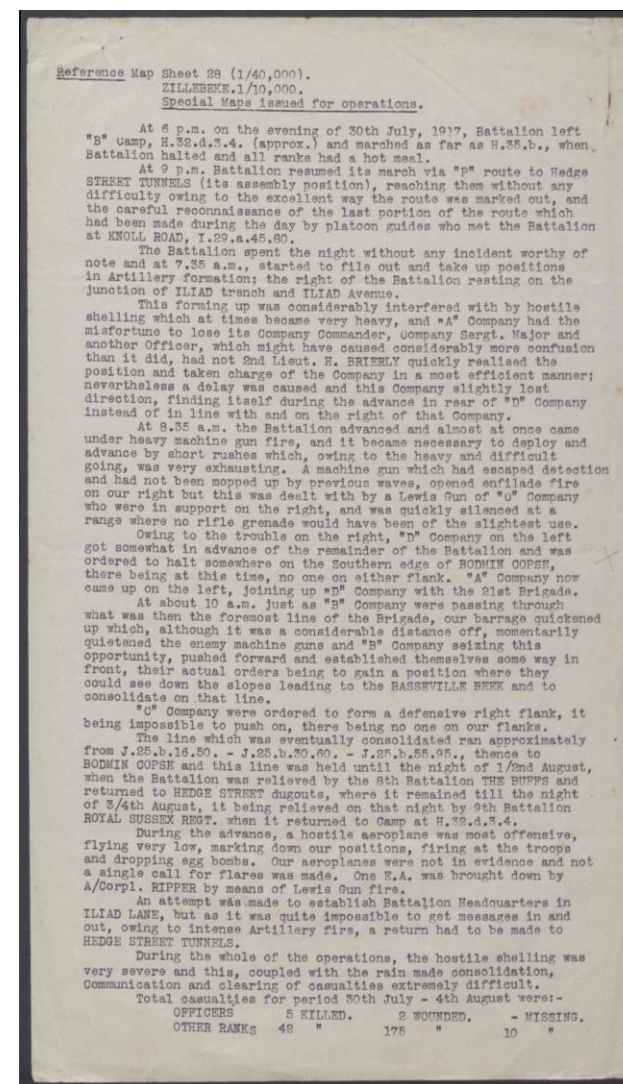
Battalion casualties were

Killed in action 47

Wounded 177

Missing 10

War Diary (3rd Rifle Brigade) report of the battle is below.



I wish to call your attention to the good work done by the following Officers, N.C.Os. and R'men.

Captain T.A. TATTON.
 Captain R.B. LADDEN.
 2nd Lieut. T. FENNER.
 " " H. BRIERLY.
 " " J. MUNDAY.

130 Serjt. Jennings, T.
 S/10010 R'man. Nellist, A.
 4253 " Jones, C.
 S/10748 A/Cpl. Ripper, C.
 5358 R'man. Butler, A.
 S/10778 " Voss, A.
 S/11409 " Brockland, J.
 S/ 2609 " Henderson, J.
 Z/ 1241 " Ross, F.
 S/10441 " Donoghue, D.
 S/15597 " Shaw, J.
 1172 " Rumm, W.
 S/ 2540 A/Cpl. Blanchflower, U.
 B/ 213 R'man. Kemp, A.
 S/ 5218 " Carter, W.

Lieut. Col.
 Commanding 3rd Battalion The Rifle Brigade.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
COOK	Rif Brig	1/c	5/28492
Howard			
Month	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	11/102	19/25	3284
BRITISH			
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1300.

Correspondence.

Address.

1945-1941 W. W. 2047-2141 2070a. 1019 II. 22. 234. 54701256

He was awarded



The British War Medal and the Victory Medal

In Memory of
 Rifleman
Howard Cook

S/28492, 3rd Bn., Rifle Brigade who died on 31 July 1917 Age 21
 Son of Thomas John and Florence Cook, of Little Stoke, Patchway, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
 Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

RMA 13445 Gunner George Thomas Everett



Royal Marine Artillery

George Thomas Everett

He was born 18th June 1894 Axminster, Devon.

His parents were Henry Edward Matthews Everett and Louisa Jane Veasey they had seven children: Olive Daisy Everett 1887 - 1968, Margaret Everett 1889 -, Frank James Everett 1891 - 1984, George Thomas Everett 1894 - 1916, William Alfred Everett 1897 - 1918, Violet Louise Everett 1904 - 1965, Lillian Beatrice Everett 1908 - 1963.

1901 census The family were living at 20 Victoria Place, Springbourne, Bournemouth where Henry was domestic gardener.

1911 census and George had left home and was a Footman at the home of George Bevan Bowen, Llwyngwair, Newport, Pembrokeshire.

The Royal Marines.

13445 Private George Thomas Everett enlisted into the Royal Marine Artillery on 30th April 1913 at Bristol. He was 5ft 10 ins. tall, had Brown Eyes, Dk Brown hair a fresh complexion, moles on his left breast and cheek and a scar on his forehead.

He was also listed as 'able to swim' and was Curch of England. He did his basic training at The Portsmouth division of the Royal Marines located at Eastney Barracks, which opened in 1864 to house the whole of the Royal Marines Artillery (RMA) Division. He completed this on 31/12/1913 and from 1/1/1914 until 5/2/1914 he trained to be a Gunner 2nd class. From 6/2/1914 until 23/4/1914 he trained to be a Gunner at the Gunnery School. On 24th April 1914 he embarked as a Gunner on HMS Invincible.

HMS Invincible



Her refit at Portsmouth Dockyard began in March 1914 and was interrupted by the declaration of war on Germany on 4 August. She was declared operational on 12 August, when Rear-Admiral Sir Archibald Gordon Moore, commanding the 2nd Battlecruiser Squadron, hoisted his flag in her. He was ordered to the Humber, along with the battlecruiser *New*

Zealand, where he could better support the British ships patrolling the Broad Fourteens.

Invincible's first action was as part of the battlecruiser force under the command of Admiral Beatty during the Battle of Heligoland Bight operation on 28 August 1914. Beatty's ships had originally been intended as distant support of the British cruisers and destroyers closer to the German coast in case large units of the High Seas Fleet sortied in response to the British attacks. They turned south at full speed at 11:35 when the British light forces failed to disengage on schedule and the rising tide meant that German capital ships would be able to clear the bar at the mouth of the Jade estuary. The brand-new light cruiser *Arethusa* had been crippled earlier in the battle and was under fire from the German light cruisers *Strassburg* and *Cöln* when Beatty's battlecruisers loomed out of the mist at 12:37. *Strassburg* was able to duck into the mists and evade fire, but *Cöln* remained visible and was quickly crippled by fire from the squadron. Beatty was distracted from the task of finishing her off by the sudden appearance of the elderly light cruiser *Ariadne* directly to his front. He turned in pursuit and reduced her to a flaming hulk in only three salvos at close range (under 6,000 yards (5.5 km)). At 13:10, Beatty turned north and made a

general signal to retire.^[19] At this time, *Invincible*, trailing the main body of battlecruisers, opened fire on *Cöln*. She fired 18 rounds, all misses, before Beatty's main body encountered the crippled *Cöln* shortly after turning north and she was sunk by two salvos from *Lion*.

The West Indies Squadron of Rear-Admiral Christopher Cradock was destroyed by the German German East Asia Squadron commanded by Vice-Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee during the Battle of Coronel on 1 November 1914

The British, after their defeat at the Battle of Coronel sent a large force to track down and destroy the victorious German cruiser squadron.

On 11 November, *Invincible* and *Inflexible* left Devonport, although repairs to *Invincible* were incomplete and she sailed with workmen still aboard.

Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee—commanding the German squadron of two armoured cruisers, SMS *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, the light cruisers SMS *Nürnberg*, *Dresden* and *Leipzig*, and the colliers SS *Baden*, SS *Santa Isabel*, and SS *Seydlitz*—attempted to raid the British supply base at Stanley in the Falkland Islands. The British squadron—

consisting of the battlecruisers HMS *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, the armoured cruisers HMS *Carnarvon*, *Cornwall* and *Kent*, the armed merchant cruiser HMS *Macedonia* and the light cruisers HMS *Bristol* and *Glasgow*—had arrived in the port the day before

the ships arrived on the morning of 7 December. The famous ship SS *Great Britain*—reduced to a coal bunker—supplied coal to *Invincible* and *Inflexible*. Spee's cruisers—*Gneisenau* and *Nürnberg*—approached Stanley first. At the time, the entire British fleet was coaling. It was 13:00 when the British battlecruisers opened fire, but it took them half an hour to get the range of SMS *Leipzig*. Realising that he could not outrun the British ships, Spee decided to engage them with his armoured cruisers alone, to give the light cruisers a chance to escape. He turned to fight just after 13:20. The German armoured cruisers had the advantage of a freshening north-west breeze, which caused the funnel smoke of the British ships to obscure their target practically throughout the action. *Gneisenau's* second-in-command Hans Pochhammer indicated that there was a long respite for the Germans during the early stages of the battle, as the British attempted unsuccessfully to force Admiral Spee away from his advantageous position. Despite initial success by

Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in striking *Invincible*, the British capital ships suffered little damage. Spee then turned to escape, but the battlecruisers came within extreme firing range 40 minutes later. HMS *Invincible* and HMS *Inflexible* engaged Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, while Sturdee detached his cruisers to chase SMS Leipzig and SMS Nürnberg.

HMS *Inflexible* and HMS *Invincible* turned to fire broadsides at the armoured cruisers and Spee responded by trying to close the range. His flagship SMS Scharnhorst took extensive damage with funnels flattened, fires and a list. The list became worse at 16:04, and she sank by 16:17, taking von Spee and the entire crew with her. SMS Gneisenau continued to fire and evade until 17:15, by which time her ammunition had been exhausted, and her crew allowed her to sink at 18:02. During her death throes, Admiral Sturdee continued to engage SMS Gneisenau with his two battlecruisers and the cruiser HMS Carnarvon, rather than detaching one of the battlecruisers to hunt down the escaping Dresden. 190 of SMS Gneisenau's crew were rescued from the water. Both of the British battlecruisers had received about 40 hits between them from the German ships, with one crewman killed and four injured.

Meanwhile, SMS Nürnberg and SMS

Leipzig had run from the British cruisers. SMS Nürnberg was running at full speed but in need of maintenance, while the crew of the pursuing HMS Kent were pushing her boilers and engines to the limit. SMS Nürnberg finally turned for battle at 17:30. HMS Kent had the advantage in shell weight and armour. SMS Nürnberg suffered two boiler explosions around 18:30, giving the advantage in speed and manoeuvrability to HMS Kent. The German ship then rolled over and sank at 19:27 after a long chase. The cruisers HMS Glasgow and HMS Cornwall had chased down SMS Leipzig; HMS Glasgow closed to finish SMS Leipzig, which had run out of ammunition but was still flying her battle ensign. SMS Leipzig fired two flares, so HMS Glasgow ceased fire. At 21:23, more than 80 mi (70 nmi; 130 km) southeast of the Falklands, she also rolled over and sank, leaving only 18 survivors. During the course of the main battles, Sturdee had despatched Captain Fanshawe on HMS Bristol, together with HMS Macedonia, to destroy the colliers. Baden and Santa Isabel were chased, stopped, and (after removing the crews) sunk by HMS Bristol and HMS Macedonia at 19:00. Seydlitz had taken a separate course and escaped. After the battle, *Invincible* made temporary repairs at Port Stanley and headed for Gibraltar, where she could be drydocked for more

permanent repairs. This took a month, and the opportunity was taken to extend the height of her fore funnel by 15 feet (4.6 m) to reduce the amount of smoke blocking visibility from the bridge and spotting top. *Invincible* sailed to England on 15 February 1915 and joined the Grand Fleet. On 21 February, the British battlecruiser force was organised into three squadrons of the Battlecruiser Fleet, with the 3rd Battlecruiser Squadron (BCS) that was to consist of the three *Invincible*-class ships once *Inflexible* arrived from the Mediterranean. She was refitted between 25 April and 12 May to have four worn-out 12-inch guns replaced and the secondary armament reduced and given casemates. Rear-Admiral Horace Hood took command of the 3rd BCS on 27 May 1915 and hoisted his flag in *Invincible*.

The 1st and 3rd BCS had sortied in response to the German bombardment of Yarmouth and Lowestoft on 24–25 April 1916, but failed to locate the German ships in heavy weather. During the return home, *Invincible* was rammed by the patrol yacht *Goissa* at 23:07. *Goissa*'s bow was embedded in *Invincible*'s side which partially stove-in. *Invincible*'s speed was reduced to 12 knots (22 km/h; 14 mph) through flooding and she was forced to haul out of line and proceed independently to Rosyth for repairs which lasted until 22 May 1916.

Jutland

At the end of May 1916, the 3rd Battlecruiser Squadron was temporarily assigned to the Grand Fleet for gunnery practice. On 30 May, the entire Grand Fleet, along with Admiral Beatty's battlecruisers, had been ordered to sea to prepare for an excursion by the German High Seas Fleet. In order to support Beatty, Admiral Hood took his three battlecruisers ahead of the Grand Fleet. At about 14:30, *Invincible* intercepted a radio message from the British light cruiser *Galatea*, attached to Beatty's Battlecruiser Force, reporting the sighting of two enemy cruisers. This was amplified by other reports of seven enemy ships steering north. Hood interpreted this as an attempt to escape through the Skagerrak and ordered an increase in speed to 22 kn (41 km/h) at 15:11 and steered East-Southeast to cut off the fleeing ships. Twenty minutes later, *Invincible* intercepted a message from Beatty reporting five enemy battlecruisers in sight and later signals reporting that he was engaging the enemy on a south-easterly course. At 16:06, Hood ordered full speed and a course of south-southeast in an attempt to converge on Beatty. At 16:56, with no British ships in sight, Hood requested Beatty's course, position and speed, but never received a reply.

Hood continued on course until 17:40, when gunfire was spotted in the direction to which his light cruiser *Chester* had been dispatched to investigate other gunfire flashes. *Chester* encountered four light cruisers of Hipper's 2nd Scouting Group and was badly damaged before Hood turned to investigate and was able to drive the German cruisers away from *Chester*. At 17:53, *Invincible* opened fire on *Wiesbaden* and the other two *Invincibles* followed two minutes later. The German ships turned for the south after fruitlessly firing torpedoes at 18:00 and attempted to find shelter in the mist. As they turned *Invincible* hit *Wiesbaden* in the engine room and knocked out her engines while *Inflexible* hit *Pillau* once. The 2nd Scouting Group was escorted by the light cruiser *Regensburg* and 31 destroyers of the 2nd and 9th Flotillas and the 12th Half-Flotilla which attacked the 3rd BCS in succession. They were driven off by Hood's remaining light cruiser *Canterbury* and the five destroyers of his escort. In a confused action, the Germans only launched 12 torpedoes and disabled the destroyer *Shark* with gunfire. Having turned due west to close on Beatty's ships, the three *Invincible*-class battlecruisers were broadside to the oncoming torpedoes, but *Invincible* turned north, while *Inflexible* and *Indomitable* turned south to present their narrowest profile to the torpedoes. All the torpedoes

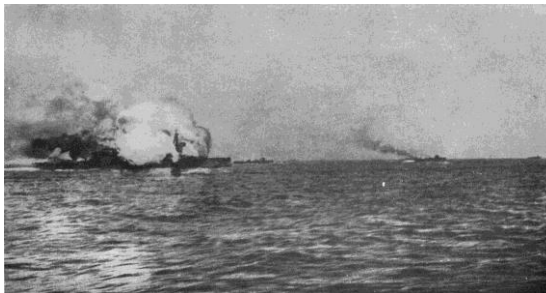
missed, although one passed underneath *Inflexible* without detonating. As *Invincible* turned north, her helm jammed and she had to come to a stop to fix the problem, but this was quickly done and the squadron reformed heading west.



The two shattered halves of *Invincible* temporarily standing on the seabed

At 18:21, with both Beatty and the Grand Fleet converging on him, Hood turned south to lead Beatty's battlecruisers. Hipper's battlecruisers were 9,000 yards (8.2 km) away and the *Invincibles* almost immediately opened fire on Hipper's flagship *Lützow* and *Derfflinger*. *Indomitable* hit *Derfflinger* three times and *Seydlitz* once while the *Lützow* quickly took 10 hits from *Lion*, *Inflexible* and *Invincible*, including two hits below the waterline forward by *Invincible* that would ultimately doom her. At 18:30 *Invincible* abruptly appeared as a clear target before *Lützow* and *Derfflinger*. The two German ships then fired three salvos each at *Invincible* and sank her in 90 seconds. At

least one 305 mm (12-inch) shell from the third salvo struck her midships 'Q' turret. The shell penetrated the front of 'Q' turret, blew off the roof and detonated the midships magazines, which blew the ship in half. The explosion possibly ignited 'A' and 'X' magazines. Of her complement, 1026 officers and men were killed, including Rear-Admiral Hood. There were only six survivors picked up by *Badger*. Five of the six were stationed in the fire-control top located on the tripod foremast; the other man was stationed in 'Q' turret itself. When the magazine exploded he was somehow thrown clear of the ship.



Invincible blowing up, taken from a nearby destroyer.

Only

Name *Everett* Register No. *3445* Division *11th Div*

George Thomas

RECORD OF SERVICE		RECORD OF SERVICE		RECORD OF SERVICE	
Date	Place	Date	Place	Date	Place
1898	...	1898	...	1898	...
1899	...	1899	...	1899	...
1900	...	1900	...	1900	...
1901	...	1901	...	1901	...
1902	...	1902	...	1902	...
1903	...	1903	...	1903	...
1904	...	1904	...	1904	...
1905	...	1905	...	1905	...
1906	...	1906	...	1906	...
1907	...	1907	...	1907	...
1908	...	1908	...	1908	...
1909	...	1909	...	1909	...
1910	...	1910	...	1910	...
1911	...	1911	...	1911	...
1912	...	1912	...	1912	...
1913	...	1913	...	1913	...
1914	...	1914	...	1914	...
1915	...	1915	...	1915	...
1916	...	1916	...	1916	...
1917	...	1917	...	1917	...
1918	...	1918	...	1918	...
1919	...	1919	...	1919	...
1920	...	1920	...	1920	...
1921	...	1921	...	1921	...
1922	...	1922	...	1922	...
1923	...	1923	...	1923	...
1924	...	1924	...	1924	...
1925	...	1925	...	1925	...
1926	...	1926	...	1926	...
1927	...	1927	...	1927	...
1928	...	1928	...	1928	...
1929	...	1929	...	1929	...
1930	...	1930	...	1930	...
1931	...	1931	...	1931	...
1932	...	1932	...	1932	...
1933	...	1933	...	1933	...
1934	...	1934	...	1934	...
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1945	...	1945	...	1945	...
1946	...	1946	...	1946	...
1947	...	1947	...	1947	...
1948	...	1948	...	1948	...
1949	...	1949	...	1949	...
1950	...	1950	...	1950	...

George Thomas 250

Service record

Officers and Men Killed in Action H.M.S. Invincible Jutland Bank, 31st May 1916.

Extract from the Official History; "
Naval Operations" by Sir Julian S.
Corbett. 1923

.....At 6.32 Admiral Beatty reached his station ahead of the battle fleet. Ahead of him again was Admiral Hood with his three battle cruisers, leading the fleet, and leading it in a manner worthy of the honoured name he bore. Upon him was concentrated the fire of three or four of Admiral Hipper's five ships. Under pressure of the oncoming British Dreadnoughts they had turned again to the southward. For the past ten minutes the action between them and the "Invincibles" had been growing hot upon similar courses, and Admiral Hood with Captain A. L. Cay, his flag-captain, at his side was directing it from the bridge. Having the advantage of the light he was giving more than he received. The range was down below 9,000 yards, but it was the greatest that visibility would permit, and he was

doing too well to alter. "Several shells," says Commander von Hase of the *Derfflinger*, "pierced our ship with a terrific force and exploded with a tremendous roar which shook every seam and rivet. The captain had again frequently to steer the ship out of the line to get clear of the hail of fire." So heavy was the punishment he was inflicting that Admiral Hood hailed Commander Dannreuther, his gunnery officer, in the control top, and called to him, "Your firing is very good. Keep at it as quickly as you can. Every shot is telling." They were the last words he is known to have spoken. Just then the mist was riven and from the *Derfflinger* her tormentor was suddenly silhouetted against a light patch of sky. Then as another salvo from the *Invincible* straddled her she began rapid salvos in reply, in which probably the *König* joined with as many. One after another they went home on the *Invincible*. Flames shot up from the gallant flagship, and there came again the awful spectacle of a fiery burst, followed by a huge column of dark smoke which, mottled with blackened debris, swelled up hundreds of feet in the air, and the mother of all battle cruisers had gone to join the other two that were no more. As her two consorts swerved round her seething

death-bed they could see she was rent in two; her stem and stern rose apart high out of the troubled waters as though she had touched the bottom, and near by a group of half a dozen men were clinging to a life raft, cheering the ships as they raced by to continue the fight.¹ So in the highest exultation of battle—doing all a man could do for victory—the intrepid Admiral met his end, gilding in his death with new lustre the immortal name of Hood.....

George Thomas Everett, son of Henry and Louisa J Everett, of Greenwood, Stoke Gifford, Bristol. Gunner (RMA/13445) Royal Marine Artillery. Killed in action aged 21 years whilst serving aboard HMS Invincible at the Battle of Jutland (North Sea) 31/05/16. Commemorated on Portsmouth Naval Memorial. Sources: 1917 Naval Who's Who Jutland casualty lists and CWGC data base.

Name: George Thomas Everett
Rank: Gunner
Birth Date: 18 Jun 1894
Birth Place: Stoke Gifford, Bristol
Branch of Service: Royal Marine Artillery
Cause of Death: Killed or died as a direct result of enemy action
Official Number Port Division: R.M.A/13445. (Po)
Death Date: 31 May 1916
Ship or Unit: HMS Invincible
Location of Grave: Not recorded
Name and Address of Cemetery: Body Not Recovered For Burial
Relatives Notified and Address: Mother: Louisa, Greenwood, Stoke Gifford, Nr Bristol

He was awarded the





British War Medal and Victory Medal

Gunner Everett's body was never recovered and he is commemorated on Portsmouth Naval Memorial.

In Memory of
Gunner
George Thomas Everett
RMA/13445, H.M.S. "Invincible", Royal Marine Artillery who died on 31 May 1916 Age 21
Son of Henry and Louisa J. Everett, of Greenwood, Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
Portsmouth Naval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

36858 Private
William Alfred Everett



**1st Battalion
Gloucestershire Regiment**

William Alfred Everett.

He was the brother of George Thomas Everett (Royal Marine Artillery) who was killed in action on HMS Invincible at Jutland.

He was born in Ripley, Hampshire on 22nd February 1897.

William Alfred's parents were Henry Edward Matthews Everett and Louisa Jane Veasey they had seven children: Olive Daisy Everett 1887 1968, Margaret Everett 1889 -, Frank James Everett

1891 - 1984, George Thomas Everett
1894 - 1916, William Alfred Everett 1897 - 1918, Violet Louise Everett 1904 - 1965, Lillian Beatrice Everett 1908 - 1963.

1901 census The family were living at 20 Victoria Place, Springbourne, Bournemouth where Henry was domestic gardener.

In 1906 William Alfred was enrolled into Marlborough Road Primary School (boys) at Cardiff, so presumably the family had moved to the area.

1911 census the family were living at Winterbourne Hill, Henry was a domestic gardener and William Alfred was a garden boy. His two sisters were living with them, Violet Louise and Lillian Beatrice He married May Dix in 1917 at Newport Pagnell

They had a son George Thomas Alfred Everett born 29th May 1917.

**Army Service
The Great War**

2981 Private William Alfred Everett enlisted into the Herefordshire Regiment in late 1914.



The Herefords were a Territorial Force regiment and not required to serve overseas but in 1915 the 1st/1st Battalion was sent to Gallipoli, (Pte Everett did not go as he was only 17 on enlistment and age for overseas service was 19) the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were reserve units which came under the general auspices of the KSLI (King's Shropshire Light Infantry). The reserve battalions not only supplied reserves and reinforcements for KSLI but also for many other regiments as well, over 300 for the 11th Border Regiment, for the Warwickshires and the Gloucesters. Private Everett was transferred to the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. I am not sure precisely when but his Glos. number was 36858 and men with 63000 numbers start to appear in the casualty

lists around September 1916 but the first confirmed case I can find was 36860 Noah Langford 1st Gloucestershire Regt. and 1700 in Herefordshire Regt before this. He died on 10th November 1916 and is buried at Dernancourt Communal Cemetery, he came originally from Wellington, Salop (Shropshire). It seems almost certain the Pte Everett first saw action in France in September or October 1916 and considerable numbers of Herefordshire men were sent as reinforcements at that time to replace the huge numbers of losses at the start of the Some offensive.

Gloucestershire Regiment landed at Le Havre 13th August 1914 and we do know he was there by November so I shall include some of the details of the 1st Glosters activities from then until Private Everett died on 7th March 1918. From the War diaries

1916.

November

1-5th At Bazieux training

6-10th Marched to Milencourt and more training. Then marched to Mametz Wood arriving at 4pm on 10th.

11-26th. At Mametz Wood, fatigues, inspections and on 21st moved to High Wood.

27th The Brigade moved into the line, owing to thickness and depth of mud the relief was very late, many men went so

deep in the mud they had to leave their boots behind and carry on in bare feet until fresh boots arrived. Casualties 2 killed 5 wounded.

28th At Eaucourt L'Abaye several heavy barrages during day and front line mortared 3 wounded 4 missing.

29th. Quieter day.

30th Large amount of 'pip squeaking' (*a type of German shell*) and intermittent shelling

5 killed 1 wounded.

December.

1st Quiet day, relieved by Camerons and moved back to High Wood.

2-13th Battalion bathed, fatigues, trench maintenance moved to Bazentin Le Petit on 6th. Then to Mametz Wood on 11th, 1 killed 2 wounded.

14- 18th. Into front line our artillery and special brigade RE bombarded the enemy intensely for 15 minutes, they did not seem alarmed. Quiet days one heavy barrage on first day then intermittent shelling. Relieved by SWB moved back to Bazentin. 2 killed 3 wounded.

19-26th In support line repair and digging of trenches, dug to a depth of 4 ft 6 inches. 2 killed 2 wounded.

27 -31st. At High Wood and moved to Becourt Camp at Contalmaison. Cleaning up, fatigue party of 3 officers and 100 men to Meaulte to ammunition railhead. On 30th 179 ORs 'untrained' joined, inspected by C/O.

1917

January

1 -31st. At Becourt Camp, fatigues, musketry training, attack training, training parades, church parades, inspection of billets.. On 10th Jan 175 untrained men sent to 4th Army.

February

1-5th At Contay moved to Morcourt rest and foot drill under new French system of washing. next day whole Battalion had their feet washed.

6th Marched to Olympe and took over from 24th French Division. 2 Coys in front line 2 in support.

7th Quiet day 1 man killed.

8- 18th In trenches. Shelling gradually increased then became intermittent. Coys in front line and support relieving each other. 18th relieved by SWB and marched back to Telegraph Camp.

19/20th Practice for raid commenced, camp knee deep in mud, many dugouts falling in due to water forcing through.

21-23rd Back into the line relieved SWBs trenches knee deep in mud and impassable in places.

24-28th relieved by Northants and back to billets at Chuignes. Battn. training and new organisation of attack.

March

5th. relieved and in support at Great Wood.

7-11th Relieved SWB in front line trenches very bad condition full of mud and water. Heavy shelling and Minenwerfers.
12- 14th Assevillers on fatigues.
15 -18th Front line orders to penetrate enemy trenches with patrols. 16th patrols failed to cut enemy wire crawled to parapet and met with bombs and MG fire did not get into trench. 4 wounded. 17th further patrols succeeded in entering the German line 2 platoons of each front line Coy occupied the German front and support line. The patrols pushed on to the Somme at Brie and stayed until dark, there was a good deal of hostile shelling. 1 man killed. Bn stayed in position all day of 18th relieved and returned to dugouts at Boulogne Wood.
19-31st training at Boulogne Wood.

April.

Whole month at Chuignes, Peronne and Belle Vue Farm training, sports, railway work under RE. large working parties for REs.

May and June

As for April but on 26th June moved to Malo and billeted in Villas on the sea front.

July

5-17th To Juniac camp training and on 10th heavy shelling of back areas. Preparations for expected attacks, in support for Lancs but not needed. fatigues.
18- 31st billets at Leffringhouck then moved to St Pol and on from there to Le

Clipin Camp. Baths, training, kit inspections.

August, September, October

Training at Le Clipin Camp plus inspections and parades, sports, church parades. At end of October the Battalion was at Houtkerque

November

7-9th Moved into the line in support fairly quiet but enemy shelled support line heavily during the day.

10th. 2 Batt in the line attacked and reached their objective but had to withdraw because of very heavy shellfire. D Coy ordered to go forward to support left Bn. Then A Coy ordered to support the right Bn. Ordered forward, very heavy shell and rifle fire all day. Casualties 1 killed 26 wounded.

11th Patrols sent out at then moved to dugouts at Canal Bank near Ypres 2 killed 5 wounded 1 DOW.

14-30th Moved to billets at Dambre Camp, then on to Schools Camp and Proosdy Camp training and support, baths, inspections divine service.

December

1-11th in billets

11th Boche cross roads take up close reserve.

12- 15th In the front line.

16- 31st Nordhoek Training divine services etc.

1918

January

1-5th In billets and reserve.

5-8th In front line, patrols.

9th relieved by Royal Munster Fusiliers

10-12th Brigade reserve.

13th To Woesten and billets.

14th Nr Crombeke training, baths, route march. Until 21st then work on bridge at Yser Canal until 31st.

February

At Caribour camp and Kempton Park.

Training, divine service, working parties, bathing parades for whole month.

March.

1-3rd In huts working parties and foot washing.

4th Relieved Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in the front line.

5th In the front line active patrolling.

6th. Battalion in the line enemy bombarded Meunieur with 4.5s and 5.9s and tried to raid the post but driven off by our artillery and machine gun fire.

Casualties Lt Warren mortally wounded, 3 ORs killed 4 ORs wounded.

7th March 1918. Private William Alfred Everett died. Most probably he was one of the wounded the previous day

Soldiers who died in the great war

Name: William Alfred Everett

Death Date: 7 Mar 1918

Death Place: France and Flanders

Enlistment Place: Hereford

Rank: Private

Regiment: Gloucestershire Regiment

Battalion: 1st Battalion

Regimental Number: 36858

Type of Casualty: Killed in action

Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

Comments: Formerly 2981, Herefordshire Regiment.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
H. EVERETT William. A	Hereford R Hereford R	Plt	2981 36858
Service	Rank	Page	Remarks
Private	Lt Col 189	1890	
Private	do		
Private			
Theatre of War traversed in			
Date of entry theatre			

Correspondence

Address

UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

Beginning of 5th Part of List 6666661

Serial No.	Regiment	Soldier's Name	Rank	Service No.	Home Address	Effects	Remarks
689501	1st Bn	Budham Private Edmund	Lt Col	1890	1890	1890	1890
689502	1st Bn	Budham Private Edmund	Lt Col	1890	1890	1890	1890
689503	1st Bn	Budham Private Edmund	Lt Col	1890	1890	1890	1890
689504	1st Bn	Budham Private Edmund	Lt Col	1890	1890	1890	1890
689505	1st Bn	Budham Private Edmund	Lt Col	1890	1890	1890	1890

He was awarded





The British War Medal and the Victory Medal



In Memory of
Private
W A Everett

36858, 1st Bn., Gloucestershire Regiment who died on 07 March 1918

Remembered with Honour
Cement House Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

135397 Gunner Frederick Gupwell



"B" Bty 51st Bde.
Royal Field Artillery

Frederick Gupwell

He was born in Stalham, Cheshire in 1889

His parents were Frederick George Gupwell and Selina Adnitt at 1891 and 1901 census they lived at the Brick Yard, Old Sodbury where Frederick's father was a Storeman Brickmaker. I have been unable to find Frederick or his family on the 1911 census.

On 22nd September 1913 Frederick married Florence Emily Coles at the Parish Church of Stoke Gifford. Florence lived at Baileys Farm Cottages, Stoke Gifford.

Page 85.

1913. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Stoke Gifford, in the County of Gloucestershire.

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
169	Sept 22 nd 1913	Frederick Gupwell Florence Coles	24 24	Bachelor Spinster	Labourer Labourer	Stoke Gifford Stoke Gifford	Frederick George Gupwell Frederick William Coles	Labourer Labourer

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church after Service on St. John's, Near

This Marriage was solemnized in the Presence of
 Minister: William Robert Augustin
 Groom: Frederick Gupwell
 Bride: Florence Coles

1914. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Stoke Gifford, in the County of Gloucestershire.

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
170	February 18 th	Arthur George Fox Mabel Emma Bunde Margaret Bunde	30 26 26	Bachelor Spinster Spinster	Labourer Labourer Labourer	Stoke Gifford Stoke Gifford Stoke Gifford	Edward Fox George Worlock George Worlock	Labourer Labourer Labourer

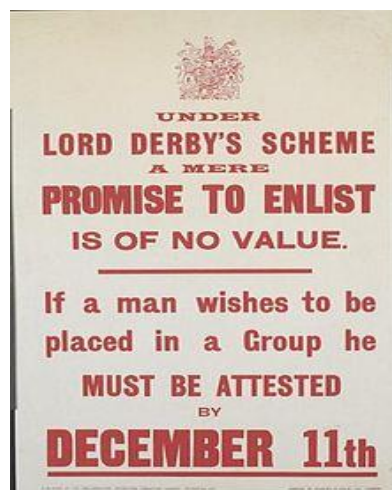
Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church after Service on St. John's, Near

This Marriage was solemnized in the Presence of
 Minister: John Henry James Buxwell
 Groom: Arthur George Fox
 Bride: Mabel Emma Bunde

Army Service WW1

Gunner Gupwell has no military service record (they were mostly destroyed in the ww2 bombing) but some survived and men with army numbers very close to his all enlisted into the Derby Scheme of late 1915 and were attested and mobilised in April 1916. It is almost certain that Gnr Gupwell followed this route as well. On 11 October 1915 Lord Derby was appointed Director-General of Recruiting. He brought forward a programme five days later, often called the Derby Scheme although its official title was the Group Scheme, for raising the numbers. Men aged 18 to 40 were informed that under the scheme they could continue to enlist voluntarily or attest with an obligation to come if called up later on. The War Office

notified the public that voluntary enlistment would soon cease and that the last day of registration would be 15 December 1915. The public was repeatedly told that the groups of unmarried men would be called up before married men.



Under the scheme each man was put into a group depending upon age and whether married or single, Gnr Gupwell would have been in group 32 and been mobilised on 7th April 1916.

We are not sure when he was sent to the front but soldiers of his service started to appear on the casualty lists around September 1916. He was sent to 51 Brigade Royal Field Artillery and in 'B' Battery.

'B' Battery 51 Brigade (from the War Diaries)

1916

September.

1st. At Berthonval A/51 and B/51 were shelled by 5.9cm battery no damage done, many hostile balloons. B/51 completed move into pits lately occupied by A/51.

2nd. A/51 B/51 and C/51 registered barrage for forthcoming operations.

3rd B/51 had a successful shoot at a fleeting target (vehicles being loaded at a dump) sent down by aeroplane.

4/5th weather very bad.

6th Enemy shelled Zouave valley intermittently B/51 registered by aeroplane.

7th D/51 registered very successfully with aeroplane using powder filled shells.

8th Aeroplane activity by enemy splendid weather.

9th 4 18 pdr batteries of the group fired at regular intervals on enemies trenches and suspected OPs intension being to hinder observing while heavy trench mortar firing.

10th Nothing to report

11th C/51 and B/51 extended their zones and altered S.O.S lines.

12th C/51 and B/51 cut wire all day with regard to the ammunition used on the wire cutting great difficulty and waste was caused by the erratic burning of the fuses, no complaint about the propellant except that 3 fell short fortunately causing no damage. 625 rounds were expended.

13th Wire cutting continued

14th. Wire cutting continued 16th I.B. carried out a raid along trench Jack. All batteries in the group barraged the enemies second line, the Camerons entered the front line but the Black Watch were unable to enter as enemy barraged their front line. Orders tha brigade

probably to move to Ablain St Nazaire by 20th.

15th Wire cutting continued. Aeroplane registered 4 targets for D/51

16th 115 men of Royal Naval Division were to be deployed to reinforce battery positions but was cancelled. One gun of D/51 burst by a premature, no casualties.

18th New positions being built at Ablain St Nazaire by A/51, B/51 and C/51 for possible occupation.

19th B/51 and C/51 cut wire satisfactorily

21st Weather stormy.

22nd Stokes guns registered enemies trench successfully by means of aeroplane observation. Our wire less means of communications with HQ was used.

23rd Aeroplane registered B/51 and C/51 B/51 successfully knocked out German motor lorry spotted by aeroplane moving along a road near Givenchy.

25th 9th Scottish rifles raided enemies trench at 4.15 this morning, right group barraged for 27 minutes. Trenches empty no prisoners taken.

26th 24th Division relieves 9th Div but Artillery stays in the line.

October

1st Our trench mortars more active.

2nd. Machine gun on parapet firing at our aeroplane. Knocks out Trench Mortar.

3rd. Relief and on 4th Brigade moved to wagon lines on 5th marched to billets at La Comte guns taken over from 106 Bde and sent to I.O.M. for overhaul.

7th. Brigade sports in afternoon.
8th Marched to billets at Bouret.
13th Moved to wagon lines at Fricourt practically no accommodation at wagon lines for men.
14th Weather dull and cold, batteries busy searching for materials to make shelter for men.
15th B/51 received orders to prepare position at M29 Central, this is a very advanced position and will be difficult to transport ammunition etc.
16th B/51 took up guns to new position. Great aeroplane activity.
17th Weather very dull. Operation orders regarding attack by 26th Inf. Bde on enemy trench.
19th Enemy counter attacked but without success. Weather very bad for active operations.
21st at High Wood, Bde relieves 52nd Bde. Roads in terrible state and movement of transport very difficult.
22nd Operation order issued to batteries, target is Giro trench but unfortunately this part of the trench is not under direct observation and will have to be carried out by aeroplane.
23rd. Weather very cold and mist in the forenoon. Work on pits commenced and guns taken up. Batteries busy taking up ammunition which was by pack saddles.
24th Order regarding attack on Giro Lines cancelled. 9th Div relieved (less Artillery).

25th.. Bde to form a forward report centre in our front line.
26th System of visual signalling arranged from Batt. HQ back to receiving station. Telephone communication very bad. Bde fired an SOS which was a false alarm, the enemy uses the same signal uncertainty exists as to whether signals seen are Hun or British.
27th Weather very bad SOS signal seen and opened fire for 20 minutes on SOS lines.
28th. Weather squally A,C,D and 117 Batteries stood by for aeroplane shoot which did not take place. Heavies continually fired short today, difficulty of getting ammunition great
29th Weather and ground terrible, guns showing signs of wear, springs difficult to obtain and guns have to be pushed up by hand.
November
4th Barrage for forthcoming operation was tested twice today was very good. B/51 registered trench south of Butte De Warlencourt successfully by aeroplane.
5th, 50 Div attacked and successful on the left, infantry unable to gain their objectives due to very heavy rifle and machine gun fire. Forward observing officer was killed by rifle fire and two telephonists wounded. By 11pm the enemy had counterattacked three times.

A/51 had very heavy casualties with 1 officer and 3 ORs killed and 8 wounded. The enemy shelled the battery with high velocity shells which had a direct hit on the gun pit which caused the majority of casualties.
8th. B/51 which is a forward battery to take over from C/52 position which is on the left of C/51.
9th. Beautiful day. B/51 took over new position. Great aeroplane activity. 'Chinese' attack - bombardment with no infantry took place this afternoon. Took the enemy 5 minutes to arrange his barrage which was not very bad.
10/11th 'Chinese' attacks on both days.
13th Barrage on Giro Lines to cooperate with attack by fifth army. D/51 had a premature which destroyed a gun but no casualties.
14th Attack took place on Giro Line Australians on right gained their objective but 50 Div infantry apparently gained their objectives but were bombed out.
15th Hook trench bombarded all day.
16th Enemy attacked Giro line and managed to regain part of the line from Australians.
18th.. Horrible day, started to snow then rain very muddy.
20th. A B and C batteries registered new zone.
21/22nd relief carried out. Aerial activity.
23rd. Brigade marched to Behencourt area. A/51 started at 5.30 and batteries

followed at 20 minute intervals. A/51 and B/51 billeted at Frenchicourt

24th Harness cleaning.

26th Draft of men from D.A.C but Bde still under strength.

27 - 30th. Marched to Rebreuve via Remainnil and Frohen. Billeted and had hot baths.

December

1 -18th. In billets. 'peace time' activities. Sports, Div band played in village, training, gas respirator testing, inspection of horses and harnesses,

19th At Arras, standing and accommodation for men not very good.

20th Immediate commencement of horse standings at Montenescourt.

24th Preparations for men's Xmas dinner. The Daily Press have made arrangements for

1/4lb of Xmas pudding which is very welcome.

25th Xmas day special arrangements for dinner to be sent to men at the guns.

26th A/51 B/51 and C/51 to take over from A,B,C 159.

27th. Enemy shelled northern part of Arras very heavily.

31st Operation order to carry out strafe on enemy trenches tomorrow weather permitting.

1917

January

1st bombardment carried out successfully no hostile reprisal.

2nd Work on horse standing carried out.

3rd With the object of destroying enemy trenches and covering our trench mortars B/51 and C/51 fired 50 rounds on front and support lines. A successful raid was carried out by 3rd S A Regt. supported by B/51 and C/51 The infantry were especially pleased with the artillery barrage,

4th Brigade received 25 remounts today.

5th Artillery strafe, aeroplanes report several hostile batteries active.

7th B/51 and C/51 fired 25 rounds to cover trench mortars.

8 -16th Daily bombardments to cover trench mortars and movements of men.

17th. Heavy snowfall, visibility very bad, but bombardment to cover trench mortars.

18th. Raid to be carried out by South Africans, cancelled due to weather.

20th Enemy trench mortars very active.

21st The official Cinematographer filmed C/51 in action today.

23rd Lot of our aeroplanes up today, enemy TMs very active causing some damage.

24th Aeroplane attempted to register B/51 on target but owing to snow on the ground 18 pdrs were not seen by observer.

26th Bde carried out combined bombardment. group fired 448 rounds.

28th Enemy TMs very active today.

29th. Enemy TM especially active, only way to deal with them is heavy TMs or

Howitzers. Filed Artillery cannot do any damage as they are probably in deep pits.

February

1 - 25th. Daily activities of shelling enemy trenches, dugouts, transports, aeroplane shoots, bombardments, supporting counter offensives, work on new positions but problems with getting materials. work held up because of weather especially snow.

25th Registration carried out by batteries. Enemy aeroplane activity, 3 of our fighting machines were brought down.

26th In cooperation with raid carried out by 12th Div. bombarded enemy trenches. Raid successful 25 prisoners brought back. Enemy retaliated with weak barrage.

27th Raid carried out by 1st S.A Regt. No prisoners as trenches practically empty, 4 Bosch were killed our casualties 1 killed 1 missing. German trenches in a terrible state of disrepair.

28th Work on new battery positions and cable trenches.

March.

2nd. Enemy attempted a raid but failed to enter our trenches several dead seen in no man's land who had been killed by our barrage.

3rd. Box barrage fired on trenches opposite.

5th Barrage fired in conjunction with successful raid 40 prisoners taken.

Rest of the month, was working on positions and trenches, enemy artillery active, light was bad so wire cutting activities through month until last few days when snow and bad weather stopped wire cutting as well. On 22nd enemy made a raid on trenches opposite, which had themselves been taken day before. Several raids carried out supported by our artillery.

April

1 Brigade wagon lines shelled early this morning, enemy aeroplane brought down over Arras.

2nd Artillery operation order for forthcoming offensive.

3rd. B/51 and C/51 to move to new positions tonight.

4th 'V' Day bombardment commenced 5.30

5th 'W' Day 'Chinese' attack

6th 'Z' postponed for 24 hours.

7th 'Q' Day Heavy bombardment of hostile line, 1st SA regt carried out a raid, enemy holding his lines very strongly and on the alert.

8th 'Y' Day.

9th 'Z' Day attack carried out. Most successful, low casualties, hundreds of prisoners taken. Batteries moved to new positions in hollow.

10-19th Weather very bad, little movement, some shelling.

20th All batteries reported in action and registering.

21st Preliminary bombardment commenced today.

22nd Bombardment continued.

23. Infantry attacked, enemy put up a very stubborn fight with many hand to hand fights. The enemy artillery was very powerful and our tanks were of great assistance. At no point was the situation very clear.

24-27th Orders to get as much ammunition to the guns as possible and attack planned for 28th Attack carried out by infantry under heavy barrage. Batteries engaged many infantry in the open and many casualties were inflicted.

29th By subsequent minor operations our original line was occupied, a continuous light barrage was carried out during the day.

May.

1st No operations today.

2nd Orders for attack tomorrow.

3rd. Attack took place this morning in darkness and little success was achieved. Fighting in the chemical works and Roeux was severe, several Coys got through the enemy machine guns but were cut off and had difficulty in fighting their way back. Accurate artillery shooting on the enemy in the open inflicted casualties.

4-10th Brigade ordered to withdraw all men and wagons to rest, guns to remain in positions.

11th. Brigade in action at 9.30 for purpose in taking part in attack. Attack

took place at 7.30pm all objectives were gained and enemy made no counter attack.

12th At 6.30 we attacked again to take the final objectives. The attack was successful. The counter attack took place but several concentrations of enemy infantry were engaged by artillery.

13th 51st Div relieved 4th Div.

14th. Our infantry pushed forward. One section of each battery moved to north side of river Scarpe and relieved sections of 52nd Bde.

15th. Enemy kept up continuous bombardment of chemical works in afternoon and it is suspected he is retiring.

16th Enemy counter attacked this morning at 3.30 and infantry were pushed back to chemical works, Artillery barraged whole day, brigade was heavily shelled and A/51 had a particularly trying time.

135397 Gunner Frederick Gupwell was Killed in Action during this battle.



Name	Group	Regt. No.
GUPWELL	RFA	135397
Frederick		
Medal	Inst.	Page
Victoria	RFA 129 th	3188
Bar	16	
Remarks		
Theatre of War first served in		
Date of entry therein		

Correspondence

He was awarded



The British War Medal and the Victory Medal

In Memory of
Gunner
Frederick Gupwell

135397, "B" Bty, 51st Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 16 May 1917 Age 28

Son of Frederick and Selena Gupwell; husband of Florence Gupwell, of Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
Feuchy British Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

51836 Private Herbert Henry Hartnell



2/7th Battalion
West Yorkshire Regiment
(Prince of Wales' Own)

Herbert Henry Hartnell

He was born in 1888 and baptised on 26th February 1888 at St Michael's Church, Stoke Gifford. His parents were John Hartnell from Staple Hill and Mary Jane Beale from Stoke Gifford. They had 11 children: Frank, Alfred, Herbert, Stanley, Bertie, Ethel, Leonard, Stafford, Arthur, Reginald and one other girl whose name I cannot trace.

In 1901 the family were living in Stoke Gifford as they were in 1911 when most of them were either Farm Labourers or worked for the Railway.

Army Service The Great War

25503 Private Herbert Hartnell was mobilised on 24th March 1916 which means he was almost certainly signed up to the Derby scheme. (a system brought out in late 1915 where men could 'sign up' by Dec. 1915 and would be called up under a 'quota' system - rather than be conscripted). He was 28 years old, good physical condition, 5ft 4ins tall. Somewhat flat footed, fit for labour abroad.



He was placed into the Royal Berkshire Regiment and then attached to the 3rd (reserve) Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry then to 12th (Labour Battalion) DCLI, he went with them to France on 7/5/16 to Southampton and landed at Havre 8/5/16.

On 14th May 1916 he transferred to the 156 Bn Labour Corps (93239 Private Herbert Hartnell) (Duke of Cornwall's Labour Battalion became this unit)

He transferred then went on 14/5/17 to France with 2/7th West Yorkshire Regiment

2/7th (Leeds Rifles) Battalion
Formed at Leeds, 15 September 1914.
1 March 1915 : came under orders of 185th Brigade, 62nd (2nd west Riding) Division. Moved on that day to Matlock and on in May to Thoresby Park, going on in October 1915 to Retford, November to Newcastle, January 1916 to Salisbury Plain and June 1916 to Somerleyton near Lowestoft. In October 1916 to Bedford and finally landed at Le Havre in January 1917. 16 June 1918 : reduced to cadre strength. Cadre returned to England and was absorbed into 18th York & Lancs on 19 June 1918.

2/7th West Yorkshire Regt. France. 1917

June

4th. At Gomiecourt Camp. Draft of 44 men arrived from base. Probably the draft he arrived with as they had come from base.

5-9th Specialist training and supplying large working parties.

10th Divine serve, kit inspection, inspection of lines by C.O.

11th Brigade field day every man paraded.

12-21st Specialist training, large working parties and Lewis gun training.

21st Battalion parade, gun drill and instruction Batt. sports in afternoon.

22-24th Field day, divine service. Battalion orders for relief.

25th. Battalion paraded 1.15 dress fighting order and proceeded to the line to relieve 6th Ox and Bucks at Lagnicourt.

26th Outpost line reorganised, sent patrols out/

27-30th Enemy quiet.

July

1-4th Lagnicourt. 1/2/3rd in the line very quiet. 4th Dugout blown in 1 killed 4 wounded 2 officers badly shaken.

Relieved and marched to billets.

5-13th At Vaulx. Providing working parties and practicing raids.

13-21st Relieved and marched to 'D' Camp at Favreuil. Training, practicing raids in stronger force. On 16th raiding part assaulted German post. casualties 3 wounded 3 missing.

21- 31st relieved Yorks and Lancs at Vraucourt. 4 Coys in the line, wiring by night improving trenches by day 3 killed 9 wounded.

August.

1-4th In the line, trenches very wet and muddy.

4-14th Favreuil cleaning clothing and equipment, bathing. Firing on the range and closs order drill. Kit inspection and on 8th moved into reserve until 14th.

15 - 21st. Before Reincourt . Quiet nothing unusual to report.

22nd - 29th Favreuil. Usual training, inspections etc.

19th Before Queant. In the line quiet and patrols out.

September

1- 13th Noreuil In the line. Inter Coy relief, patrols out.

14-21st Favreuil In divisional reserve.

21-30th Relieved by York and Lancs in the line Bullecourt sub section. On 26th enemy retaliated for a heavy bombardment by us. 29th 2Coys relieved by KOYLI

30th Relieved by 2/6th W. Yorks. Moved to support at Mory.

October

1-10th In support. Classes, training, church parades, inspections.

11th 'C' Coy relieved by Gordon

Highlanders, Battalion relieved by Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Left Mory in motor busses for Barastre.

12-28th Barastre. Kit, clothing and equipment inspection. Intensive training most days, brigade field day, church parades.

29th. Gomiecourt and marched to Baillecourt and on to Barricourt.

30th Foot inspections.

November

1- 13th At Barricourt. Battalion training.

14th. Gomiecourt and marched to hutments at Lechelle.

16th Marched to link camp at Ypres.
 17th Relieved Royal Irish Fusiliers in Havrincourt sector.
 20th. Battalion took part in the attack in conjunction with the tanks. Obtained objectives took 100 prisoners and 4 machine guns. The 4 Coys formed up for the second objective without difficulty then the whole battalion followed the tanks. 'A' Coy mopped up its area 'B' and 'D' captured the Denbury support line taking 150 prisoners and 7 machine guns. Casualties. 22 killed 76 wounded 6 missing.
 21st Batt. remained on its objectives through the night. Relieved by Duke of Wellington's.
 22nd A party went forward to establish a post on the Quay but encountered a large party of Germans coming from the wood. They were dispersed with rifle and machine gun fire and heavy casualties were inflicted on them. A short time later a patrol was sent along the Cambrai road when a large party of Germans came out of the trenches so the patrol immediately charged them with bayonets. An enemy machine gun then opened fire from the flank killing the officer and 2 NCOs remainder of party withdrew to Annene Chapelle.
 23rd Relieved and moved back to Lechelle.
 24/25th Cleaning kit, resting, re-equipping.

26th Moved into Bourslon Wood began to dig in in support of 186 I.B. which was holding the line.
 27th. Took part in the attack on enemy position, objectives in Bourslon Village. Coys moved forward in three advances but found themselves under heavy machine gun fire which made a fourth advance impossible. They then had five or six small counter attacks launched against them all of which were stopped by our rifle and Lewis gun fire. At 7pm the Battalion was relieved by a composite Battery of Cavalry and moved into support on 28th at Bourslon Wood. Casualties 15 killed 55 wounded 12 missing. 20 prisoners, 2 medium trench mortars 41 machine guns were captured by Batt.
 29th. Into billets at Beaumetz.

December

December the Battalion was not in the line, it was a period of training, re-equipping, musketry training, church parades, firing on ranges, inspections, competitions and bathing.

1918

January

1-6th Monchy - Breton. Training, specialist training, firing on ranges, divine service.
 7th. Left marched to Tinquies then by train to Maroueil, billeted then by light railway to Daylight Railhead and then by route march to front line trenches before Oppy relieved Middx Regt.

9-13th Oppy. In the line, very quiet.
 14th. Roclincourt, Bathing, foot inspections, kit inspections, lectures
 15-22nd In Brigade reserve. Company and specialist training, working parties for rations. Gas helmets tested in Div. Gas chambers.
 22nd Holding the line
 24th Enemy patrol approached through a few bombs into the post but no casualties.
 25th Relieved and back to Roclincourt bathing and training
 30th Back in the line Party of 15 enemy seen near one of our posts, dispersed by Lewis Gun fire.

February

1-3rd Oppy in the line
 4-7th At Bailleul in support.
 8-21st Roclincourt, training, working parties (wiring)
 21st Route march to Ecuries Stn then train to Tinquies then march to Billets at Mochy Breton until 27th Training, bathing, Div. horse show.
 28th Brigade field day in conjunction with aeroplanes (No. 15 Squadron R.F.C)

March.

1-4th Monchy - Breton Training, platoon competitions, church parades, inspections of billets and Lewis Guns.
 5-23rd. Ecoives. Training and bathing, Battalion training, inspection by C/O. On 12th proceeded by light railway to forward area at Bailleul - Willerval line. Quiet but considerable gas shelling on 15th and

16th. several casualties. On 19th at Arleux Loop, quiet but heavy bombardment on Arleux Post on 21st. 23rd relieved by 13th Canadians and proceeded to Roclincourt.

24th Orders to be ready for active operations. Moved into billets at the Prison, Arras.

25th. Moved from Arras and marched to Bucquoy all surplus stores and kit dumped at Arras. Took up defensive positions at road to Achiet Le Petit. 2 wounded.

26th Bucquoy. Orders to withdraw to defensive positions in support of 8th and 2/5th West Yorks.

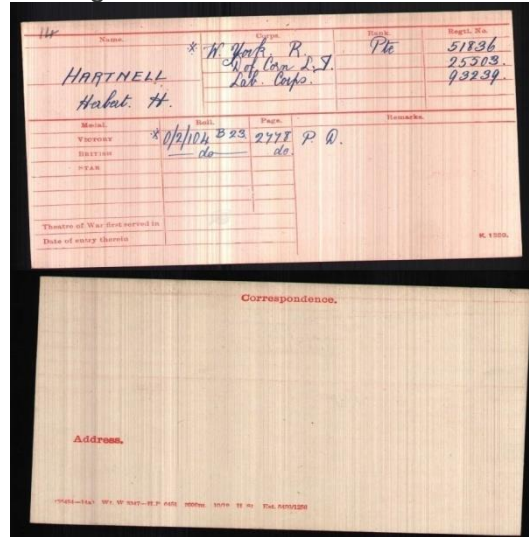
27th. After 2 hours of heavy bombardment enemy made a determined attack on Bucquoy the line was not entered at any post and enormous casualties were inflicted on the enemy rifle, Lewis guns and machine guns made him withdraw in disorder. Our casualties were killed 24 wounded 25 missing 2.

28th. Still in line 2 hour bombardment but no attack materialised. Battalion relieved by detachments. Casualties. 4 killed 29 wounded 2 missing.

One of those missing was Private Herbert Hartnell.

His body was never recovered so he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

At the entrance to the Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery in France stands the Arras Memorial. The memorial commemorates nearly 35,000 soldiers of the British, South African and New Zealand forces with no known grave.



He was awarded





The British War Medal and the Victory Medal

In Memory of
Private
Herbert Henry Hartnell

51836, 2nd/7th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 29 March 1918 Age 32

Son of John and Mary Jane Hartnell, of Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
Arras Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

30465 Private
Henry Bolton Hooper



1st Battalion
The Worcestershire Regiment

Henry Bolton Hooper

He was born in Iddesleigh, Devon in
1893.

Births Sep 1893 (>99%)

Hooper Henry Bolton [Okehampton 5b 369](#)

The son of Henry Trip (born 1/7/1855 Axbridge) and Eliza Hooper (Stephens) and they had married in Bristol in 1878. They had five children Lillian, Eliza, Annie, John, Henry

1901 The family were living at Broomhall where Henry was a domestic gardener, his wife Eliza was a shopkeeper originally from Bristol. They had three children at home John (10) Henry (7) and Annie (19) a drapers assistant.

1911 They were at Stoke Park Colony For Mentally Defective Children, Stapleton, Bristol. Henry (senior) was Head Gardener, His wife Eliza and son Henry Bolton Hooper were there as well.



Most Bristolians will remember the building as the former Stoke Park Hospital, a sombre, not-much-talked-about institution where many local people needing "care and control" spent their whole lives. Some had entered the institution because relatives could no longer cope with them at home or simply on "moral grounds" - perhaps because they had had an illegitimate child. The founder, the Rev Harold Burden - In 1902 founded a pioneering organisation for those many thousands of people who could not cope with everyday life or who were disruptive and desperately in need of help. It was known as "National Institutions for Persons Requiring Care and Control" and he became its first warden. The result of the Commission on which the Reverend sat was the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913, and it was because of this legislation that Stoke Park Colony was set up.

30465 Private Henry Bolton Hooper

We are not really sure when Private Hooper joined the army we do know that 29969 Pte Townsend joined the Worcesters on 12/5/16 and 30720 Pte Haskins joined the Worcesters 1/4/16 so it would seem on the face of it that he joined about the same time. Conscription had started in January 1916 so it would appear he was conscripted. However he went to France on 19th July 1916 (date of arrival in France) and almost certainly was with the draft of 350 which arrived at the regiment on 24th July. As there were no Worcestershire Regt men in this draft but among them were a number of troops from the Gloucestershire Regiment, so it is probable he had been with the Glosters prior to this.

The Great War

1st Battalion Worcestershire Regiment disembarked in France On the morning of the 8th November 1914. Private Hooper was sent to France arriving in France on 19th July 1916, he then joined his Regiment (1st Worcesters) along with 350 other reinforcements however these men were not Worcester men but did include men from the Gloucestershire Regt.

From the war diaries of the Worcester Regt. 1st Battalion July 1916.

7th July Attack at Fricourt on Contralmaison and the Quadrangle

continued until withdrew to Lozenge Wood on the 9th.

Casualties for period 6-9th July
30 killed, 243 wounded 44 missing.

Total casualties 317 It was losses like this that required the reinforcements.

24th July a mixed draft from Ox & Bucks, Gloucesters, Berkshires total of 351 men. This could well be the draft in which Pte Hooper arrived.

25th July in billets and on 30th relieved the Middx Regt in trenches at Cuinchy between Boyeau and La Basse Canal, weather fine, hostile trench mortaring at night.

August 1916

Relieved on the 5th August by Royal Scots casualties for this period 4 killed and 7 wounded. Marched to billets at Bethune.

6th Aug. 1st Army church parade to commemorate 2 years of war. 7th enemy heavily shelled Bethune causing much damage 1 killed 3 wounded. 9th Took over trenches from 2nd Devons 1 killed 5 wounded. 10/11th holding trenches trench mortars very active 1 killed 2 wounded. 12th Aug. D Coy stayed in front line A,B & C Coys moved into support 1 killed 3 wounded. Enemy raided trenches on our left after very heavy bombardment which extended over our lines held by D Coy. 3 killed 16 wounded. 13th D Coy relieved by C Coy shelled heavily during afternoon. 15th Aug. marched back to billets until 23rd Aug. when took over

Hohenzollern sector of trenches from Devons. Hostile TMs very active, weather fine, trenches badly damaged by enemy shellfire relieved on 27th Aug. Casualties for period 12 wounded. 28-30th Bn in support trenches and took over front line on 31st Aug.

September

1-5th Holding front line in Hohenzollern sector. Slight increase in TM activity but enemy fairly quiet. Casualties 2 killed 6 wounded. On 5th moved to reserve line in front of Vermelles very wet and stormy, occupied with working parties. On the 9th relieved by Berks Regt and marched to billets in Gosnay and Labourse, billets fairly good. Drill, fatigue parties, working parties and inspections until 17th when took over reserve trenches from W Yorks in Quarry Section fatigue parties and on 21st took over front line trenches from Sherwood Foresters, enemy fairly quiet but some hostile TM activity and on 23/4th became very active. 25th Enemy artillery still active 26th TM doing considerable damage 26th Enemy TM still very active. 27/8th enemy less active. 29th Relieved and took up positions in reserve line at Vermelles. Casualties for this period 9 killed 18 wounded.

October

1/2nd In reserve trenches Hohenzollern sector, very wet fairly quiet. 3rd In the front line, trenches in a very bad state. 4th Trench Mortar very active with indirect

fire 2 ORs wounded. 5th quiet during the day heavy hostile fire at night 3 killed 2 wounded. Weather changeable. 6th Quiet in morning but later heavy artillery and TM fire 2 wounded. 7th Bn relieved moved to support trenches. 8-10th Support trenches fatigue parties carrying to the front line trenches. 11th relieved and back to billets at Labourse. On 13th preparing to move by train to South. 14-18th in billets and camps at Citernes, Meault and Sandpits valley. On 19th relieved E Lancs in trenches at Guedicourt. 20th In trenches 1 man killed 6 wounded and 1 missing. 21st Enemy shelling very severe indeed and continuous 11 killed 40 wounded 2 missing believed killed. 22nd relieved and moved to Needle trench. 23rd 2 Coys moved to Bulford and Shine trenches in close support to E Lancs who were attacking Mild trench. 8 wounded. 24th In Needle trench as above 9 wounded. 25th Relieved E Lancs in Mild and Shine Trenches 1 killed 2 wounded. 26th. Very severe shelling by enemy 2 killed 9 wounded. 27th In above trenches 6 wounded 1 Died of wounds. 28th As above 9 killed 34 wounded. 29th As above 1 killed 6 wounded. 30th relieved spent night at Trones Wood and next day moved to Sandpits Camp. The battalion had a very rough time in these trenches, as enemy's artillery was very active and trenches offered little

cover. The greatest difficulty was in the matter of supply as all rations and water had to be brought up by pack animal and man handled over 5 or 6 miles of roadless waste of shell holes, which in conjunction with the wet weather became a sticky mass of wet mud.

November

1st Nov. At Sandpits camp, draft arrived from Monmouthshire Regiment. 2-5th at Sandpits Camp.
 6th Nov. Relieved 2nd Worcesters at Gillemont in reserve.
 8th Nov. Relieved E Lancs at Les Boeufs trenches.
 9th relieved by 2nd Berks (early relief) went to camp at Brique Line. In Brique Line 10-12th Nov.
 13th Nov Left camp night of 13/14th and went into trenches at Les Boeufs. Enemy shelled Les Boeufs heavily. 14th as above.
 15th Enemy shelled 3rd line at Les Boeufs heavily 12 killed 13 wounded. Relieved
 16th Into reserve line at Flers one Coy at Trones Wood.
 17th Relieved by Hampshire Regt. and Newfoundland Regt. marched to Carnoy Camp (North). 18th. Marched to billets at Meaulte, billets fair. 19th at Meaulte.
 19th Nov. Marched to Edgehill and entrained and detrained at Airaines and marched to billets at Aumont. Remainder of month at Aumont.

December.

The month was spent training at Aumont. Training of companies in attack formation, Church parades, Lewis gunners, snipers and bad shots of the Battalion on ranges. Route marches, cross country runs, Weather wet and snow. Practicing advance in successive waves under a creeping barrage. Practice cooperation of Lewis gunners and bombers in trench attack. Instruction by R.E. on rapid wiring by day and night. Instruction on us of Bangalore Torpedo theoretical and practical. Torpedo exploded to blow a gap in the wire and bombers went through gap.
 24th December Divine Service.
 25th December Xmas Day, Divine Service.
 26th Dec. Company training.
 29/30th Dec. entrained at Airaines and then marched via 112 Camp to 16 Camp on the Bray - Maricourt Rd. Camp in very dirty condition.
 31st. Cleaning up camp.

1917

January

1st - 8th. In the field at Camp 16. Cleaning and draining camp. Draft of 1 officer and 25 ORs arrived. Weather very wet and cold.
 9th marched to billets in Vaux stayed there on 10th.
 11th Jan. Marched to Merricourt L'Abbe entrained and detrained at Airaines and

marched to billets at Vergies, billets good.
 12th cleaning up.
 13th Jan. Battalion training in new battle formations. Battle patrol platoon formed.
 14th. Training as above.
 15th-21st Battalion in training, Battalion and Battle Patrol Platoon inspected by Brigadier General Cobham and the G.O.C 8th Division.
 22nd Marched to Oisement entrained and detrained at Edgehill marched to Camp 13 on Morlancourt-Chipilly Rd stayed there on 23/24th Jan.
 25th Jan. Battalion marched to Camp 21 on the Maricourt - Sousanne Rd.
 26th Jan. Paraded for trenches and took over from Argyle & Sutherland Highlanders in the Bouchavesne North Sector.
 27th Enemy quiet.
 28th January 1917. Normal day 1 OR killed 2 wounded.
 29/30th Normal.
February
 1st. In the field Bouchavesnes, very cold, 3 casualties.
 3rd. Relieved by 2nd Lancs and moved back to Asquiths Flats.
 4-9th Brigade reserve draft of 14and3 casualties.
 10th Relieved by 1st Household Bn. enbussed at Crucifix Corner for camp 124. very good camp but left in poor condition.
 11-21st. In training for attack on Fritz Trench. During the latter days of training

the attack in detail was carried out, the Bn also assembled for an attack in the dark. Battle platoon also carried out practiced raid on Bremen Trench.
 22-28th Moved and stayed in billets at Bray, practiced attacks. Billets in dirty condition.
March.
 1st marched to billets in dugouts at Asquith Flats then on 2nd took over trenches at Bouchavesnes from 2nd Devons.
 3rd. In trenches, quiet weather fair, one German walked into trench and was captured. 1 killed 6 wounded.
 4th. Attack on German positions at 5.30am. under a creeping barrage, attack was quite successful with many Germans killed and two machine guns captured after their crews had been killed. 100 prisoners taken. Pallas and Fritz trench were captured. Observation from Fritz trench excellent for our artillery. Heavy artillery barrage was kept up on captured lines. Excellent observation from Fritz meant we could beat off counter attacks by means of Lewis guns and rifle fire. Few casualties were sustained during the attack the enemy heavy shelling was the major cause of casualties.
 Casualties. Killed 49, wounded 162, missing 12.
 5-7th Billeted in Asquith flats.
 8th Relieved 2nd Devons and in trenches until 12th Casualties 1killed 7 wounded.

13-15th Asquith Flats then on to camp 161.
 16-23rd Camp 161 Bn. employed building railway near Maricourt.
 24-31st Billeted at Moislains improving billets and working on road, on 31st German aeroplane dropped 4 bombs on Moislains no damage and no casualties.
April.
 1-3rd in Trenches at outpost line, heavy artillery shelling casualties 1 killed 15 wounded.
 4-15th In billets at Moislains and Heudicourt Moved to Nurle on 15th.
 16-20th Drill, dugout blown up by mine on 18th occupied by Bn. 5 ORs killed.
 23rd Relieved Middx. in outpost line until 27th.
 27-30th Billets in Villers Guislan.
May.
 1-5th Trenches between Villers Guislan and Honnecourt. Enemy aeroplanes very active at low altitudes occasionally firing at objects on the ground. 1killed 2 wounded.
 6th Relieved by East Lancs and marched to billets.
 7-31st. In billets at Moislans Training, practicing attacks, divine services, bayonet fighting training, musketry etc.
June.
 1-14th Billets at Corbie then on to Hazewinde and finally to the Infantry Barracks at Ypres.
 15th In the trenches in Hooge sector. 2 wounded.

16-18th. Trenches at Hooge, very heavy artillery fire. Casualties 2 killed 53 wounded.

19-28th Billeted in Vancouver camp Working parties. Coys/platoons sent to tunnelling companies, heavy siege batteries and road works. 1 killed 7 wounded.

29/30th Marched to Ypres and took over accommodation from Sherwood foresters. Wet weather hostile artillery subsided.

July.

1-4th In dugouts at ypres. Heavy shelling 1 man killed 11 wounded.

5th Bn relieved by Berks. during relief heavy shelling took place, 9 killed 38 wounded.

6th At Winnipeg Camp.

7th Moved by bus to Steenbecque 3 ORs wounded.

8-18th Moved to Cuhem training 1 officer and 2 ORs accidentally wounded practicing bombing. Small groups of drafts arrived during month

19th Moved to Reninghelst via St Martin arriving on 22nd in Halifax Camp.

23rd Enemy fired many gas shells into Ypres during the night.

24-26th Ypres Fairly quiet, more gas shells at night. 1 killed 5 wounded.

27th Relieved Northants on Menin Rd - Zouave wood.

28th Weather stormy, enemy artillery active 1 killed 8 wounded.

29th. Weather good still in line 1 killed 6 wounded.

30th Weather poor. Coys to attack and capture 'Ignorance' pass through James Trench and form a blue line on Bellewarde Ridge

31st. Hooge - Attack commenced at 3.50am behind a creeping barrage of shrapnel. Bn encountered some MG fire and sniper fire from right flank although at first weak fell behind ignorance trench, the tunnel under the Ypres-Menin Rd was expected to give triubke but turned out to be easy to deal with. Coys captured James Trench which was strongly held. On the edge of Chateau Wood the enemy brought down a heavy barrage most of which dropped behind the front attacking lines. Bn consolidated on the slope of the ridge overlooking Westhoek. East Lancs passed through to attack the black line and great deal of MG fire encountered on right flank were our troops were not progressing as expected. D Coy were withdrawn to work as stretcher bearers and the Tanks began to pass through to attack the green line. The ground was too marshy to allow them to be used with success and they were heavily shelled on their way up. Bn was moved up to the X roads enemy shellfire was fairly heavy as was MG and sniper fire, weather was very cloudy and did not permit aeroplane work. Heavy rain fell in evening and continued all night. Captured 70 German prisoners.

Casualties 25 killed 163 wounded 50 missing.

August

1-14th On 1st held defensive flank, heavy sell and MG fire. Relieved by 3rd Worcs. and moved to Devonshire Camp, billeted in Steenevoorde then on to Halifax Camp. Several drafts of reinforcements. 1 killed 3 wounded.

15th. Halifax Camp Moved to Esplanade, Ypres in Div. Reserve for attack next day.

16th Moved to Birr Xroads under orders of GOC occupied a post under the crest of Westhoek ridge. With orders to counter attack the black line if the Scottish rifles were driven out "and hold at all costs". No counter offensive developed.

17th August 1917. Moved into the black line and relieved 2nd Scottish Rifles. Relief complete just after midnight. Casualties Killed 13 ORs wounded 37 ORs.

Private Henry Bolton Hooper was killed in action on 17th August 1917

Soldiers who died in the Great War

Western Daily Press 15 September 1917

PRIVATE HENRY B. HOOPER.

The sad news has been received by Mr H. Hooper, Stoke, late of Stapleton, that his only son, Henry Bolton Hooper, of the Worcester Regiment, age 24, who was sent to France July 19, 1916, was killed in action on August 17, 1917. He was a member of the Stapleton Bible Class and of the Church Football Club, and was highly respected by all who knew him. Before enlisting Private Hooper served his apprenticeship as a carpenter and joiner with Messrs S. Curnock and Son, Triangle, Clifton, where he was greatly esteemed by his employers and fellow-workmen. A memorial service will be held at Stoke Church.

Name: Henry Bolton Hooper
Birth Place: Iddesleigh, Devon
Residence: Bristol
Death Date: 17 Aug 1917
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Bristol
Rank: Private
Regiment: Worcestershire Regiment
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Regimental Number: 30465
Type of Casualty: Killed in action
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

His grave in Sanctuary Wood Cemetery



25194 Private Norman Oakhill



12th (Bristol) Battalion
Gloucestershire
Regiment.

Norman Oakhill

He was born in 1895 in Almondsbury. In 1901 they were living at St Mark's Easton where his father was a platelayer with the railway. In 1911 they were living at Harry stoke Farm, Stoke Gifford and Norman was a groom, father a Ganger TW with GWR, Victor his brother was a brickmaker, Emily Ann his mother was Home duties. Emily his sister was a laundry packer.

Army Service WW1

I have been unable to find out when Pt Oakhill actually 'joined up' the 'service records' of WW1 soldiers were largely destroyed by bombing in WW2 but many records of soldiers who received pensions at the end of WW1 still survive. His army number 25194 gives a clue as 25875 Pte Court 'signed on' 22/7/1915; 23912 Pte Edgar on 18/8/1915; 25660 Pte Schoolbread on 4/8/1915 so it would appear he joined the army around July or August 1915. He did not go out to France with the Battalion in November 1915 or he would have received the 1914/15 Star Medal. Several large drafts of men from base arrived in France in January. It is likely as a trained soldier he would have been one of them.

12th BATTALION GLOUCESTERSHIRE REGIMENT `BRISTOL`S OWN`

On September 3rd 1914, Bristol was granted permission to begin forming a 12th service Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment. Almost immediately it became known as `Bristol's Own`. It was originally planned to be 1,100 strong, but that figure was increased to 1,350 to cope with the demand. At first the boys of `Bristol's Own` were allowed to live at home and many continued to work. Eventually the temporary buildings constructed for Bristol International Exhibition at Bower Ashton were used as a headquarters for the battalion. Ashton Court estate and Ashton Park were used for outdoor training.

The battalion trained in Bristol until June 1915, then moved to Yorkshire and finally Salisbury Plain before, it sailed to France on 21st November 1915 The Battalion had a complement of 27 officers and 886 men and spent some time in the then quiet area of the Somme, On the 26th of December 1915 they transferred with 95th Brigade to 5th Division as part of an exchange designed to stiffen the inexperienced 32nd Division with regular army troops. In March 1916 5th Division took over a section of front line between St Laurent Blangy and the southern edge of Vimy Ridge, near Arras. They moved south in July to reinforce The Somme and were in action

at, High Wood, The Battle of Guillemont, The Battle of Flers-Courcelette, The Battle of Morval and The Battle of Le Transloy. The Battle of the Somme began on the 1st July 1916.

High Wood is a small forest near Bazentin le Petit in the Somme département of northern France which was the scene of intense fighting for two months from 14 July to 15 September 1916 during the Battle of the Somme. Though the wood was initially abandoned by the Germans delays, confusion and hesitation meant that the British did not attempt to occupy it until the evening when two regiments of cavalry, the 7th Dragoon Guards and the 20th Deccan Horse, made the only cavalry charge of the battle. Though the cavalry gained a foothold and held out until the morning of 15 July, they were unsupported and forced to withdraw. The 33rd Division attacked again on 20 July and managed to capture part of High Wood while the 5th Division and 7th Division attacked the Switch Line to the east. Sergeant Bill Hay of the 1/9th Battalion, Royal Scots, described the attack thus:

"That was a stupid action, because we had to make a frontal attack on bristling German guns and there was no shelter at all. ... There were dead bodies all over the place where previous battalions and regiments had taken part in previous attacks. What a bashing we got. There

were heaps of men everywhere — not one or two men, but heaps of men, all dead. Even before we went over, we knew this was death. We just couldn't take High Wood against machine-guns. It was ridiculous. There was no need for it. It was just absolute slaughter."

The British field guns had difficulty supporting attacks on High Wood because they had to fire over Bazentin Ridge. The low elevation of the guns meant the shells were just skimming over the British trenches and the margin for error was small with numerous casualties from friendly fire. and the Battalion was moved back there on July 20th.

By the end of the month they were in the line facing Delville Wood or `Devil's Wood` as it had already become known. `Bristol's Own` received their first blooding in trench warfare, when on the 3rd September 1916 they attacked the German positions in an area known as Wedge Wood. This attack required the Battalion to advance in daylight over a distance of one and a half miles, in full view of the enemy and as a target for the murderous machine-gun and artillery fire. The attack was successful in the terms of the First World War but the cost to the `Bristol's` was horrendous for in this brief action one officer and 44 men were killed and another 48 were missing. Six officers and 225 other ranks were

wounded. From a total of 913 men, 324 had been killed or injured in their first full action. Such was the Battle of the Somme. They took part in The Attacks on High Wood. The Battle of Guillemont. The Battle of Flers-Courcelette

On 18 August the 33rd Division was called on to attack High Wood once again and failed. The division tried on 24 August between High Wood and Delville Wood and as preparation for this assault, a machine gun barrage was fired by the 100th Machine Gun Company (100th Brigade) which in twelve hours fired over 1 million bullets from ten machine guns. Another failed attack was made on 3 September as part of the fighting for Guillemont. High Wood was captured along with the Switch Line, in the next big British offensive the Battle of Flers-Courcelette on 15 September 1916. Success was not achieved without further blunder and sacrifice. Due to the closeness of the two front-lines the III Corps commander Lieutenant General Sir William Pulteney, decided to use the new tanks instead of artillery. After two months of constant fighting High Wood was not ideal terrain for tank operations, especially these first under-developed tanks. Four tanks were allocated to High Wood but only one, D-13 penetrated any distance and its presence was not decisive.

The task of capturing High Wood had fallen to the 47th (1/2nd London) Division. Their first attempt with tank support had failed but the attack resumed and after a hurricane bombardment of German positions by Stokes Mortars, in which 750 bombs were fired in 15 minutes, High Wood was finally in British hands. The 47th Division's performance was considered a failure because High Wood was only one of their objectives for the day; after four days of fighting in which the division suffered over 4,500 casualties, the commander Major General Charles Barter was relieved of command for "wanton waste of men".

Battle of Morval 25-28th Sept.

North of the 56th Division, the 95th Brigade of the 5th Division was delayed by enfilade machine-gun fire from the embankment north of the tram line and a strongpoint on the Ginchy–Morval road until bombed from the north. On the left the 15th Brigade followed the creeping barrage closely down into the valley, overrunning and taking prisoner numerous Germans. The 95th Brigade resumed its advance up the far slope and rushed the German trench running south from Morval, as the 15th Brigade overran the trench further north, west of the village, taking many more prisoners. After another halt to reorganise, the village was occupied by the 15th Brigade at 3:00 p.m. The final objective from the "Moulin de Morval"

windmill, south to the 56th Division area was consolidated by nightfall. Several weak German counter-attacks were defeated and the 95th Brigade began working its way southward towards the French at Frégicourt.

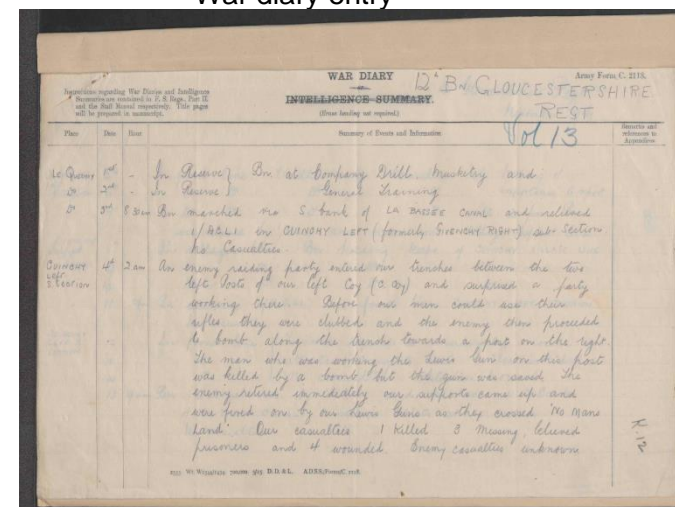
5th Division was heavily engaged at High Wood, Guillemont and Morval, and by September 1916 had suffered over 11,000 casualties on the Somme.

In October 1916 The Battalion was at Bethune and Givenchy in billets and in the line. It was a fairly quiet time with very few casualties. On 31st October they were at Le Quesnoy in billets and on 3rd November the Battalion marched to the South Bank of La Basse Canal and relieved 1 DCLI (Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry) at Cuinchy with no casualties. On the 4th an enemy raiding party attacked.

Diary entry below.

"An enemy raiding party entered our trenches between the two left posts of our left Coy (C. Coy) and surprised a party working there. Before our men could use their rifles they were clubbed and the enemy then proceeded to bomb along the trench towards a post on the right. The man who was working the Lewis Gun on this post was killed by a bomb but the gun was saved, the enemy retired immediately our supports came up and were fired upon by our Lewis Guns as they crossed 'no man's land' Our casualties 1 killed 3 missing. Believed prisoners and 4 wounded.

War diary entry



Pte Norman Oakhill died on 6th December 1916 there were no casualties recorded in the war diaries between the action above and the 6th December so it is most likely that Pte Oakhill was one of the 4 wounded above and was sent back to a base hospital where he died later.



Troops of the 12th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment (5th Division) advancing in artillery formation

There were many other temporary wooden battlefield memorials erected during or just after the war, very few of which still survive, but near to Caterpillar Valley Cemetery is a replacement of another – the **Bristol Cross**. This memorial to the 12th Battalion, the Gloucester Regiment, is located just outside Longueval, south-east of High Wood. The battalion was involved in an attack near here on the 29th of July. Once again, this location (see picture below) illustrates the elevation advantage of High Wood. The cross that stands here today is not the original; that was erected in the 1920s, but had vanished by the end of the Second World War. In 1986 this replacement (made in Bristol) was put in place. Records at the National Archives suggest that the Gloucesters erected a wooden memorial very near this spot during the War



27		Name.		Corps.		Rank.		Serial No.	
DAKHILL		Norman.		Glouce R.		Pte.		25194.	
Blood.		Vaccines		Dietary		Dress		Remarks.	
2/10/20.		2/2/24		do		do			
Theatre of War first served in		Date of entry theatre							

Correspondence.

Address.

FORM 688 WA 1916—R.P. 687 1,000. IT120. 2,000.

He was awarded



the British War Medal and the Victory Medal





In Memory of
Private
Norman Oakhill

25194, 12th Bn., Gloucestershire Regiment who died on 06 December 1916 Age 21

Son of George and Emily Oakhill, of Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

Remembered with Honour
Merville Communal Cemetery Extension



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

10301 Acting Bombardier

Frederick Guy Pitt



25th Battery 35th Brigade
Royal Field Artillery

Frederick Guy Pitt

He was born in 1896 in Almondsbury. His parents were father Silas Clifford Pitt originally from Newent, Mother Alice Hathaway from Newport Mon.

In 1901 Frederick was living at 26 Mildred St, Bristol. With his parents, sisters Clara and Gladys and brothers Clifford and Stanley. His father worked in the traffic dept. of GWR.

In 1911 the family had moved to Railway Cottage, Fair View House, Stoke Gifford, Gloucestershire and Father was a Railway inspector, Clara laundry worker, Gladys mothers helper, Clifford and Stanley both Railway porters GWR.

Army Service The Great War

Acting Bombardier Frederick Pitt went to France on 13th July 1915 and joined 25th Battery of 35th Brigade Royal Field Artillery at Bethune. He would have arrived at his unit in the field in late July 1915.

35th Brigade War Diaries

August 1915.

1st 25th Bty marched out at 8am on relief by 9DA. reassembled at former rest billets at L'Ecleme

3-5th Nothing to report

6th. Inspection by Gen. Rotton.

7-10th Nothing of importance.

11th Horse show in Robecq

13th Inspection of 25 Bty by Gen Capper.

16-25th Nothing of importance, men promoted several to commissioned rank.

25th Batteries marched to Billets at Riez Du Vinage.

28th Reconnaissance and took over section near Vermelles.

29th Work continued, considerable difficulty with communications with working parties owing to great distance

from reserve billets. Motor bicycles would have been very handy. 35 Bde fighting HQ detected and shelled.

September.

30Aug -20th Work and strengthening gun positions on 9th an aeroplane registration and Sgt Stillyard 25th Battery was killed by a bullet fired at our aeroplane. Aeroplane registration on most days on 16th Gnr Pritchard (25th Bty) was wounded and 25th Bty searched for with 4.2 HE shells. On 20th Huns put up a notice saying "CHEMISTS to hurry up and come on"

Battle of Loos

On the morning of 25 September 1915, after a four-day artillery bombardment, six divisions attacked through clouds of smoke and gas. In the north of the battlefield, the gas hindered the attack of the 2nd Division along the La Bassée Canal and it was driven back with heavy casualties. In the centre, the 9th (Scottish) Division managed to seize the formidable Hohenzollern Redoubt and the vital

observation point of Fosse 8, while the 7th and 1st Divisions battled forward towards the Lens-la Bassée Road, with some units reaching the village of Hulluch. In the south, the gas had been more successful and the 47th (London) Division reached the distinctive spoil heaps known as the Double Crassier, while the 15th (Scottish) Division swept through the village of Loos and on the stronghold of Hill 70. By nightfall, reserves were urgently needed to exploit the gains. But by the time the 21st and 24th Divisions saw action the following day they were already exhausted by a long march and German reinforcements were counter-attacking. Despite hard fighting, the British reserves suffered heavy casualties and were driven back until the arrival of the Guards Division stabilised the position. Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt were lost during the following days and an attempt to regain them on 13 October by the 46th (North Midland), 12th (Eastern) and 1st Division ended in failure. CWGC

From the War Diaries of 35 Brigade RFA
21st. At Vermelles. First day of bombardment from Hohenzollern redoubt to Hulluch Rd. all batteries cutting wire. 25 Bty searched for bu 4.2 How. Battery. 1 man 25 Bty wounded.
22nd. 3 men 25 Bty wounded. Batteries firing on wire and all firing ceased 9.50 - 12.50.
23rd Wire cutting continued. The effect at the end of the day was encouraging, infantry officers of the units detailed for the

attack reported on the state of the wire as far as possible, Batteries did night firing.
24th. Fourth day of bombardment, continued wire cutting. During the four days 3 sham attacks were exploited the enemy took no notice of them. Zero hour 5.50am on 25th,
25th. September
Bombardment prior to assault began.
6.20 25Bty reported red and white rocket at Madagascar.
6.32 infantry getting out on to the parapets.
6.35 Infantry in German trenches with very little loss, HQ reported the assault a great success.
7.10am Barrages ordered to continue.
7.50 Bde reported tha Pope's Nose had held us up a bit but was surrounded and the defenders surrendered.
8.50 700, 25th and 58th Btys sent on.
9.00am Barrages ordered.
9.08 Barrages stopped.
9.20 Report from vii D.A "our infantry have reached Puis 13. Rate 3 rounds per Bty per minute until 10am.
11.15 ordered to barrage across the railway.
11.30 25th and 58th opened fire at this range.
11.25 Reported progress Loos taken by 15th Div, St Elie partly - Puits 13 entirely - Hulluck partly, later events showed how absurd this was.

12.06 rifle fire and shrapnel from Loos on Quarry Ridge.
12.32 Cavalry seen going up the road towards Loos.
1.30pm 25th and 58th opened fire on Cite.
2.55 Report that French have broken the German line on a 40km front in Champagne.
4pm Scheduled hour for attack on St Elie trench.
5.15 9th Div appears to be retiring 25th and 58th fired on zone.
5.35 After reconnaissance a Bde telephone cart and detachment went out and a wire was laid to 12thBty new position,
6.36 A counter attack expected, rate of fire increased to 3 rounds per gun per minute.
26th Sept.
Early morning enemy making free with flares. 12th Bty came out of action, 25th and 58th barraged. Attack by enemy expected, 5.20am 25th Bty reported situation calm, we held at least the enemy's front line trenches.
8.45 Attack on the quarries by Norfolk's failed. 9.15 25th & 58th Shelled the quarries where the enemy were clearly visible. 11am Heavy bombardment heard to the south. 2.15 Strong counter attack driving us back to Vermelles. 3pm Enemy reported in large numbers in St Elie 6 rounds gun fire. 3.50 about 2000 enemy retiring from St Elie 12Bty fired on them at

a rapid rate, 4.32 Infantry started to attack.

General Capper was mortally wounded in the firing line.

6.40pm Night line, same as last night.
27th Sept.

Enemy still in possession of the Quarries. Comparatively quiet but heavy fighting started during the course of the morning around Fosse 8 and the Dump which the enemy finally captured. Great difficulty in recognising the men in this area and the enemy must have been let off a heavy artillery punishment of account of this. Several counter attacks by 9th Div. failed to re-establish on the Dump. Situation at night mixed. Night lines 25th Bty Quarries. 28th. Attack on Dump by Yorkshire's failed. 25th did great execution among the enemy around the Dump and might have done much more if there had been no doubt about the nationality of the troops in the area.

9am. All morning heavy fighting in Fosse 8 and the Dump. Major Gover from Vermelles insisted several times that there were enemy on the Dump and Hohenzollern Redoubt but opinion was divided, Col Tudor, Majors Gover and Dunlop all said they were German but Major Clarke's observation station said they thought they were British. It would seem that a different part of the Dump was invisible to each party, leave was finally given to Col tudor to fire if he deemed it

safe to do so. 25th immediately opened fire and obtained great effect.

12 noon, Corps orders. To stop firing at Dump and Hohenzollern. Afternoon fighting still continued in this area. Night lines. 25th on north side of Quarry, 15 Rds per battery all night.

29th Sept, Bombing attack on St Elie's ave and Slag Alley. 25th & 58th Fired on Quarry.

8.55am German's reported by our 700s to be advancing from St Elie's ave and Slag Alley 25th opened fire but told to stop by 9th as they said they were there. 9.05 9th Div asked for fire on slag Alley and 25th opened fire. 9.52 hostile fire in support of the German attack ceased. 2.10 Report that French have broken last German line in Champagne.

30th Sept. 35 Bde horses moved back from fighting to Noyelles. 7.30 Enemy reported massing in Quarries, 25th & 58th opened fire.

October.

1st. 1.10am 25th Opened fire on Quarries to prevent enemy pushing home an attack which had become lodged 100 yards in front of gun trench. Bedford's counter attacked.

2nd Little Willie was retaken by us after its capture last night and was retaken by enemy later this morning. 8.30am Gun trench in the enemy's possession was attacked and 2 coys got well in but were

bombed out again. 10.15 28th Div. attacked Little Willie but attack failed. 3rd. Enemy attacked across the open from Little Willie without preparation but were met with heavy gunfire and driven back. 25th and 58th registered by aeroplane. 4.10 enemy reported massing opposite to Gun trench. 5pm Reports that KRR were being attacked, batteries fired and KRR held their own well and were pleased with the artillery support. 7.45 very heavy fighting and bombing in Hohenzollern redoubt, Germans seem to have the majority of it.

4th Quiet day. Heavy howitzers shelled Dump and Quarry.

5th 25th dispersed a working party in the quarry. In the afternoon gun trench heavily shelled everyone ready to expect attack. 5.30pm 1st Guards Bde grouped with us. Night firing all batteries as usual. 6th Heavy shrapnel and HE fired on gun trench and support trenches. Terrific explosion in St Elie coming from one of our big gun shells hitting a house.

7th Nothing of importance.

8th, Lots of rockets, attacks but driven off, rifle fire section fire from Batteries.

9-11th Bombing on all days 25th retaliated stopping the bombing and gave intensive fire.

12th. Heavy shelling and enemy increased its intensity during the day. 5pm Grenadier Guards being heavily attacked 5.25 Btys fired.

13th. Bombardment of the quarries. 25th fired on Germans in the open.

14th Gun trench all in our possession. Remainder of month at Vermelles then Norrent Fontes. Quiet period on 26th 25th Bty were in a bog on 27th tried to get 25th out of the swamp but were all futile. Wet and stormy at end of month.

November

At Gorre. Activity by sharpshooters, lot of bombing, enemy exploding mines, enemy doing a lot of shouting and singing in the trenches, hostile shelling of roads, trenches and Givenchy. But a fairly quiet time.

December

Moved to new billets at Lambres Some aeroplane activity beginning of the month, But most of month Winter, section and Battery training.

1916

January

Bourdon Battery training all month.

February

Moved to Meaulte on 6th. Lot of re-arranging procedures. 19th 25th Bty fired 22 rounds in retaliation for Trench Mortars and a further 39 on 20th. 21/22nd enemy shelled the Tambour. Btys stood to. 25th fired 220 rounds 58th 226 rounds. Rest of month fairly quiet until 29th when enemy heavily shelled front line trenches.

March.

Certain amount of registration. On 1st 25th fired on working party, Batteries retaliated for Trench Mortars, enemy put some minenwerfers bombs no damage. Enemy Trench Mortars very active. Some days fairly quiet others a lot of hostile shelling and retaliation from our batteries.

April/May/June

First part of the month heavy artillery exchanges. A number of mines were exploded by the Germans. Then a quieter period of hostile artillery fire until the 14th when it became much more active until 20th when it quietened down until the 25th when it became very active. May and June followed similar patterns with almost non stop artillery exchanges and periods of fairly quiet activity and very active.

The Somme

July

The Battery were part of the Divisional troops of the 7th Division. Below are the battles they took part in at the Somme 1916.

The battle of Albert, 1-13 July 1916, is the official name for the British efforts during the first two weeks fighting of the first battle of the Somme. As such it includes the first day of the Somme, the most costly day in British military history and one that has coloured our image of the First World War ever since.

The artillery bombardment began seven days before the infantry were due to go in. It was not as effective as had been hoped, leaving large portions of the German front line intact. The German lines on the Somme contained a large number of deep concrete bunkers, which protected the Germans from the British bombardment, allowing them to emerge once the bombardment ended. Worse, along most of the British front the bombardment failed to destroy the German wire. The attack on 1 July was made by eleven divisions along a fourteen mile front from Montauban to Serre. Haig hoped to capture the German front line along this entire front, then break through their second and third lines, before turning left and rolling up the German lines to the sea. This would prove to be the most ridiculously optimistic plan. Along the northern two thirds of the front virtually no ground was taken. A few lodgements were made in the German front lines, but they were impossible to extend and difficult to support. The British suffered 57,000 casualties on 1 July, the most costly single day in British military history. Thirteen divisions at full strength contained 130,000 men, so the British suffered over 40% casualties in a single day. On the right of the line the picture was a little less depressing. Between Maricourt and Fricourt the British XIII corps captured the entire German front line. To its left the 7th

Division (XV corps) failed to take Fricourt, but the 21st Division, also of XV corps, captured 1,000 yards of the line, isolated Fricourt, which the Germans abandoned overnight.

War diaries of 25th Battery. First few days of the battle

1st July. At Montauban.

6.25am Bombardment commenced

7.30 Infantry assaulted.

All day, Batteries shelling trenches and targets for infantry, 9.45 started night barrages at request of infantry. Later taken off night barrages and put on night firing, later ceased to allow infantry to bomb down trenches.

2nd. Infantry bringing in the wounded from no-man's-land around Fricourt. Later infantry seen walking in the open near the Tambour unmolested.

3rd. Attack on Bottom Wood 25th Bty pulled out and took away 2 German 77mm guns

9am attack began and barrage opened.

The Battle of Bazentin Ridge, 1916

Opened at dawn on the 14th (unusually so; Douglas Haig, the British Commander-in-Chief, was suspicious of night attacks), and preceded by a short sharp five minute artillery bombardment - just enough time to send exposed German defenders to their dugouts - the infantry moved

forward. A notable success, Bazentin-le-Grand and Bazentin-le-Petit were secured within a matter of hours, with Longueval (skirting Delville Wood) following shortly afterwards. Having established a position at Bazentin-le-Petit it became apparent to the British that High Wood itself was deserted; a large gap in the German lines was waiting to be exploited. Permission was sought from headquarters to dispatch infantry into the wood. However it was instead decided that here was an ideal scenario for the use of cavalry who could, it was stated, move far more quickly than infantry and may even break right through to Bapaume. During the delay between the request for an infantry advance into the wood being sent - around 9am - and midday, by which time still no news of a cavalry advance had been given, German defenders were moving slowly back into the wood, effectively plugging the hole in their lines. By the time the cavalry were finally sent forwards, at around 7pm, the Germans had established sufficient defences to be able to decimate the oncoming British with machine gun fire. Despite the costly failure of the attack upon High Wood, the cavalry nevertheless secured a line from the wood to Longueval. That night the British, under heavy fire, attempted to establish a line inside the wood, in readiness for an attack upon the German forces situated in the north-western half of the wood on the

following day. However British headquarters had resolved instead to launch an attack upon Martinpuich in the north, overlooking the reality that the Germans had not yet been fully cleared from High Wood. Midway between Bazentin-le-Petit and Martinpuich, and clipping the edge of High Wood - where the German troops were still in residence - was sited a formidable German line of defence known as the Switch Line. In launching an attack upon Martinpuich the British would find themselves open to enfilading fire from the wood; therefore a simultaneous attack from the western side of the wood, directed at the German position, was launched, repeatedly and without success. The consequences for the attacking 33rd Division towards Martinpuich was devastating. Later that evening the British withdrew entirely from High Wood.

Delville Wood July 15 until 3 September 1916 On July 15 at dawn the South African regiment went in following a heavy artillery battle: they managed to clear the southern edge of German forces. The remainder of the wood remained in German hands. Hand to hand fighting ensued until the South Africans were relieved on the night of July 19, having lost 766 dead among the four battalions alone; the dead outnumbered the wounded by four to one. Throughout poor weather (it

rained often) and enemy artillery fire which reached a crescendo of 400 shells a minute, the surrounding landscape was transformed into a mess of broken, stumpy tree roots and massive shell holes. Mud and rainwater covered bodies of South African and German forces alike - many bodies remain in the wood today (which is now in private hands). The Germans lost 9,500 men by August alone. The wood was never entirely taken by the South African forces, despite huge efforts to do so. It wasn't until after another month of fierce fighting had taken place, on August 25, that 14th (Light) Division finally took the wood and overcame German resistance. Delville Wood remained the most costly action the South African Brigade fought on the Western Front. During the final great German push of March 1918 the wood was again taken by the Germans on March 24 but was recaptured by 38th (Welsh) Division on August 28. Today the wood and nearby memorial is looked after by the South African Government. The Delville Wood Cemetery contains 5,493 burials. Almost two-third of these are unknown.

The battle of Guillemont, 3-6 September 1916, was the official name given to the fighting that captured the village of Guillemont during the first battle of the Somme. The dates of the battle are rather misleading. Guillemont had been on the

right flank of the British line since the middle of July, and had been attacked without success during August. The official name also covers the fighting further north in Delville Wood and around Ginchy.

Progress on this eastern flank of the British line was essential if the French and British were to cooperate properly north of the Somme. By the start of September the capture of Guillemont was becoming more urgent, as the plans for an attack north toward Flers and Courcellette began to take shape.

The successful attack on Guillemont was made by XIV corps, and was led by the 20th Division, with the 5th Division to their right. Their target was Leuze Wood, 1,500 yards beyond the village, on a ridge overlooking the village of Combles.

The southern part of the attack on 3 September suffered the most heavily. There the 13th Brigade had been relying on the French for a final bombardment of their objective, Falfemont Farm, but the French became stuck in Combles Ravine, and were unable to make any progress. The leading waves of the first battalion to attack were wiped out by German fire. To their left the 95th Brigade (5th Division) captured its first three objectives, and reached a line east of Guillemont.

The 20th Division attack on Guillemont began from a series of trenches very close to the German front line. The village itself had been destroyed by repeated artillery bombardments, but underneath it was a maze of German strongpoints. Despite this the 20th Division attack succeeded, captured its three objectives and reaching the Ginchy-Wedge Wood road, east of Guillemont. Elsewhere British attacks on Ginchy and further west around the front met with little or no success on 3 September.

The advance east of Guillemont continued over the next three days. By the end of 6 September the British had reached their target line, around Leuze Wood, and were ready to turn north to deal with Ginchy. Everything would soon be in place for the next big attack, at Flers-Courcellette.

The Battle of *Flers–Courcellette* (15–22 September 1916)

The Brigade was heavily involved in this battle as well

Through September the 25th Bty were at Longueval daily constant hostile shellfire. On 15th an attack on Gueudecourt 25th advanced but held up tried to observe from Brown Trench but communications not working due to hostile artillery. Batteries continue with bombardment.

The ground was like an intersecting series of shell craters and the guns could only be dragged into position with greatest difficulty, the Battery had numerous casualties of men and horses. 16th enemy seen advancing and were engaged with great effect. 17th Batteries kept up continuous observed fire on hostile trenches. 18-23rd Batteries kept up continuous observed fire on enemy trenches. On 23rd cutting wire. 26th Enemy advancing in te open all day and engaged by batteries. 29th Brigade rested at Bonnay.

October/November at Ploegsteert Daily artillery exchanges, Trench Mortar activity no major battles but just trench warfare.

December 4th On the march until 15th when arrived at Beaumont Hamel. Stayed until end of year. Heavy shelling especially of Redan Ridge.

1917

January Beaumont Hamel, moved to Sardon in mid February and on to Puisieux at beginning of March and Mory on 15th stayed through April. This period saw a lot of shelling hostile wagons, intermittent shelling by hostile artillery. A lot of wire cutting.

May/June/July. At St Leger. Some wire cutting but daily routine firing end of July at Ecoust Valley.

August. 1-24st At Ecoust Valley, calibration and routine firing. 25-31st In rest at wagon lines at Sapignes.

September 27 -30th moved to Reninghelst positions prepared in front of Chateau Wood.

3rd October 1917 In front of Chateau Wood. 2 guns of 106 Bty and 3 guns of 25th Battery casualties, it is most likely that this was the point at which Frederick Pitt was wounded and sent back to the base hospitals at Etaples where he died on 2nd November. There do not appear to be any casualties in the war diaries between these dates.

Campaign: 1914-15.				(A) Where decoration was earned.	
				(B) Present situation.	
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	REGD	PROV
(A) PITT	R.F.A.	2/Bomber	1030	VICTORY	1917
(B) Fredk	"	"	"	STAR	1917
Action taken				Died 2-11-17.	
THEATRE OF WAR, (1) France					
QUALIFYING DATE: 13.7.15.					
<small>(S 24 46) W204—H105890 500,000 4/19 HWV(1215) K608</small>					

Correspondence.
Address.

He was awarded



The 1914/15 Star, The British War Medal and Victory Medal

Soldiers who died in the Great War

Name: Frederick Pitt
Birth Place: Bristol
Death Date: 2 Nov 1917
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Bristol, Glos.
Rank: Gunner
Regiment: Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery
Regimental Number: 10301
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds





In Memory of
Gunner
Frederick Guy Pitt

10301, 25th Bty. 35th Bde., Royal Field Artillery who died on 02 November 1917 Age 21

Son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Pitt, of "Fairview," Stoke Gifford, nr. Bristol. Late of Great Western Railway (Traffic Dept.).

Remembered with Honour
Etapes Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

21344 L/Corporal Jesse Halford Wicks



7th Battalion Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire) Regiment

Jesse Halford Wicks

He was born on 27th September 1890 and baptised on 2nd November at Stoke Gifford. His parents were John Wicks a farm labourer. from Hullavington, Wiltshire, and Minnie Curtis from Stoke Gifford. In 1891 they were living at Stapleton, Stoke Gifford, Gloucestershire, England.. At 1901 they were at Stoke Gifford and Jesse had a brother George and sister Ruth.. In 1911 he was joined by sisters Mary and Lillian and Jesse was a labourer with GWR.

Army service The Great War

We don't know precisely when L/Corporal Wicks joined the army but his army number almost certainly means he 'enlisted' probably under the Derby scheme in December 1915 and a single man born in 1890 would have been in group 8 and 'called up for service on January 8th 1916 or if deferred on February 8th 1916. He did not receive the 1914/15 Star medal so did not serve overseas before 1916. He was put into the Royal Berkshire Regiment and joined the 7th Battalion with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in the Balkans (Salonika). the

7th Battalion was part of the 78th Brigade of the 26th Division and on 11-24.11.1915 Moved to Salonika and engaged in various actions against the Bulgarian Army including;.

The Salonika Campaign

On the 5th October 1915 the first British and French troops landed on the Greek port in Salonika (now called Thessaloniki). During the almost three year campaign, the British Salonika Force (BSF), French, Greek, Italian, Russian and Serbian contingents fought together at various points.

The Campaign

The BSF aimed to stop Bulgarian forces from joining the German and Austro-Hungarian attack on Serbia. With early Allied failures and German successes, Bulgaria saw a real possibility that the Central Powers would win the war, and so they joined them and declared war on Serbia on 13th October 1915.

By 14th December the Allies were forced to retreat to Greek territory towards Salonika. Although the Allies had 250,000 men they lacked the necessary equipment and supplies to fight along a 250 mile front. The front stretched from Albania to the mouth of the River Struma in Greece.

Many operations were launched throughout the three years but the Allied failure to break Bulgarian resistance resulted in a stalemate along the Salonika Front. It was not until 1918 that a surprise French and Serbian attack managed to break through the Bulgarian lines during the Battle of Doiran. The Salonika Campaign was long and dangerous, ending with the surrender of Bulgaria on 26th September 1918.

On the 5th October 1915 the first British and French troops landed on the Greek port in Salonika (now called Thessaloniki). During the almost three year campaign, the British Salonika Force (BSF), French, Greek, Italian, Russian and Serbian contingents fought together at various points.

Battle of Doiran (1916) The Battle of Horseshoe Hill.

In the beginning of August 1916 three French and one British divisions with

45,000 men and 400 guns launched an offensive against the Bulgarian positions at Lake Dojran, defended by the Second Thracian Infantry Division. The attack began on 9 August with heavy artillery fire on the positions of the 27th Chepino Regiment and 9th Plovdiv Regiment. All four attacks that followed - on 10, 15, 16 and 18 August were repulsed by the Second division and the Allies were forced to retreat to their original positions with heavy casualties.

As the Wiltshires and the Devons crouched in their trenches, Bulgarian howitzers and a battery of German naval guns pounded the boulders around them. There was a lull in the barrage in the early evening, and from the lakeside a waiting officer heard a familiar sound – the croak of hundreds of frogs, adding a touch of Aristophanic mockery to the irony of war. It was no more than a brief respite. Soon the shells were lobbing down once more; and the gullies became caverns of dead and wounded even before the hour of advance.

At 9.45 [pm], with the relentless barrage unabated, they pressed forward, down to the bottom of the smoke-filled Jumeaux Ravine and across a swift-flowing stream. And when they emerged from the hell of the ravine, two powerful searchlights threw their beams across the open ground, exposing the attackers to a withering cross-fire : few reached the Bulgarian

trenches. The tragic pattern was to be repeated in other ravines and ridges throughout the night. Within half an hour the Berkshires and the Worcesters of the 78th Brigade, who were coming on the Jumeaux Ravine from the south-west, had been swept by a similar hurricane of gun fire; and, although some battalions captured the enemy outposts and two of the Devon companies reached the inner line of trenches on the Petit Couronné, there was confusion in the centre. The Bulgars counter-attacked, and about four in the morning, when it was clear that there was no reasonable chance of making headway, the 26th Division was ordered back to its lines, exhausted and sadly depleted.

Meanwhile, on the left of the front, the 22nd Division had had more success and fewer casualties, mainly because the Bulgarian artillery could not rake the gullies in this sector and it was therefore possible to find covered approaches to their outposts. The 22nd Division reached their first objective and held it against five counter-attacks, but the costly failure on their right prohibited any further advance up the hills behind Doiran as they would have come under strong enfilade fire from the unassailed Bulgarian positions. Still further westward the 60th Division raid an Machukovo had started well; but, with searchlights once again silhouetting the attackers against the night sky, it was not

possible for them to get beyond the first line of Bulgarian trenches.

Battle of Doiran (1917)

During the Second conference of the Military Counsel of the Entente in Chantilly, it was decided to continue with the attempts at a breakthrough. The task for the Entente forces on the Macedonian front was to inflict major defeats on the Bulgarian army and effect a wide breakthrough in the Balkans in a relatively short time. The Allied command, which expected reinforcements, planned a major assault in the direction of Vardar and Doiran. In 1917 the 2nd (Bulgarian) Thracian Infantry Division was replaced at Doiran by the 9th Plevan Infantry division under the command of Colonel Vladimir Vazov.

On 9 and 10 February the Allies attacked the 33rd Svishtov and 34th Troyan Regiments but were repulsed by a decisive counter-attack by the Troyan Regiment. The British advance on 21 February was repulsed by Bulgarian artillery after a two-day battle.

The Allied command found that the Bulgarian positions were better fortified than in the previous year, so it ordered a systematic artillery barrage on these defences. In the meantime, it continued the development of their forming-up

ground which was 800–1,500 m from the defensive lines of the Plevan Division. To make the breakthrough, the British concentrated three divisions (the 22nd, 26th, 60th), with its artillery – more than 43,000 men, 160 guns, 110 mortars and 440 machine-guns. The objective did not differ much from the battle in the previous year, the main blow was on a front of 5–6 km towards Kalatepe.

The prognosis of the Bulgarian command for a major Allied offensive was confirmed by intelligence. The 9th Plevan Division was reinforced and had a total of 30,000 men, 147 guns, 35 mortars, 130 machine-guns.

According to the orders of the High Command the front was divided into three zones with different widths: the right from the River Vardar to the Varovita heights with a width of 13 km, was defended by 1st Brigade (6 battalions with 48 guns, 12 mortars and 56 machine guns); the central from the Varovita heights to the Karakondzho heights, 4 km wide, defended by the 57th Regiment (3 battalions) and the left from the Karakondzho heights to Lake Doiran, 9 km wide, defended by 2nd Brigade (6 battalions, 76 guns, 19 mortars and 52 machine-guns).

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The British infantry began its attack on the night of 24–25 April - 12 companies attacked the Bulgarian 2nd Brigade and after a bloody fight managed to take the "Nerezov", "Knyaz Boris" and "Pazardzhik" positions. After a Bulgarian counter-attack the British were repulsed with heavy casualties and by 8 pm had retreated. The British assaults on the right and central fronts were also repulsed with heavy casualties after help from the Bulgarian artillery.

The British attacks in the next two days were defeated by constant Bulgarian fire and counter-attacks. Due to this fire the British withdrew to their initial positions on 27 April, the Bulgarians immediately started to reconstruct the destroyed fortifications.

Due to criticism by their high command, the British made new attempts at a breakthrough. On 8 May, after a long artillery barrage, they began another attack. The main assault started at 9 pm with five waves of British troops attacking the Bulgarian positions. After four attacks during the night of 8–9 May the British were defeated and suffered enormous casualties.^[6] A Times correspondent wrote that the British soldiers called the "Boris" point "the valley of death".

The artillery duel continued until 9 May but due to heavy casualties the British had to abandon all attacks. They lost 12,000 killed, wounded and captured of which more than 2,250 were buried by the Bulgarian defenders. The losses of the Ninth Pleven Infantry Division were 2,000 of whom 900 died from disease and wounds.

L/Cpl Wicks died in the attack on the night of 24–25 April, his body was never found and he is commemorated on the Dorian Memorial.

The DOIRAN MEMORIAL stands roughly in the centre of the line occupied for two years by the Allies in Macedonia, but close to the western end, which was held by Commonwealth forces. It marks the scene of the fierce fighting of 1917-1918, which caused the majority of the Commonwealth

battle casualties. From October 1915 to the end of November 1918, the British Salonika Force suffered some 2,800 deaths in action, 1,400 from wounds and 4,200 from sickness. The campaign afforded few successes for the Allies, and none of any importance until the last two months. The action of the Commonwealth force was hampered throughout by widespread and unavoidable sickness and by continual diplomatic and personal differences with neutrals or Allies. On one front there was a wide malarial river valley and on the other, difficult mountain ranges, and many of the roads and railways it required had to be specially constructed. The memorial serves the dual purpose of Battle Memorial of the British Salonika Force (for which a large sum of money was subscribed by the officers and men of that force), and place of commemoration for more than 2,000 Commonwealth servicemen who died in Macedonia and whose graves are not known.

239289 Sapper Alfred John Winstone



262nd Railway Construction
Company
Royal Engineers

Alfred John Winstone.

Alfred John Winstone, known as John was born in 1885 in Stoke Gifford. His parents were George Winstone a farm labourer (cowman) and Lucy Causen Phillips. Alfred had three brothers. Frederick, Henry and Albert. They lived until the Great War at Stoke Gifford. Alfred married Emma Causon Phillips on 5th June 1915 at Stoke Gifford Parish church.

Page 89.

1815. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Stoke Gifford in the County of Gloucester

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
177	June 5th 1915	Alfred John Winstone Emma Causon Phillips	29 30	Bachelor Spinster	Paeker Spinster	Stoke Gifford Stoke Gifford	George Winstone Frederick Phillips	Labourer Countryman

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church of England by Mr. K. J. J. J. J.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Alfred John Winstone in the Presence of us, Emma Causon Phillips of us, Secretary, Methodist

1815. Marriage solemnized in the Parish Church in the Parish of Stoke Gifford in the County of Gloucester

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
178	Dec 5 1915	Alfred John Winstone Ada Louise Hughes	29 25	Bachelor Spinster	Paeker Spinster	Stoke Gifford Stoke Gifford	John Winstone George Hughes	Labourer Countryman

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church of England by Mr. K. J. J. J. J.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Alfred John Winstone in the Presence of us, Ada Louise Hughes of us, Secretary, Methodist

They had a daughter Doris Mary Winstone born 13th April 1916.

Sapper Winstone was appointed to the 262 Railway construction Company

Railway Construction Companies of the Royal Engineers



The contribution to the war effort, especially on the Western Front, of the designated Railway Construction Companies of the Royal Engineers is largely overlooked and/or not researched in most accounts of the conflict. Given the fact that the earliest troop movements gave rise to the phrase "war by timetable" and that the railway was the primary means of movement of men, munitions and supplies, the important if unglamorous role of

this military function cannot be underestimated. Once in France, the sappers would be assigned to a Construction Train, of which there were eight in operation in mid-1915. Each Construction Train would have a complement of up to two complete Railway Companies, with a Captain as officer commanding the train. This enabled the sappers to carry both themselves and all their necessary tools and equipment to and from wherever the next work was required. The Companies would pitch tents for accommodation, as required. Large-scale work would include the construction of the major stores and ammunition dump at Audruicq, ten miles from Calais. Here, and at numerous other locations such as the nearby major ammunition dump at Zeneghem Yard, there was great use of Chinese Labour and R.E. Labour Companies to prepare the ground, ready for the platelaying sappers. As the various campaigns and battles unfolded, RE Railway Companies were engaged all over the British sector, joined by Dominion RE Railway Companies. Close examination of the period maps bear testimony to miles of what was to be temporary track that criss-crossed the area. Howitzer Spurs, Ambulance Train Sidings, Tank Enablements and bridges were all constructed, in addition to the constant maintenance and line doubling. Work in progress was always a potential target for enemy artillery and also there were the attentions of the German Air Force to contend with. Zeneghem Yard, for instance, was a natural target and sappers from RE Railway Companies are recorded as having to help extinguish serious fires resulting from air raids.

A primary objective was always to take standard gauge railways as close to the front as possible, to lessen the demands on light railway systems, horsed transport and manpower. For the sappers, work could mean toiling around the clock, especially where lines had been cut by shellfire. Inevitably there were casualties; analysis of the records shows that 173 men from Railway Companies lost their lives. From just the two Regular Companies in 1914, there would be a total of forty-five Companies engaged in Standard Gauge Railway Construction, including other theatres such as Egypt and Salonica, by the end of hostilities. Most of the men in the RE Railway Companies had enlisted for the duration of the war and were naturally keen to return home as soon as possible. However, there was still much line repair work to be done in order to restore the lines of communication now extending deeper into the areas formerly held by the Germans. The Railway Companies gradually began to be demobilised and by August 1919 the last Company had laid its last sleeper.

Army Service The Great War

239289 Sapper Alfred John Winstone. (A Railway Platelayer) On 3rd June 1916 he was attested at Bristol and appointed to the Railway Troops depot R.E. He was mobilised next day. He was attached to the 262 Railway construction company Royal Engineers and on 26th February 1917 they left Southampton for France on the SS Caeserea and arrived at Havre on 27th at 5pm. They were accommodated at No 1

Rest camp and on 4th March arrived at Drenoutre where they were accommodated in billets and employed on building the Clapham Junction to Bruloose Line. On 8th March Officer and 30 men detached to Poperinghe to work on lines at Ypres. On 16th HQ of the company moved under canvas and work on new line continued. 17th. A further detachment of 19 men to Poperinghe to strengthen the first party and enable them to undertake the completion of the Railhoek yard in addition to maintenance. 17-31st March remainder of company working on Clapham Junction to Bruloose line. April war diary is not in evidence but the company was working on the Clapham Junction line and it was completed on April 30th.

May

1st Clapham Junction to Bruloose line was inspected by the 2nd Army Commander.
5th. Leaving No 1 platoon to maintain the new Clapham Junction line, HQ No 2 and 4 platoons moved to 'sheet 28' where they were joined by No 3 platoon.
8th Work on alterations to Pacific sidings and Edwaart Hoek begun.
9th Work on construction of Westonhoek transshipping yard was begun.
11th Work on construction of offloading platforms at Godwaersvelde was begun.
18th Above platforms were completed.
An overland summer loco water supply

was begun, the section from International corner to Poperinghe being undertaken by 262nd Railway Coy. RE.

All of May. Maintenance parties increasing in size towards the end of the month, were provided by the Company for work in the area around Ypres. The first casualties to men of the unit occurred on May 12th, two men were wounded by shrapnel in the area of Ypres Asylum.

June.

1st In the Field. Company still in camp near Brandhoek with one platoon at Clapham Junction near Kemmel Hill engaged on maintenance of the Clapham Junction Bruloose Line. In the Ypres area the Coy was employed on the Pacific and Westonhoek transshipping stations, Peselhoek RE Park / begun on 3rd June. Additional from International corner to Busseboom. etc.

5th A Howitzer spur in Ypres station was begun, this work was completed on 11th after great difficulty and with several casualties.

12th. The completion of the three branches of the Midland Railway between Flamertinghe and Elverdinghe was undertaken. The work was begun by the Coy but then handed over to the 4th. C.R.T.

18th. Hospital siding at Brandhoek begun.

28th. 15 men were withdrawn from Clapham Junction and 75 from Brandhoek for work in the Proven area.

During the month 2 casualties occurred to men of the Coy and 5 to a labour unit attached.

July

1st In the Field. The Coy still had detachments at Clapham Common and at Proven. The remainder of the Coy was at Brandhoek Near Proven a triangle was being laid. While connections were being laid at Rousebrugge and Bandaghem Hospital siding continued.

10th Three additional sidings at Flammertinghe were begun

11th Machine Gun Farm railhead was begun.

12th Reigersburg RE Park was begun. A second cord was begun E. of Proven.

7th Lifting and pushing and the construction of a cours for the trench near Krombeke was begun.

24th. The detachment returned from Proven to Brandhoek having completed the above work for the French, and the Proven triangle, with the other work at Rousebrugge and Bandaghem here a Hospital platform was constructed.

25th. Flamertinghe Station, Machine Gun Farm and Reigersburg R.E. Park were ready for traffic on the required date.

During the month 5 casualties occurred to men of the Company and 17 to men of the attached labour unit.

August

1st. In the Field. After the push of 31st July the Company reconstructed the line

from Ypres to Boesinghe and also began the repair of the Roulers and Comines line.

On 4th August. Sapper Winstone was re-assessed at a Superior Rate by his O/C and received Extra Pay of 1/8p a day

6th A second Hospital siding was begun at Remy on this date and was ready for traffic on 8th.

12th Murat and Rivoli Howitzer spurs on the Ypres - Boesinghe Line begun on the afternoon of the 12th and completed on the 14th. A second spur (for a gun) at Murat farm was begun on 16th.

17th Earthworks for the Ravine Wood Howitzer spurs were begun, one being completed on 22nd the other on the 25th. 25th Howitzer spur finally completed.

During the month maintenance from Brandhoek to Ypres and Ypres to Boesinghe was continued. Captain Hatch and Sgt Greening wounded. 11 casualties to attached labour.

September.

During the last week of August and the first few days of September an attempt was made to drain the Railway Cutting at Hill 60. But this work was suspended under orders from HQ, after a considerable improvement had been effected. Work on the Comines line diversion and the Ravine Wood Howitzer spurs was continued day and night.

In September casualties occurred to the Coy and attached labour unit.

262nd Coy R.E. 2 Killed 6 Wounded.

Attached labour 4 Killed 30 Wounded.

One of the 262nds wounded was Sapper Winstone. He was sent back through the line to the 134 Field Ambulance where 'died of shell wounds' on 6th September 1917.

The Field Ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit (it was not a vehicle), manned by troops of the Royal Army Medical Corps. Most Field Ambulances came under command of a Division, and each had special responsibility for the care of casualties of one of the Brigades of the Division. The theoretical capacity of the Field Ambulance was 150 casualties, but in battle many would need to deal with very much greater numbers. The Field Ambulance was responsible for establishing and operating a number of points along the casualty evacuation chain, from the Bearer Relay Posts which were up to 600 yards behind the Regimental Aid Posts in the front line, taking casualties rearwards through an Advanced Dressing Station (ADS) to the Main Dressing Station (MDS). It also provided a Walking Wounded Collecting Station, as well as various rest areas and local sick rooms. The Field Ambulances would usually establish 1 ADS per Brigade, and 1 MDS for the Division

soldiers died in the great war

Name: Alfred John Winstone

Birth Place: Stoke Gifford, Glos.

Residence: Stoke Gifford, Glos.

Death Date: 6 Sep 1917

Death Place: France and Flanders

Enlistment Place: Bristol

Rank: SPR.

Regiment: Royal Engineers

Regimental Number: 239289

Type of Casualty: Died of wounds

Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

Comments: 262Nd Rly. Constn. Coy., R.E.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
WINSTONE	R.E.	Spr	239289
Alfred J			
Medal	Regt.	Page	Remarks
Victory	R.E. 101 3218	5317	
Service	to		
Span			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

Correspondence

Address

001 W 90/21 P. 0905 1,000m. 24/03 H.H. & Co. Ltd. E. 7000

He was awarded



The British War Medal and the Victory Medal





WINSTONE Alfred John of Stoke Gifford Gloucestershire
239289 sapper 262nd railway company R.E. die
September 1917 in Belgium Probate Bristol 13 Febr
to Emma Cason Winstone widow. Effects £227 6s.

10th March 1918 his widow was
awarded a pension of 10/9p a week for
herself and child.

In Memory of
Sapper
Alfred John Winstone

239289, 262nd Railway Construction Coy., Royal Engineers who died on 06 September 1917

Remembered with Honour
Voormezele Enclosures No.1 and No.2



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

9960 Private Frank Wood



1st Battalion
North Staffordshire
(Prince of Wales's)
Regiment

Frank Wood.

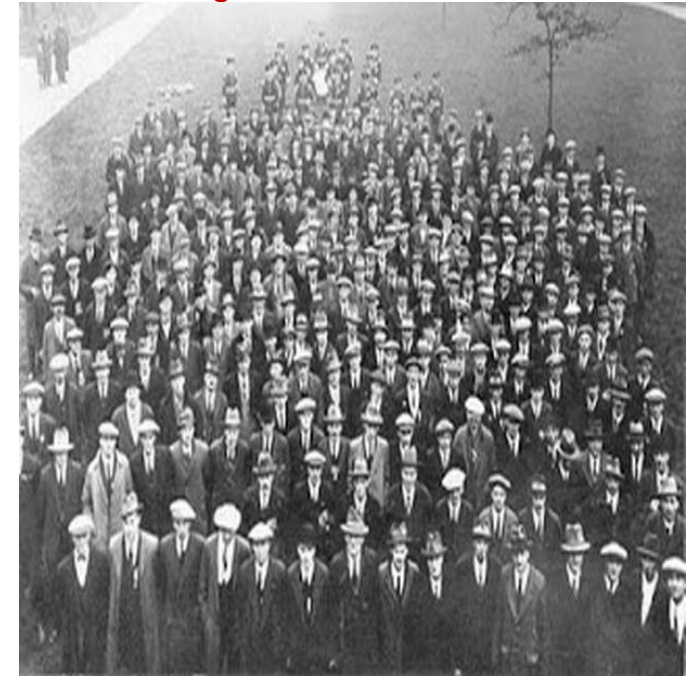
Frank Wood was born in 1896 in Litchurch Derby, Derbyshire. In 1911 he was a 'scholar' at Clifton Certified Industrial School, Clifton Wood, Bristol. An 'inmate' this school was an industrial school allowing it to receive boys committed by a magistrate to a period of detention. By 1896 it was house in Mardyke House and work by the boys were Tailoring, Shoemaking, Binding and Lining toolbaskets, Carpenters, Brushmakers, Pattern makers. Boys of good conduct were allowed 8 days leave to visit their family (if suitable) twice a year.

I regret I know no more of his background or relationship with Stoke Gifford other than he appears on the Stoke Gifford War Memorial so someone in 1920/22 must have had an attachment to him to have 'fought his corner' to have him put on the memorial.

His Army career is equally somewhat mysterious The 1st North Staffs war diaries on not available to see as they are housed at the Staffordshire Regiment Museum. His medal card says he went to France on 10th September 1914 with his regiment but this has been crossed out and amended to say 3rd March 1915. I have given an indication of the actions he would have been involved in below. He enlisted into the 1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment in Bristol in August

or early September 1914 judging by his army number and comparing it to others with similar numbers.

1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment WW1



North Staffordshire Recruits.

The 1st Battalion went to France in September 1914 as part of 17th Brigade in 6th Division. It took part in the First Battle of Ypres being based in the Armentières sector on the southern flank of the battle. In December 1914 it was in trenches in the Rue-du-Bois area (near

Fleurbaix), and participated in the Christmas truce, where British and German soldiers fraternised in no man's land.

In March 1915 it carried out a successful action in the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, capturing the village of L'Epinette.

During 1915 the Regiment was involved in the 'Actions at Hooge'. For much of the war, Hooge was one of the eastern-most sectors of the Ypres Salient, being almost constantly exposed to enemy attacks from three sides. After the First Battle of Ypres in 1914, the front line of the salient ran through the Hooge area and there was almost constant fighting in the region over the next three years, during which Hooge and the *Château de Hooge*, a local manor house were destroyed. Around the



North Staffs in France.

village, the opposing front lines were almost within whispering distance of each other. With its ruined village and a maze of battered and confusing trench lines, the area was regarded as a hazardous area for the infantry, where snipers abounded and trench raids were frequent. Both sides saw Hooge as a particularly important area and a key target for heavy artillery bombardment.

Ypres is overlooked by Kemmel Hill in the south-west and from the east by low hills running south-west to north-east with Wytschaete (Wijtschate), Hill 60 to the east of Verbrandenmolen, Hooge, Polygon Wood and Passchendaele (Passendale). The high point of the ridge is at Wytschaete, 7,000 yd (6,400 m) from Ypres, while at Hollebeke the ridge is 4,000 yd (3,700 m) distant and recedes to 7,000 yd (6,400 m) at Polygon Wood. Wytschaete is about 150 ft (46 m) above the plain; on the Ypres–Menin road at Hooge, the elevation is about 100 ft (30 m) and 70 ft (21 m) at Passchendaele. The rises are slight apart from the vicinity of Zonnebeke which has a gradient of 1:33. From Hooge and to the east, the slope is 1:60 and near Hollebeke, it is 1:75; the heights are subtle and resemble a saucer lip around the city. The main ridge has spurs sloping east and one is particularly noticeable at Wytschaete, which runs 2 mi (3.2 km) south-east to Messines (Mesen) with a gentle slope to the east and a 1:10

decline to the west. Further south is the muddy valley of the Douve river, Ploegsteert Wood (Plugstreet to the British) and Hill 63. West of Messines Ridge is the parallel Wulverghem (Spanbroekmolen) Spur and the Oosttaverne Spur, also parallel, lies further east. The general aspect south and east of Ypres is one of low ridges and dips, gradually flattening northwards beyond Passchendaele into a featureless plain. Possession of the higher ground to the south and east of Ypres gives ample scope for ground observation, enfilade fire and converging artillery bombardments. An occupier also has the advantage that artillery deployments and the movement of reinforcements, supplies and stores can be screened from view. The ridge had woods from Wytschaete to Zonnebeke giving good cover, some being of notable size like Polygon Wood and those later named Battle Wood, Shrewsbury Forest and Sanctuary Wood.

3rd March 1915 Private Wood joined his regiment in France



North Staffs advancing in France.

Raid on Hooge Chateau

On 2 June 1915, German artillery bombarded the Hooge area from 5:00 a.m. to noon leaving only two walls of the chateau standing, after which infantry attacked and captured the chateau and stables. A counter-attack on the night of 3/4 June recovered the stables but the Germans held onto the chateau.

Actions of Hooge

On 19 July, the Germans held Hooge Chateau and the British the stables and no man's land either side was 70–150 yd (64–137 m). Inside the German salient was a fortification under which the 175th Tunnelling Company had dug a gallery 190 ft (58 m) long and charged a mine with 3,500 lb (1,600 kg) of ammonal but waterlogged ground required the explosives to be loaded upwards. The

mine was sprung at 7:00 p.m. and left a crater 120 ft (37 m) wide and 20 ft (6.1 m) which was rushed by two companies of the 8th Brigade, 3rd Division. No artillery-fire had been opened before the attack and the Germans were surprised as bombers of the 8th Brigade advanced 300 yd (270 m) but then had to retire 200 yd (180 m) when they ran out of bombs. The trenches near the crater were consolidated and connected to the old front line, the 8th Brigade losing 75 casualties and taking 20 prisoners. On 22 July, the 3rd Division attacked east of the new line during the evening and the 14th (Light) Division attacked further north at Railway Wood but lacking surprise, both attacks failed.

On 30 July the Germans attacked Hooge against the front of the 14th Division, which had held the line for a week. The area had been suspiciously quiet the night before and at 3:15 a.m. the site of the stables exploded and jets of fire covered the front trenches, the first German flame thrower attack against British troops. A simultaneous bombardment began, most of the 8th Rifle Brigade was overrun and the rest retreated to the support line. A second attempt to use the flame throwers was frustrated by rapid fire but attempts to counter-attack failed and most of the captured trenches were consolidated by the Germans. On 6 August, the 6th Division relieved the 14th Division and

made a deliberate attack, with diversions on either flank by the 49th Division near Boesinghe, the 46th Division near Hill 60 and the 17th Division further right along with the 28th Division. From 3 August heavy artillery bombardments were fired at different times during the early hours. French artillery and 3 Squadron RFC participated and two brigades attacked after a hurricane bombardment. The brigades linked at the crater and dug in and German counter-attacks were broken up by the artillery which with direction by artillery-observation aircraft suppressed German artillery retaliation until mid-morning, when visibility reduced. Part of the captured ground on the right was evacuated under intense bombardment during the night. The 16th Brigade had 833 losses and the 18th Brigade 1,295 casualties, mostly from artillery fire after the attack.

First day of the Battle of Loos (The Big Push) 25th September 1915

On 25th September 1915 Private Wood was Killed in Action this day coincided with the start of the Battle of Loos but the North Staffs were not involved in that battle. There would however have been a lot of subsidiary actions going on on that date.

Name WOOD <i>Frank</i>		Corps <i>1 N Staff R</i>	Regt <i>56</i>	Serial No. <i>9960</i>
Medical	Dist.	Page	Remarks	
VICTORY BRITISH	<i>104</i>	<i>Bu</i>	<i>254</i>	<i>Taken on charge 432 d. 24-12-19 568/Adc.</i>
<i>15-14</i>	<i>11-13</i>	<i>11-12</i>	<i>11-11</i>	<i>Kw A 25-9-15</i>
Recommitted on 15.8.15		<i>F/10</i>	<i>555</i>	
Theater of War first served in		<i>1</i>		
Date of entry therein		<i>10-9-15</i>		
		<i>3-3-15</i>	<i>568 Adc.</i>	

Correspondence.	
<i>Inf. Rec. Lichfield returns 1914 Star - 19-12-19</i>	
Address.	

He was awarded




The 1914/15 Star The British War Medal The Victory Medal.



In Memory of
Private
F Wood

9960, 1st Bn., North Staffordshire Regiment who died on 25 September 1915

Remembered with Honour
La Brique Military Cemetery No.1


 Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission