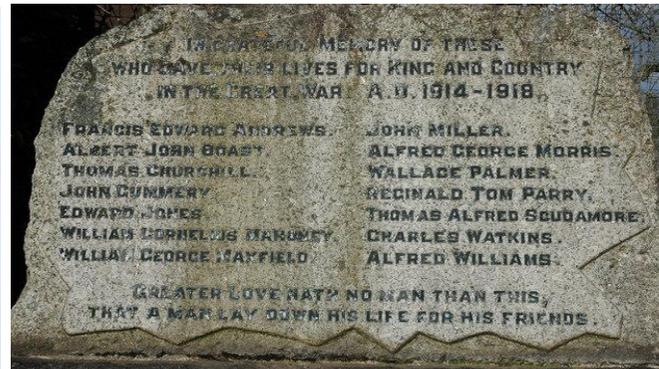


The Great War for civilisation

1914 - 1919

Commemorating the men of Llangrove who died in the conflict.



The Great War for Civilisation

1914 - 1919

Commemorating the men of Llangrove
who died in the conflict which started in 1914 years
and took the lives of 14 young men from the community.
We will remember them.



Bill Webb:
email: billwebb.llangarron@gmail.com

Tim Pridgeon
email: marksfarm3@btinternet.com

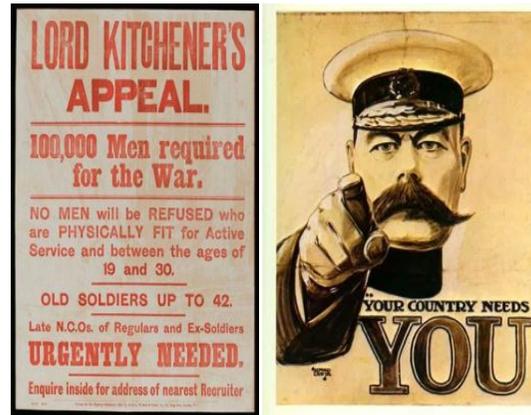
The war to end all wars

August 4th 2014 was 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.

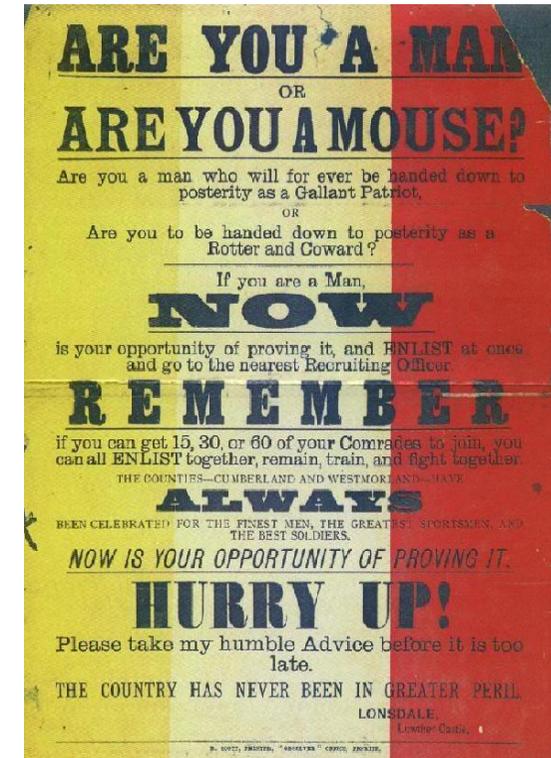
On August 7th 1914, Kitchener made his first appeal for 100,000 volunteers. To begin with the adverts in the newspapers were very staid with the royal crest with "Your King and Country need you" followed by "A Call to Arms". The adverts stated clearly an age range of 19 to 30. However, these adverts 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). Which later had 300 reserves allocated from the Herefordshire 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,

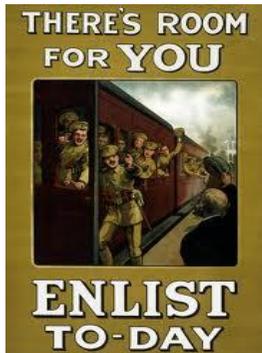
comprising men from the same town, had enlisted together to serve together. They suffered catastrophic losses: whole units died together and for weeks after the initial assault, local newspapers would be filled with lists of dead, wounded and missing. By the end of the battle 13th Nov. Britain had 420,000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



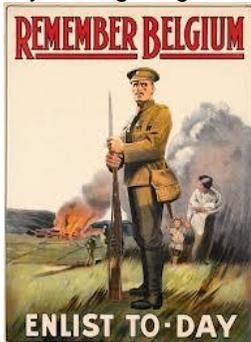
Cambrai Nov-Dec 1917. This was the first time that tanks had been used in large numbers. On the first day the British attack broke deeply and quickly into apparently impregnable defences with few casualties. But a later counter attack reversed the success. a "*harum-scarum affair, ill-planned and feebly 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.

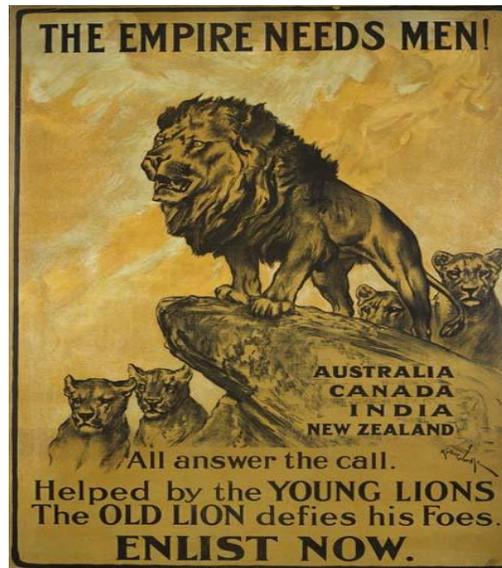


The Poster Campaign

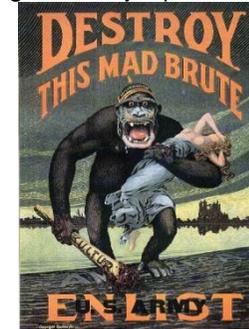


An effective way to get men to enlist was to pressure them through the women of the country.

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

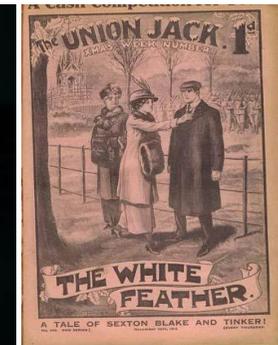


Different countries took different approaches to recruitment. The USA 'King Kong' approach looks frightening by today's standards and the Canadian appeal to the Jewish community is again a major patriotic approach.



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.

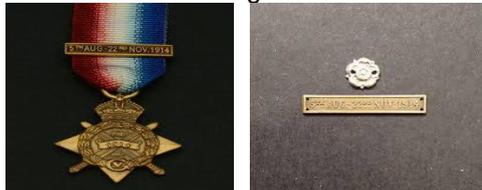
I have not listed all the medals available, such as eg. Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Military Cross just the ones awarded to local men.



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



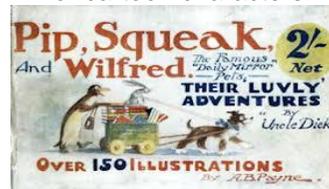
1914 (Mons) Star & Clasp and Roses. The Star was awarded to those who served in France or Belgium between 5th August and 22nd November 1914. The Clasp & Roses was awarded to those in the same period who were within range of enemy mobile artillery.



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

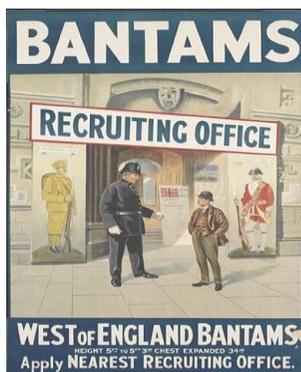
The Pals battalions of World War I were specially constituted units of the Army comprising men who had enlisted together in local recruiting drives, with the promise that they would be able to serve alongside their friends, neighbours and work colleagues ("*pals*"), rather than being arbitrarily allocated 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.

The stories of the men of Llangrove who died in the Great War.

236682 Private Francis Edward Andrews	1st/1st Herefordshire Regiment.
3802 Private Albert John (Jack) Boast	1st Monmouthshire Regiment
35541 Private Thomas Churchill	1st South Wales Borderers.
3739 L/Corporal John (Jack) Gummery	1st Batt. Australian Infantry (Australian Imperial Force).
1899 Private Edward Jones	1st/1st Herefordshire Regiment
36796 Private William Mahoney	2nd Coy. Machine Gun Corps
17767 Private William George Maxfield	1st Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers)
54470 Rifleman John Miller	1/7th West Yorkshire Regt. (Prince of Wales's Own)
A/201774 Rifleman Alfred George Morris	18th King's Royal Rifle Corps (Arts & Crafts)
11411 Private Wallace Palmer	1st South Wales Borderers
3747 Flt/Sergeant Reginald Tom Parry AFM.	Royal Flying Corps/Royal Air Force.
23531 Private Thomas Alfred Scudamore	2nd King's Shropshire Light Infantry
8610 Private Charles Watkins	1st South Wales Borderers
53981 Private Alfred Williams	1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers

236681 Lance Corporal Francis Edward Andrews



1st/1st Herefordshire Regiment

Francis Edward Andrews

He was born in 1895 in Monmouth. His parents were John Andrews and Eliza Cording, John was born in Hereford and Eliza in Devonport. In 1901 Francis (Frank's) father John and brother Willie were both Haycutters and they all lived in 2 Watery Lane, Monmouth. His brothers Willie, Tom and Bertie had all been born in Usk but the other five siblings were born in Monmouth. In 1911 The family had moved to Llangrove. Frank was a

Waggoner boy. They lived at Yew Tree Cottage, Llangrove when he enlisted.

The Great War

Francis (Frank) Andrews enlisted into the Herefordshire Regiment early in the Great War with the number 4182. He was re-numbered in 1917 with the number 236681. He did not go with the regiment to Gallipoli, if he had he would have received the 1914/15 Star Medal and his medal card would have indicated the date he arrived. The Herefords were re-numbered in early 1917 and the numbers allocated to them were 235001 - 260000 so his number 236681 would have been in the first batch. (all the territorials were re-numbered).

It is difficult to find out when he went to 'the front' numbers in the 4100 range appear at Gallipoli (but he did not serve there) but also appear on CWGC (commonwealth War Grave Commission) death registers in 1916, Numbers in the 236000 range were certainly appearing in 1917 in Palestine but mostly in the lower range. The vast number of 236000 numbers appear from July 1918 onwards in CWGC lists. His medal cards state he was serving at the Depot but does not give dates unfortunately.

It is possible that he went to join the Herefords when they were evacuated from Gallipoli to Egypt in 1916. They had suffered enormous losses in the Gallipoli

campaign and required similar reinforcements from the reserve battalions in the UK. It most likely that he joined the 1st/1st Battalion in France at Proven in July 1918.

If he went in 1916 he was involved in:

1916 EGYPT

In July 1916 Von Kressenstein advanced on the Suez Canal and the Herefords took part in the Battle of Rumani they were bombed by Turkish aircraft and heavily shelled and had 13 killed and 26 wounded.

24th March 1917 Gaza

the Division attacked the Turks at the 1st Battle of Gaza. The Herefords were supporting the Royal Welsh Fusiliers who carried the El Sire Ridge but because of poor communications the Generals ordered a withdrawal (to the disbelief of the troops on the ground) and when the mistake was discovered ordered them to take the ridge again but a strong enemy counter attack resulted in disaster. The Herefords lost 17 of their 22 Officers and 218 Other Ranks were killed, wounded or missing. The British Commander's report implied this had been a decisive victory and so was forced into the 2nd Battle of Gaza three weeks later.

2nd Battle of Gaza 17th-19th April 1917

Thus the battle was renewed on 17 April 1917. In the interim meanwhile the Turks

had extended their formidable garrison defences south-east along the road to Beersheba. Dobell chose to launch a frontal assault upon Kressenstein's force of 18,000 by three British infantry divisions aided by eight heavy **Mark I tanks and** 4,000 gas shells. Unable to extract anything more than minor gains in spite of a two-to-one manpower advantage, chiefly on account of complex and effective Turkish defensive lines, Dobell called off the patently unsuccessful attack on the third day. British casualties were heavy: 6,444 men, with Turkish losses under a third of that figure.

Third Battle of Gaza 31st October 1917

Also referred to as the Battle of Beersheba - was initiated early on the morning of 31 October 1917. Not for Allenby a frontal attack, as at the Second Battle of Gaza. Instead he resolved to take the Turkish forces by surprise in the relatively lightly defended area of Beersheba (a plan initially proposed by General Chetwode), deploying 40,000 troops in the area. He nevertheless ensured a hefty British presence directly in front of Gaza. Three divisions, aided by a heavy artillery presence of 218 guns, bombarded the garrison for six days before the attack began in order to fool the Turks into believing that a full frontal attack was imminent. Allenby's ploy, which demanded the utmost secrecy in planning, succeeded in its entirety. British RFC

aircraft - of newly deployed Bristol fighters - ensured British air superiority, crucial in preventing German aircraft from detecting British troop movements. Allenby deployed infantry forces to take Beersheba from the front while despatching his Light Horse unit far to the east. Following an all-day battle an Australian Light Horse unit finally penetrated the Turkish defences and secured control over the town's wells before the Turks could execute a prepared plan to contaminate them. The Turkish Seventh Army meanwhile retired to the stronghold of Tel es Sheria commanded by German commander Kress von Kressenstein's Eighth Army. Panicked there by another diversionary attack to the east by a 70-strong camel company, the Turkish defenders began to scatter believing it to be a large-scale flank attack, thus leaving the flank of Seventh Army exposed. Promptly exploiting this Allenby struck north at Tel es Sheria at dawn on 6 November splitting Seventh and Eighth Armies. Allenby hoped to trap Kressenstein's Eighth Army at Gaza but the Turks retreated in some haste further up the coast, Gaza being abandoned on 6-7 November. Meanwhile Eighth Army established itself in Jerusalem preparatory to a stand against the British. Having concluded the successful capture of Gaza Allenby next turned his attention to the fall

of Jerusalem, which he succeeded in securing the following month.

The offensive was successful and Beersheba was captured.

In November and December the Battalion advanced through Palestine in appalling conditions, very hot, insufficient water (3 pints every 48 hours) and rough tracks through the Judean Hills in the Khamsin season. But by Christmas they had taken Jerusalem. March 1918 the Battalion was engaged at Tell Azur a fiercely fought battle of attack and counter attack with a lot of hand to hand fighting but the Turks were finally driven off.

This ended the Battalion's involvement in Palestine and in June it returned via Italy to Proven, Belgium. If as is likely he joined in 1918 his service was below

FRANCE

June 1918 they returned to France arriving at Les Cinq Chemins on 1st July 1918.

They drew new equipment and a period of training and acclimatizing followed. On 18th July Marshal Foch had ordered a major counter offensive between Chateau Thierry and Soissons.

They went into the field at 7.40am on 23rd July at Poiseux. and immediately experienced very heavy shellfire, high standing corn made it difficult to move through, casualties occurred from enemy machine guns before the attack had proceeded many yards. Attack was held up at 12.00 due to units on flank either

side failing to advance at all. At nightfall relieved by 1/4 Cheshires.

Casualties heavy - 8 Officers and 230 ORs.

Continuous shelling for the whole night and experienced gas shells for the first time, it made the evacuation of the wounded very difficult.

24th July moved to reserve trenches.

25th July Shelled heavily French Aeroplane felled in our lines.

26th/27th Heavy shelling tried to move to new location but trenches filled with water.

Casualties so far (estimated) 10 Officers wounded, 23 ORs killed, 206 wounded, 19 missing. Relieved by French Battalion.

28th July Moved back to new bivouacs.

August 1st. Back in the line. on 1st August they were in action at Bucy Le Bras Ferme. Much of the Brigade had moved forward and following were the advance HQ contingent including Major Whitehouse, suddenly and unexpectedly a group of Germans appeared in front of them from a dugout and Major Whitehouse was shot in the head and died instantly. Major Whitehouse was a local man, his father was the Vicar of Sellack.

Total casualties for month of July. 36 Killed, 256 Wounded, 18 Missing, 64 Sick Total. 362.

2nd - 30th August. In reserve, billets and bivouac at Zeggars Capel, Hezeel and Proven. Re-organising, baths, divine services, training three drafts 160 men,

140 men and 50 men arrived (very young many were under 19), brigade sports.

31st August. Bn under orders to move at short notice.

September 1st Marched to Lumbres, train to Abeele, marched to Scherpenburg.

2nd Sept. Divisional Reserve

3rd. In the front line. Reorganising front line.

4th. 4.30am Bn formed up ready to move.

5.30am Artillery and Machine gun barrage began. Right Coy moved on but were held up by barbed wire which had not been cut by artillery fire, left Coy failed to reach objective and were back in Farmer Trench, right Coy failed to reach objective and were back in original position.

5th - 7th Sept. Situation as normal

8th -14th Sept. Relieved by Cheshires and in reserve position at Willbeck a very wet position no accommodation except French and Boche old front line trenches. Rained all day for 4 days.

Francis Andrews was wounded during these actions and he died on 10th September 1918 and is buried at Esquelbecq Military Cemetery. There was an Australian Casualty Clearing Station at Esquelbecq and presumably he was taken there from the front line.



UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: Francis Andrews
Birth Place: Monmouth
Residence: Llangrove, Ross, Herefords
Death Date: 10 Sep 1918
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Monmouth
Rank: L/Corporal
Regiment: Herefordshire Regiment
Battalion: 1/1st Battalion
Number: 236681
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
ANDREWS.	HEREFORD. R.	LtC	4182
Francis			236681
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	J/1106A2	640	
BRITISH			
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

He was awarded



The British War Medal Victory Medal

In Memory of
 Lance Corporal
Francis Andrews

236681, 1st/1st Bn., Herefordshire Regiment who died on 10 September 1918 Age 21
 Son of Mr. J. and Mrs. E. Andrews, of Yew Tree Cottage, Llangrove, Ross, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour
 Esquebecq Military Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

3802 Private Albert John (Jack) Boast.



1st Monmouthshire regiment

Albert John Boast

'Jack' Albert Boast was born in Llangrove in December quarter 1897. Although baptised as Albert John he was always known as Jack. At the 1901 census he was living with his family in Llangrove. In 1911 Jack was working as a waggoner boy on Treduchan Farm (aged 13) his father and two brothers William and Thomas were living in Llangrove and brother George was a waggoner at Trewarne, Llancloudy. His mother though was at Golden Square, Llangattock. It seems somewhat confused. His father says he is married but his mother says she

is a widow. The addresses are correct on Jack's service record it gives next of kin as his mother, the Square, Llangattock and on his brother George's service record it gives his father as NOK in Llangrove.

The Great War

Albert John Boast enlisted into the 3/3rd Monmouthshire Regiment on 28th January 1916 at Abergavenny. His service was considered from 28th February 1916.

1st Monmouthshire Regiment



1/1st Rifle Battalion, The Monmouthshire Regiment was a Territorial unit based at Newport when war was declared in August 1914, they were part of the Welsh Border Brigade, Welsh Division. They were at once mobilised for war and moved at once to defend Pembroke Dock. They moved to Oswestry by the 10th of August and were at Northampton by the end of August. In December they moved to Bury St Edmunds and to Cambridge in January 1915. They proceeded to France on the

13th of February to join 84th Brigade in 28th Division, who were concentrating in the area between Bailleul and Hazebrouck, being joined by additional Territorial units. In 1915 they were in action in The Second Battle of Ypres, suffering very heavy losses and on the 27th of May they amalgamated with the 1/2nd and 1/3rd Bns at Vlamertinghe, resuming their own identity on the 11th of August. On the 3rd of September they transferred as a Pioneer Battalion to 46th (North Midland) Division. They were in action during The attack at the Hohenzollern Redoubt in October. On the 23rd of December they were ordered to proceed to Egypt via Marseilles leaving the DAC, Divisional Train and the Mobile Veterinary Section behind. All units had arrived by the 13th of January 1916 but they spent just a few days in Egypt, being ordered to return to France where the units left behind rejoined. On the 1st of July 1916 they took part in The diversionary attack at Gommecourt. In 1917 they were in action during the Operations on the Ancre, Occupation of the Gommecourt defences, The attack on Rettemoy Graben, The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, The attack on Lievin and The Battle of Hill 70. In 1918 they saw action in The Battle of the St Quentin canal, including the passage of the canal at Bellenglise, The Battle of the Beaufort Line, The Battle of Cambrai, The Battle of

the Selle and The Battle of Sambre. At the Armistice, the advance units of the Division were at Sains-du-Nord. The Division moved back to Landrecies on the 15th of November then to the Le Cateau area in early January 1919 where demobilisation began

July 1916. Jack Boast joined the 1/1st Monmouthshires and embarked for France on 22nd July 1916 arriving in the field at Berles-au-Bois on 29th July as part of a draft of 223 men mostly from the 3rd Monmouthshires at base. This was to make up for their casualties. In June alone the battalion suffered 99 casualties (Dead, wounded or missing).

The 1st 'Mons' were a pioneer battalion and the 'Saps' they were required to dig were immense covering hundreds of feet in length.

Pioneer Battalions. As a result of a December 1914 Army Order, each of the BEF's Divisions was allotted a Pioneer Battalion that would be devoted to various types of labouring work. These men were experienced in the various construction industry trades and general labouring. They underwent basic military training including firearms, but were also supplied with the necessary additional tools required for the work they were assigned to do in the field as Pioneers.

On 24th July they moved to La Cauchie and were inspected by the General Officer Commanding.

August and the Batt. was committed to trench repairs, digging new saps, and fatigue parties. The work was made much more difficult because of persistent heavy rain and enemy shelling.

September 1916 first two weeks working parties and in a raid by 1st South Staffs several Germans killed and 4 taken prisoner. 12th and 13th no work done as whole Batt. billeted in Berles being engaged in carrying gas cylinders up to the front line. 15th Sept. 2nd Lts W G Ramsden, A Lewis and **H.C. Morris** joined as reinforcements. The gas which had been carried up by the Batt. was now all in position and would be discharged at the first favourable wind. 16th - 26th work as usual and on 26th good news from the Somme - Combles, Thiepval and Guedecourt captured. 30th five men gassed because of a broken cylinder, the progress of the battle of the Somme can be traced in the distance by the position of the German balloons which were seen to retire in a northerly direction.

October work and duties as normal, more gas carrying fatigues 3262 Rfn. Thomas 'A' Coy sniper wounded by a shell on 26th.

November moved to Caours in 41 buses and final 5 miles marching. In billets, not previously used as billets so very comfortable. On the 15th a letter was received from Brig. General Tanner (Chief Engineer)

"I wish to bring to notice, the very good work done by the two companies of the 1st Monmouthshire Pioneers employed on road in the advanced area. I fully recognise the monotonous character of this very useful and essential work and I think that all the more credit is due to all those who take an interest in it and do it well. I therefore bring the matter to your notice". The remainder of the month was taken up with training, physical drill, physical training, bayonet fighting practice, ceremonial drill and the presentation of medal ribbons and medals by General Sir E. Allenby the Army Commander, he complimented Col. Evill on the smartness and steadiness of the Batt. in spite of the very cold weather and said what a fine Battalion it was. The weather was very cold. A fatigue party of 500 was used to make hurdles and fascines.

December at Leuchaux. Working parties in Leuchaux Forest. Opportunities for baths, fitting box respirators, more working parties. 6th Dec moved to Souastre. New instructions to work on communications trenches. Very heavy rain interrupted work and a German aeroplane attacked 'B' coy with a machine gun. Several groups of reinforcements from base. On 21st 120 men paraded for interview by Ordnance and Royal Flying Corps Officers as to their qualifications for fitters, plumbers etc.

24th December. "The usual Sunday rest is not being observed, time can be taken off tomorrow". Trenches were in a dreadful state and needed urgent repair many were up to 3 feet deep in mud and water.

25th December No working parties sent out. Parade services for all denominations in morning, dinner of Roast Beef, Vegetables, Beer and Xmas Pudding. Sergeants had a Sgts. Mess dinner, Officers had dinner on Xmas Eve.

26th Aeroplanes active on both sides.

27th 4 casualties

1917 January. More working parties on communications trenches. Parades, award of medals, shelling by the Germans. Very severe weather, rain and snow several large drafts from base. Strength of Batt. 41 Officers 986 ORs.

February. Started with very severe frosts, a lot of shelling from the Germans with a number of casualties. On 17th a sharp thaw made roads unusable, all Motor Lorry traffic except for a few on special duty stopped. No working parties in anticipation of move to Fosseaux. On 18th a Boxing tournament L/Cpl Morgan beat Pte Marks MGC for Divisional Championship at Featherweight. 20th Fosseaux and on 24th Marched to Arras.

March Bienvilliers until 10th when moved to Hebutern. Working parties, work on roads. Companies at Souastre,

Gommecourt and Rosignol Wood. Heavy casualties especially at Gommecourt. Rest of the month in billets, cleaning up, baths, parades.

April. 1917 Ecqueldeques. 1st-7th. Church parades, close order drill, training. Very heavy snow fall. 8th Easter Sunday parades and church service. On 9th Divisional route march 15 miles no men fell out. Rest of the month working parties on roads. Casualties from shrapnel, shelling and gas.

May 1917. At Bouvigny Boyeffles. Work on the Bully Lievin Tramway. 12th May 1 Officer 8 ORs gassed. 13th 2 ORs wounded by shrapnel. 18th heavy bombardment of our positions. 22nd work carried out at night on wiring divisional defence line. 23rd weather cleared up, bright, sun and very warm. 24th the South Staffs attacked trench known as Nash Alley and captured it but by 7pm the captured ground was retaken by the enemy. 25th work on Absolem trench. deepening the old German communication trench. 26th May 1917. Sentence of General Court Martial on 2nd Lt H. C. Morris promulgated. "This Officer has been sentenced to be dismissed from His Majesty's Service for being drunk on May 7th 1917".

Casualties. 5 O.Rs of 'D' Company gassed by gas shells. One of these ORs has died at C.C.S (Casualty Clearing Station) the following day 27th May 1917.

This OR was 227802 Private Albert John Boast. He died at No 1 Casualty Clearing Station at Chocques.

UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: Albert John Boast
Birth Place: Langrove, Hereford
Death Date: 27 May 1917
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Abergavenny
Rank: Private
Regiment: Monmouthshire Regiment (Territorial Force)
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Number: 227802
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds

Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
BOAST	Monmouth R	Pte	3802
			15501
			227802
c. Albert J.			
Medal	Hon.	Prize	Remarks
Victoria	St. James B2	576	Pte (1743 SR) 8/12/1917
Barron	St. James	576	
Star			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

He was awarded the



British War Medal and the Victory Medal



In Memory of
Private
A J Boast

227802, 1st Bn., Monmouthshire Regiment who died on 27 May 1917

Remembered with Honour
Chocques Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

His brother also served.
31343 Pte. George Edward Boast
Machine Gun Corps



Enlisted into South Wales Borderers 10th
December 1915 Transferred into Machine
Gun Corps 28th February 1916
Posted to Salonika 22nd July 1916. He
was invalided home in 1919 with malaria
and discharged with a pension of 8/- a
week (to be reviewed in 25 weeks).

35541 Private Thomas Churchill



1st Battalion
South Wales Borderers

Thomas Churchill

He was born 29th September 1890 in Walford and baptised on December 6th 1890 at Walford. His father was Thomas Churchill a labourer originally from Broadoak, Herefordshire and his mother was Ellen Smith from (Worthing, Sussex, Hoarwithy or Llangarron, the census gives them all). They had married in 1881. His father was a general labourer from Dinedor and his mother was from Worthing, Sussex.

In 1891 They were living at Hope Mansell. In 1901 Thomas was aged 11 and in the Ross Cottage Hospital. His parents and family were living at Coughton, Walford and his father Thomas was a Carter on a farm, his mother gives place of birth as Hoarwithy. In 1911 the family were at Little Elshone, Ganarew where Thomas Snr was a shepherd. Interestingly next door at Elshone lived Henry Goodwin who with his brother William both died in the Great War. Thomas's mother gives place of birth as Llangarron. Thomas in 1911 was a boarder at New House Farm, Clytha, near Raglan where he was a domestic gardener, he gave his place of birth as Warryfield (Warryfield Farm is in Walford, Herefordshire). During the Great War the family lived at The Laurels, Llangrove.

The Great War

35541 Private Thomas Churchill enlisted at Pontypool and went into the 1st Battalion South Wales Borderers. There is no record of his precise date of enlistment but we know that:
35209 Pte Auld enlisted 22/9/15 (1st Batt. SWB). BEF 1/6/16 24/4/18 Gunshot wound in the back - hospital Wimereux
36106 Pte Barrett Enlisted 12/12/1915 joined for duty 12/4/16 1st SWB POW Soltau, Broken down in health 12/4/1918 Starvation.

It would appear therefore that Private Churchill enlisted early October 1915. He

would also have been called for duty about the same time as the other two above i.e. about April 1916 and sent to the British Expeditionary Force in about June/July 1916. His medal card certainly shows he did not serve abroad before 1916. As the other two (above) both joined the BEF about July 1916 I have listed some of the activities of the Battalion from July onwards.

The following includes some extracts from the war diaries.

July 1916. The Battalion was in action (Battle of the Somme) and were at North Maroc on the 1st. They were then at Bruay (Choques) by the 5th and then Coisy, Franvillers and on the 10th July arrived at Albert in Billets, they were in reserve at Lozenge Wood and on the 16th moved into the line at Mametz Wood on the 19th they moved back to Becourt and Albert. They stayed here and Fricourt and Lozenge Wood until 24th when they moved to Contal Maison, the next day they attacked Munster Alley, The Germans opened fire and their machine gun fire was particularly intense and well directed and it broke down the attack and all the officers except three became casualties at once, the attack failed and Coys withdrew. Casualties: Officers - missing believed killed -1, wounded - 8 Other ranks killed -10, wounded - 56, wounded and missing - 1, missing - 7

The Battalion moved out of the line to Millencourt. They were then involved in training, parades, baths, etc. on 31st July Private Trump was selected to go on a course for Pigeon Flying. On 11th Aug. 8 men were awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in the recent operations. They stayed at Millencourt for three weeks rest until 15th August when they moved to Becourt Wood on the 21st Aug. they were at Bezantin Le Petit Wood when they suffered a Gas Attack when gas shells were dropping on the north side of Mametz Wood and was drifting on to the lines. There had been a great deal of air activity lately. The early part of **September** at Mametz Wood and saw very wet and windy weather, an attack was made on High Wood, a further attack was made on the 10th Sept. by the Gloucesters and the Welch, supported by the SWB but the attack failed, our casualties were 4 Officers 101 Other Ranks. **October** 1916 and the Battalion was at Aigneville for the whole month, resting, training, cleaning up and receiving new drafts of men. **November** Most of the month was spent at Millencourt and Mametz Wood working on the roads, cleaning, training and practicing. On the 17th at High Wood and back into the front line. **December** Back to Mametz Wood and Bazentin Le Petit, working parties, training

interspersed with duties in the 'front line' a steady stream of casualties were suffered. On 20th Dec. shelled at Turk Dump and suffered several casualties while water was being drawn. 22nd. relief but late as 'got stuck in the mud' casualties 6 killed, 2 died of wounds, wounded 15. **1917. January** at Becourt training, cleaning, fatigues, working parties until 23rd when moved to Baisieux, more training and practicing divisional attacks. **February.** On 10th moved to Bois De Boulogne (Front Line) attacks by German aircraft, dropped four bombs but no casualties. 14th Feb moved to reserve at Telegraph Hill, all men washed their feet in warm water and dried them thoroughly. On 18th there was a big thaw and the billets became flooded. Rest of the month back in the front line and as support battalion. **March.** On 3rd Relieved the Gloucesters in the Bois De Boulogne. HQ was in the Quarry and heavily shelled all day. On 6th Loyal North Lancs made a raid on the left but was repulsed with heavy casualties, hostile artillery on our front. 7th back into reserve at Asservilliers, snowed. On 11th whole battalion washed their feet at the Pedicarium and then back into the front line, great aerial activity on both sides. 13th News of fall of Bagdad and definite information of Boche retirement - much excitement. 15th Much rain and floods

still rising but then back into support at Great Wood. 17th March. In Support. "Oh restless night of expectation" Alas one first attempt to enter Boche trench had evidently failed. 18th we moved and 'what luck' we found the expected traps - bombs in chimneys - string tied to a chair leg and attached to a friction lighter of a bomb embedded in loose cordite around 5 gas shells with nose caps removed, the infernal box was removed to a safe place in a shell hole but alas it proved to be a dud, but a further dogout was found to be mined. The R.Es threw a bridge across the river and the Motor Machine Guns and Cavalry crossed, the Cyclist Corps then crossed to much amusement all round. The remainder of the month was in reserve at Chuignolles, training, practising battalion attacks. The weather was miserable, wet, windy and cold. **April.** The battalion was in reserve for the month at Chuignolles, Brie and Mons-en-Chausee. Practicing Brigade attacks, bayonet fighting on 11th a telegram reported the capture at Arras of 11,000 men, 177 machine guns, 100 guns and 60 trench mortars. Work on the roads at Mesnil-St-Nicaise. **May.** At Villers-Faucon working on the railways. On 7th the Battalion "ceased snoring" at 5am and moved to Flamincourt-Peronne, a southern riverside superb no a mass of ruins, but the men shewed their

appreciation of the water with the riverside being lined with naked forms all busy bathing in the sun. Remainder of month at Eclusier, Warfusee and Fletre, in billets, training, cleaning, sports, drill, musketry and other activities. On 31st moved to Dickebusch area at short notice on arrival 12 - 14 large gas shells fell into the camp. **June 1917** First week in the line at Dickebusch then on 6th arrived at Fletre/Staple stayed there until 20th, new drafts had arrived so training and integrating them into the battalion. Moved to 'very comfortable' billets at Uxem.

3rd July Battalion moved to Cost-Dunkirke on the foreshore guarding the right sub-sector of the coast defences. 5th hostile aircraft flew over and on 10th a heavy bombardment at our front and Battalion 'stood to'. In glorious weather Remained during July at Le Clipon, more training, parades, obstacle courses and opportunity for leave. Stayed at Le Clipon all through August, September and October until 20th **Oct 1917**. Moved to Houtkerque via Niewland and Broxeele arriving on the 25th. the billets were not very good and many men had to sleep in tents, the men feature of this place seemed to be mud. 26th. A horribly wet day which did not improve the mud. 27th Training and then foot rubbing - a certain sign of winter and mud - was commenced. 28th whole day

bathing. 29th/30th Coy training. 31st Attack practice. **November** in the field. 1st. P.T. and Drill followed by attack practice. 2nd Attack practice. 3rd/4th/5th arms drill, kit inspection, church parade. On 6th the Bn moved by motor bus to Dirty Bucket Camp about 2 miles N.E. of Poperinghe the huts were fairly comfortable but mud was in evidence everywhere. 7th Nov. A quiet day. 8th Moved from camp to Irish Farm, another echelon formed at Hospital Farm, a disturbed night, heavy guns have a tendency to keep one awake, not to mention an H.V. One which dotted about all over the place, luckily no damage was done.

9th November 1917 Passchendaele
The regiment formed up on the 9th for the attack on Virtue Farm, Virile Farm, Vocation Farm, Box Farm and Void Farm as well as Goubderg Copse -Pill Boxes. The barrage will commence at Zero and roll forward at Zero plus 3 minutes and will continue to do so at the rate of 100 yards every 8 minutes until Zero plus 59 minutes. A fine day every one in great spirits, great aerial activity and six bosche each unloaded one bomb into the camp wounding 15 ORs one of which died of wounds. Moved off to assembly point.

10th November 1917 'Over the Top' All ranks did splendidly, hostile fire was very, very heavy and from three sides. It shows

the discipline of the regiment as everyone 'stuck tp it', the stretcher bearers deserve special praise for their gallant work and shows that they had been ably trained and prepared.

Report on operations of 10th/11th November 1917.

The battalion proceeded to Valour Farm to form up to the left of the Canadians. There were few casualties on the march up but when they reached the farm 'A' Coy lost one platoon except for 5 men and 'B' Coy had 17 casualties. The battalion was in position at the tape by 3am. From 4am until zero the Hun had a fairly heavy barrage on the front line and the rear of the forward area. Touch was made with the Canadians before moving off. At zero the Bn moved forward but before they had moved 30 yards got amongst our own barrage which caused a number of casualties and forced the Bn to the right behind the Canadian barrage, which was very thick. Our own barrage (enfilade) was very hard to follow and seemed very ragged. As a result of this the g round between Virile and Vocation was not covered. The troops on the right got to the left of the Canadians and dug in. From zero onwards the Hun brought their barrage back and distributed between our original front line and Vocation Farm, this barrage was very heavy. On the attack approaching Vocation and Vox Farms the

barrage came down very thickly around these farms, machine gun fire was experienced from Virile and Vox farms and the trench running between them, also a good deal of sniping. The enemy counter attack developed about 7.15am and forced back the Canadian left. A number of hostile enemy aircraft flew over and fired on our posts and brought hostile artillery fire to bear on them. Between 12.00 and 1.00 the enemy again came forward and got through Vox and Virile and the post at Vocation had to withdraw as the enemy got behind their left.

After dark a Coy of the Gloucesters arrived and were put on the left to try and contact the troops there but the distance was too great. The night was uneventful except for hostile shelling. Hostile aircraft were very active over our lines continually firing on our men. 'A' and 'B' Coys of the Gloucesters took over the Farms and the Battalion was relieved on the night of 11th/12th by the Loyal North Lancs.

At the commencement of the operation the going was fairly good but directly the rain fell the ground got in a very bad state and made movement in the crater area very difficult. The Battalion then moved into a reserve and training role until 10th December.

Casualties in the operation were very heavy, the Battalion losing 10 Officers and 372 Other Ranks Killed or Wounded.

One of those wounded was Thomas Churchill, he was moved back to Wimereux. 35541 Private Thomas Churchill (South Wales Borderers) died of his wounds on 5th December 1917 at Wimereux, where he is buried.



Wimereux Hospital WW1

Soldiers Who died in the Great War

Name: Thomas Churchill
Birth Place: Walford, Hereford
Death Date: 5 Dec 1917
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Pontypool
Rank: Private
Regiment: South Wales Borderers
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Number: 35541
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds





He was awarded



British War Medal Victory Medal

In Memory of
Private
Thomas Churchill
35541, 1st Bn., South Wales Borderers who died on 05 December 1917 Age 26
Son of Thomas and Ellen Churchill, of Ross, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour
Wimereux Communal Cemetery




Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Thomas had a brother John (Leonard) Churchill who also served in the Great War.

97049 Driver John Churchill



Royal Field Artillery

He enlisted into the Royal Field Artillery on 20th August 1914 and on 22nd October 1915 went with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to the Balkans (Salonika). In 1916 he was hospitalised twice with Dysentery and on 19th October 1917 was admitted to hospital with malaria and again on 18th May 1918. He was sent back to Port Said on 27th December 1918 and discharged on 25th January 1919. He gave his home address as The Laurels, Llangrove, Herefordshire.

3739 L/Corporal John "Jack" Gummery



1st Batt. Australian Infantry
A.I.F.(Australian Imperial Force)

John (Jack) Gummery.

He was born in Osbaston, Monmouth in 1889 and baptised on 4th March 1889 his father's occupation was Miller. His parents were Samuel Gummery and Rachel Griffiths and they were married in Monmouth in June quarter 1888. At the 1891 census Samuel, Rachel, 2 year old John and 3 month old Edith were all living at St Mary's Well, Monmouth. Samuel gave his occupation as a 'Millers loader' and his place of birth as Whitchurch,

Hereford. Rachel gave her place of birth as Llanrothal, Hereford. In 1899 Rachel, John's mother and wife of Samuel died aged 35. In Monmouth. Samuel remarried in 1899 to Ellen Leach in Monmouth. Ellen had been born about 1869 in Welsh Newton, Herefordshire. At the 1901 census Samuel, Ellen John aged 12, Edith aged 10 and Ellen Mary Leach aged 5 (Ellen's daughter) were all living in Llangrove, I am not sure where but the next people on the census are at Trebandy. Samuel was a farm labourer general. On the 1911 census John and Ellen had left home but Samuel and Ellen were living at Llangrove with their three children Francis aged 9, Hubert aged 6 and Sidney aged 1. John on the 1911 census was staying at the White House, Llanvetherine, with his uncle and Aunt, he gave his occupation as Blacksmith.

John Gummery aged 22 emigrated to Sydney, Australia on 23rd May 1911 on the SS Wilcannia. He lived in Holdsworth a suburb of Sydney and by 1915 was a Cement Worker and had a fiancée called Elizabeth Collins who lived at 'Argyle', South Avenue, Leichhart, Sydney, NSW. In 1915 John Gummery was 5ft 6ins tall, weighed 148 lbs a fair complexion, blue eyes, brown hair and was Church of England faith.

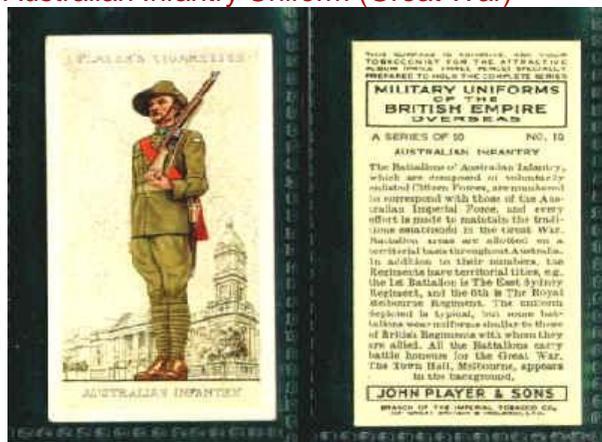
The Great War

On Wednesday 25th August 1915 John Gummery enlisted into the Australian Imperial Force. This was an entirely volunteer force with no conscription. His service record (complete on Australian files) states he was born in Monmouth and his father Samuel Gummery lives in Llangrove although they had some problems with this changing Llangrove to Longgrove and eventually deciding it must be Leangrove. On 17th November 1915 at Liverpool (NSW) he was transferred into the 12th Rein (Reinforcement) Coy, 1st Batt. Australian Infantry A.I.F (Australian Imperial Force). The 12th Reinforcement Coy left Sydney on 11th December 1915 for Tel El Kebir, Egypt on the RMS Mooltan. This was a huge Australian Infantry training camp and the launch place for the Gallipoli campaign.



John Gummery arrived at Tel El Kebir at the same time as the evacuation from Gallipoli. The 1st Batt AIF had distinguished itself at the Battle of Lone Pine in that campaign winning 2 VCs.

Australian Infantry Uniform (Great War)



On 22nd March 1916 the 1st Batt. left Alexandria, Egypt on board "Ivernia" in preparation to moving to France to join the B.E.F (British Expeditionary Force).

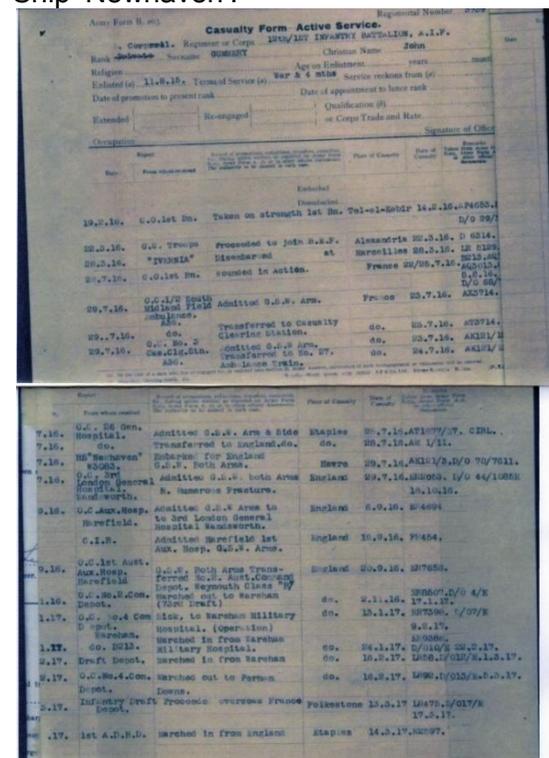
On 28th March 1916 they disembarked at Marseilles and moved to the Western Front.

The Australian 1st Division attacked Pozieres early on July 23rd 1916 and captured the town after fierce fighting. The Germans who were not giving up launched several counter-attacks in a grave effort to wrest control from the Australians, but these were repulsed. The Germans eventually launched one of the heaviest artillery barrages of the war and shelled

the Australians unremittingly - at the height of the bombardment the shells rained down at the rate of 20 a minute. After three days the 1st Division had lost 5285 men and the rest were exhausted. The Division was withdrawn and replaced by the 2nd Division. German continued on relentless and after 10 days the 2nd Division had lost 6848 officers and men. It too was withdrawn and replaced by the 4th Division. This cycle continued until September 3rd - each Division fought until exhausted and was then replaced. When the replacement Division was itself exhausted, the original Division was rotated back into the line. The 1st, 2nd, and 4th Divisions were used as a battering ram against the German strong points at Pozieres until they were almost destroyed. More than 50% of the Australians who fought at Pozieres were killed, wounded or captured. Five Victoria Crosses were won by Australians during the relentless fighting.

On 23rd July 1916 John Gummery was severely wounded at the battle of Pozieres. He had GSW (gun shot wounds) to both arms with compound fractures of both right and left humerus as well as shrapnel wounds to his abdomen. On 25th July he was admitted to the General Hospital at Etaples and on 29th July he was taken to the Casualty Clearing Station by the South Midland Field Ambulance and

embarked for England on the Hospital Ship 'Newhaven'.



In England he was admitted to the 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth where he had a slight wound to his abdominal wall an entry wound on the outer side of his arm and exit wound to the front, a compound fracture of his humerus because his wounds were very septic he was operated on to have wound enlarged and drainage tube put in. On 16th September 1916 he was admitted to Harefield 1st Australian Aux. Hospital,

Denham, Buckinghamshire until 2nd November when he was transferred to Wareham Military Hospital. His medical report states that John Gummery has such severe injuries that he would be 'permanently unfit' and should be discharged. However on 13th March 1917 John Gummery left Folkestone for Etaples in France to re-join his unit. While John Gummery was receiving his hospital treatment his fiancée was trying to find out what had happened to him (*she read about his wounding in the Sydney newspapers!*)

National Archives of Australia - Digital copy of item with barcode 4191728

Page 2 of 2

"Argyle"
10 South Avenue
Leichhardt
Sydney.
3. 9. 16.

Dear Sir

Among the casualty list last Tuesday morning in the Sydney papers. There was a Private J. Gummery England, reported wounded. Should you tell me if his number is 3439. B. Company, 1st Battalion etc. If so can you give me information as to how he is wounded. As I should have received word being his next of kin but have not done so yet. So if you can let me know the above and I would be very much obliged if you can tell me what hospital he may be in. I'm hoping to get

a reply at your earliest convenience
I Remain
Yours Sincerely
"address" L. Collins.
Mrs L. Collins
"Argyle"
10 South Avenue
Leichhardt
Sydney

He rejoined his unit on 20th March 1917 and on 18th May 1917 he was promoted to Lance Corporal. The following week on the 23rd he was sent off to the Musketry School 1st Infantry Brigade, he returned to his unit on 4th September.

Four weeks later on 3rd October 1917 John Gummery was Killed in Action in Belgium. He was killed and buried about 1 mile S.S.W of Zonnebeke.

PILLBOX CEMETERY, ZONNEBEKE, 500 metres North-East of Westhoek, which was used in October, 1917; there were buried in it 34 soldiers from Australia, 2 side of a row of "pillboxes" called Tower Hamlets; it contained the graves of 36 soldiers from the United Kingdom who fell in the winter of 1917-1918. WESTHOEK RIDGE SMALL CEMETERY, ZONNEBEKE, in Westhoek village, "near the Area Commandant's pillbox and the A.D.S."; it was used in the autumn of 1917, and it contained the graves of 16 soldiers from Australia and six from the United Kingdom.

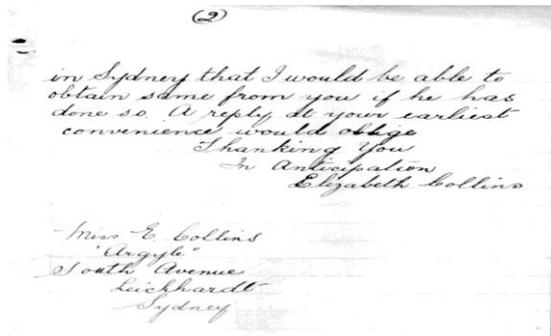
L/Cpl John Gummery's body was later exhumed and was taken from a point about 1 mile SSW of Zonnebeke. John Gummery was re-buried at Hooge Crater Cemetery.

This is the end of the story as far as John Gummery is concerned. However it was not where his fiancée was concerned. The following correspondence must have been very distressing to her.

"Argyle"
South Avenue
Leichhardt
21. 11. 17

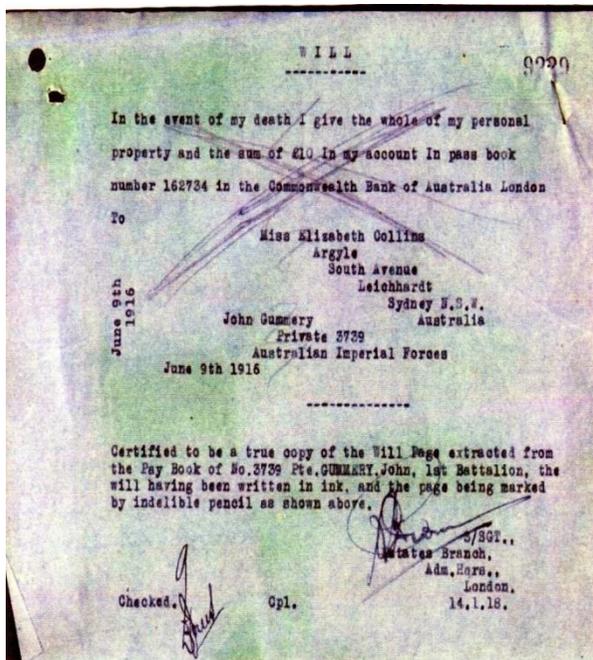
Dear Sir

Re Private John Gummery whose name appeared on the casualty list on November 17th instant as killed in action. Could you inform me if it is the same as 3439. Private John Gummery B. Company 1st Battalion A.I.F. As I am anxious to know same being appointed by him before leaving Australia as his next of kin and as I have a copy of a will in my possession made by him in my favour. I would be obliged if you could advise me if he has made another will since leaving here if so would you be good enough to let me have a copy of same, as I have been advised by the Red Cross here



Letter from Elizabeth Collins John Gummery's fiancée – **Once again she had to read about it in the newspaper casualty lists.**

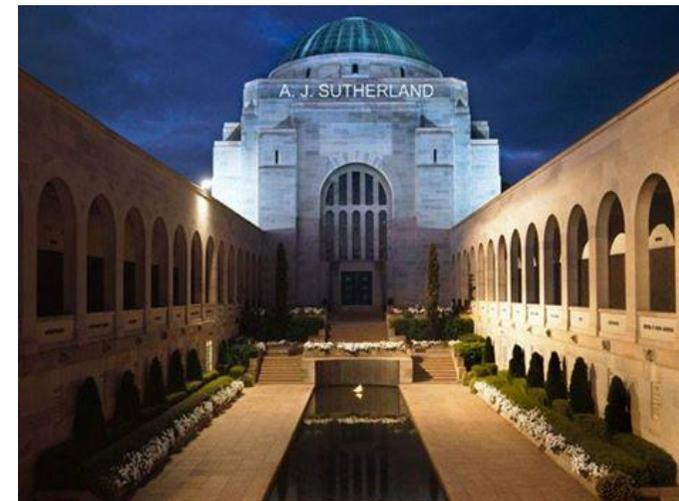
The army insisted his Next of Kin was his father in spite of his will which said he wanted his effects to go to his fiancée. When he arrived in France John Gummery, wisely made another will, *written in ink* and on the *Will page of his pay book* and the page marked with indelible pencil. Again he leaves everything he has to Elizabeth Collins.



All his effects were despatched to his father in Llangrove applied for John's pension but was unsuccessful as "he was earning the rate for the local area").

- **Roll of Honour name projections**

During the Centenary period, the name of each of the 62,000 Australians who gave their lives during the First World War will be projected onto the façade of the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial. The names will be displayed from sunset to sunrise every night, and can be seen from the Memorial's grounds. Each name will be visible for 30 seconds.



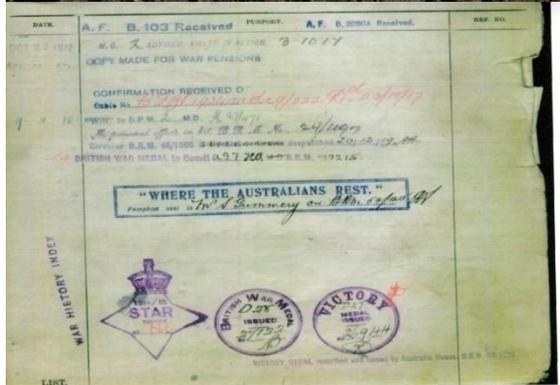
Roll of Honour name projection

John Gummery's name will be projected onto the exterior of the Hall of Memory on:

- Wed 3 May, 2017 at 5:29 am
- Thu 15 June, 2017 at 8:11 pm
- Thu 27 July, 2017 at 9:14 pm
- Tue 12 September, 2017 at 11:47 pm
- Wed 8 November, 2017 at 2:18 am
- Fri 12 January, 2018 at 11:15 pm

Since doing this piece I was talking to Roy Maxfield (who's uncle William George Maxfield is also commemorated on Llangrove War Memorial having died on 7th November 1918) Roy knew Samuel (Sam) Gummery when Roy was a youngster and can clearly remember him as an old man, a bit unsteady on his feet, who always wore corduroy trousers and a wide leather belt, who worked on the farms and lived in a cottage down a lane just past the village hall and near the chapel (this confirms the address of Chapel Cottage used by the Australian Army). He also remembers the sale of Sam's property 'presumably after his death' but as he said 'there wasn't a lot because Sam didn't have very much. Sam died in 1949 in Bridgnorth District

John Gummery's effects were sent to his father at Chapel Cottage, Longgrove (Llangrove) on Dec 27th 1917.



1899 Private Edward Jones



1/1st Herefordshire Regiment

Edward Jones

Edward Jones was born in 1896 in Ganarew, Herefordshire. Edward Jones's parents were William Baker Jones born Dec 1851 in West Bromwich, Staffordshire and Maria Compton born Mar 1860 in Crickhowell, Glamorgan.

In 1901 Edward was living at home at The Shop, Crockers Ash with his parents William B Jones and Maria Jones, their children John Compton Jones aged 15, Alice Maud Jones aged 14, and Elizabeth Jones aged 8. Edward's father William was a gas fitter. 1911 Edward Jones was living with his family William Baker Jones,

Maria Jones, Alice Jones and Elizabeth Jones in Crockers Ash, Whitchurch. The enumerator or transcribers had a wonderful time with the names. William Baker Jones has become William Bakes Jones, Crockers Ash has become Cookersarth, they have missed an 'S' in Staffordshire and Ganarew has become Jannarow and Janarn. Edward's father was now a Plumber. Kelly's Directory of 1917 gives Maria Jones as the Grocer in the Grocer's shop at Crockers Ash but she is not there in 1922. William Jones died in 1920 aged 70. Maria Jones died in 1938 aged 78.

The Great War

Edward Jones joined the Herefordshire Regt. Territorial Force probably before the outbreak of war. In 1917 the 'territorials' were all renumbered and his new number was 235499 and incorporated into the 1st/1st Herefordshire Regiment.

Gallipoli

*Extracts and notes from the War Diaries
1st Herefords at Gallipoli November 1915.*

16th July 1915 the 1st Herefordshire Regt. left Devonport on the SS. Euripides for Egypt. They arrived at Gibraltar on the 20th and then sailed for Malta arriving on the 24th, they then sailed the same day for Alexandria arriving on the 27th. On 31st they stopped at Port Said troops were allowed ashore to bathe and on 4th

August all troops in excess of 25 Officers and 750 ORs were sent by train to Alexandria (2/Lt Lloyd and 193 ORs). Later on the 4th the Battalion sailed for Lemnos arriving in Mudros Harbour on the 7th August.

The regiment landed at Suvla Bay from steam launches at 5.00am on the 9th August. They were then employed in getting water and stores up from 'C' beach. The men had some bully beef, biscuit and lime juice at 1.pm. At 4.35pm they were told to take up entrenched positions on the right of the Sherwood Foresters. After about 1 mile they came under heavy shrapnel fire, the Sherwood Foresters were further away than anticipated and touch was lost between the first and second lines. The CO realised they had gone 1/2 mile beyond the Azmak Dere (a dry water course), he rallied the men and withdrew to the line of Azmak Dere. Written orders were then received that the advance had been cancelled and they were to withdraw to a line of trenches from the Salt Lake westwards. 60 Herefords were wounded and 11 men were killed. 10th August The Battalion moved up the line of the Azmak Dere and were met with heavy shrapnel fire but little or nothing was seen of the enemy except snipers whose fire was galling but no officers were hit. 17th August at Suvla. Quiet day except for heavy sniping. At night Bn ordered to

advance 200 yards and then dig in again. The Bn got out of the trenches in one long line with no intervals between (quite absurd!) and then lie down to wait. Order cancelled, order came to take over trenches of 6th RWF but for some reason they did not leave their trenches and the Bn had to return to its cover - partially in trenches, ditches and behind hedges. A Coy of the Border Regt came to assist the Bn!. 18th/19th August more casualties with heavy sniping.

22nd Aug. Two men accidentally shot themselves and 2/Lt Lloyd and 187 ORs joined us from Alexandria. Remainder of the month was in trenches with heavy sniping barrages from Turks and casualties.

Casualties for August. 25 Killed, 146 Wounded, 2 Missing.

September 1st -5th In trenches at Anafarta Ova Suvla. Quiet period 2 Officers and 43 ORs joined from England. 5th - 7th in Rest camp 'B' Suvla. Then back into the trenches until the 16th improving trenches, wiring. Started to rain so drainage scheme thought about but needed to be done on whole front. 16th back to rest camp. 21st Moved to new rest camp, heavily shelled with HE. On 25th moved to reserve rest camp at Karakol Dagh, lots of HE, sniping and difficulties with obtaining water (one gallon per man for all purposes). Heavy fatigues. Good news from France.

28/30th moved up to the reserve firing line. Ordered to supply 439 men for fatigues only 433 available. One man killed one wounded by blasting operations by E Yorks pioneer Bn.

October 1/6th. Start made on inoculating men against Cholera at 2/Welsh Field Ambulance usual fatigues large numbers of men sent sick to Mudros and amny returning. 6th Turks at the 'Pimple' heavily shelled by Men of War at Xeros and Suvla Bay 7/8/9th Sept. Heavy shelling and many men going sick.

11/12/13th Heavy rain, strong winds some lightning- cold.

14th -30th Karakol Dagh, Suvla Bay. Enemy aircraft reconnoitred, heavy shelling Officer reinforcements from England, very heavy rain and high winds. On 23rd Pte Bowkett found dead in bivouac (of exposure). 27th Turks started very heavy shelling. 31st relieved 2nd mounted brigade in reserve.

November 1st. Took over trenches from 2nd mounted brigade. On 2nd took over trenches from Lovats Scouts and Fife and Forfar Yeomanry . 3rd preparations for wiring front of Fort Conan and filling sandbags On 5th the Turks fired eleven Broomstick trench mortar bombs into the lines, five exploded but no casualties. 6th One man killed and one wounded at Azmak Dere. 7/8th Digging communications trenches. Shelling by Turks and trench mortar fire in front of

Highland Barricade. 10th The new fire trench was conformed during the night strong covering parties being placed to cover working parties at night.

11th Nov. Enemy snipers very active and 3 or 4 big trench mortars fired into the lines near Calgarry Barricade, sniper fire very accurate and one man killed. Work carried out on new fire trench.

12th Nov. Work on fire trench continued, at 14.00 enemy shelled our lines, 14-16 shells burst without any casualties, at 20.00 enemy again opened fire with trench mortars at Azmak Dere. A battery was called upon to return fire - effect not known. 13th Nov. 14.00-14.30 front line trenches were shelled by 75mm battery and trench mortar bombs of big calibre were fired into our line with no material damage and no casualties. Work continued on the fire trenches. 3 men wounded and one seriously in the head by a sniper. 14th Nov. A few shells were fired into the trenches but apart from that exceptionally quiet, one man seriously wounded by a sniper in the early part of the night.

15/16th Nov. One man killed by sniper in early part of morning while re-entering trench from listening post. At 17.00 heavy shellfire from both sides in direction of Susak Kuyu and a good deal of rifle and machine gun fire. In the evening strong winds and some rain. The enemy artillery were very active on our right, the

Indian Brigade having sprung some mines. Artillery more active than usual, one man killed and one severely wounded to the head by shrapnel fired at one of our aeroplanes

17th Nov. Some heavy trench mortars fell in the vicinity of Pit St. One of our catapults firing cricket-ball bombs was used to search some bushes used by Turkish snipers, had the effect of reducing sniper fire.

18th Nov. Quiet day, 19th Nov. Lookouts reported near Highland Barricade at Azmak Dere that parties of the enemy were constantly moving about at a distance of 150 yards in front of our trenches. No artillery fire this day and enemy's fire normal.

20th Nov. Enemy artillery very active shelling our firing line and support trenches. It appears that a mountain battery has been pushed near the right of our line and caused considerable annoyance by firing at even small working parties.

21st Nov. Nothing to report.

22nd Nov. Enemy artillery very active between 12.30 and 1.00 with 50 shells fired at 'C' Coys trenches. Enemy erected, during the night a small bridge across the Dere about 150 yards in front of our fire trench.

23rd. 'A' Battery fired a few rounds at the bridge but failed to hit it. A fairly quiet

day. Two men wounded accidentally. Not much rifle fire.

24th and 25th Nov. Nothing of importance occurred.

26th November Heavy thunderstorm at about 19.00 hours Turkish, Highland and Calgary Barricades were swept away. AZMAK rose with great rapidity to a depth of 7-8ft. Fire, Support and Communication trenches flooded to a depth of 3-4ft and choked with slimy mud. Bn HQ flooded to a depth of 4ft in a couple of minutes. Much equipment, stores and Officers' effects were washed away. Rations arrived at usual time somehow or other, with the loss of one cart stuck in the mud, and were distributed early next morning.

27th November. The C.O. (Lt Col Drage) went to the 2/1 Welsh F.A. (Field Ambulance) at 12.00 Sick. AZMAK flood had subsided at this time, but the trenches were still deep in water and slime. The Bn. was relieved by Fife and Forfar Yeomanry at 20.00- nearly two hours late. All officers and men had been standing up by this time for over 24 hours - the greater majority being wet through. At about 20.00 the Bn moved off to march to Lala Baba bivouacs. In the meantime it had commenced to snow and about 22.00 there was a blizzard blowing with many degrees of frost. At about 22.30 it being impossible to get the Bn to Lala Baba (& no bivouacs were vacated for it). The Bn

was ordered to spend the night in the sand dunes to the S.W of the SALT LAKE.

The men suffered very severely from the cold, many suffering from frostbite & trench feet. The two last Coys to leave the trenches did not arrive at the Sand Dunes till midnight.

28th November 1915. Snowed all day. Many officers and men taken to 2/1st Welsh Field Ambulance which was fairly close by.

29th November 1915. Fine and Cold. At about 16.00 what remained of the Battalion proceeded to Lala Bala and arrived about 18.00.

Casualties for the month of November

Killed or died of wounds	13
Wounded	10
Missing	11
Died of exposure	11
Admitted sick to Hospital	355

December 1915

1st Dec Weather calm and fine - luckily as Officers and men were living with little shelter.

2nd-6th Dec Bn. reduced to about 130, employed in digging trenches at Lala Baba.

7th Dec. Heavy and most systematic bombardment by Turks, of Lala Baba, luckily few casualties and none among the Herefords.

9th and 10th Dec. More artillery fire than usual directed at Lala Baba,

11th December. Received orders about the evacuation.

12th Dec. Bn. Embarked on 'S.S. El Kahira'

13th Dec. Arrived at Lemnos and went to camping ground near Kondia.

15th Dec Embarked at Lemnos for Alexandria on 'SS Tunisian'

22nd Dec.. Arrived at Alexandria

23rd Dec. Arrived at Wardan, Egypt.

24th - 31st Dec Nothing of interest.

1916 EGYPT

In July 1916 Von Kressenstein advanced on the Suez Canal and the Herefords took part in the Battle of Rumani they were bombed by Turkish aircraft and heavily shelled and had 13 killed and 26 wounded. In late 1916 and early 1917 they prepared for the Palestine Campaign by training with their new transport - 12 riding horses, 29 mules and 110 camels. The advance into Palestine was very difficult, there was little water and they had to construct a railway to bring up supplies.

On 24th March 1917 the Division attacked the Turks at the 1st Battle of Gaza. The Herefords were supporting the Royal Welsh Fusiliers who carried the El Sire Ridge but because of poor communications the Generals ordered a withdrawal (to the disbelief of the troops on the ground) and when the mistake was discovered ordered them to take the ridge again but a strong enemy counter attack

resulted in disaster. The Herefords lost 17 of their 22 Officers and 218 Other Ranks were killed, wounded or missing. The British Commander's report implied this had been a decisive victory and so was forced into the 2nd Battle of Gaza three weeks later.

2nd Battle of Gaza 17th-19th April 1917 Having failed in his first attempt to capture Gaza on 26-27 March 1917, Sir Archibald Murray, commander of British-led forces in the region, was obliged to contemplate an early renewal of hostilities as a direct consequence of the manner of his report of the initial action to Britain's War Office. At best a draw Murray nevertheless conveyed the impression to London of a clear-cut British victory. While British losses of 4,000 were reported accurately Murray trebled details of Turkish casualties, which in the event were lower than his own, at 2,400. London - under the mistaken impression that Murray was on the verge of a notable breakthrough - consequently ordered him to re-engage his forces, this time with Jerusalem as the ultimate aim. A tall order, one made immeasurably more difficult now that the commander of Gaza's permanent garrison - German General Kress von Kressenstein - was alerted to British intentions. The British had very nearly caught Kressenstein's forces by surprise during the first encounter, aided by a dense sea fog, but was saved from

defeat by a serious misjudgement by Murray's subordinate commander Sir Charles Dobell. Thus the battle was renewed on 17 April 1917. In the interim meanwhile the Turks had extended their formidable garrison defences south-east along the road to Beersheba. Dobell chose to launch a frontal assault upon Kressenstein's force of 18,000 by three British infantry divisions aided by eight heavy Mark I tanks and 4,000 gas shells. Unable to extract anything more than minor gains in spite of a two-to-one manpower advantage, chiefly on account of complex and effective Turkish defensive lines, Dobell called off the patently unsuccessful attack on the third day. British casualties were heavy: 6,444 men, with Turkish losses under a third of that figure. In the aftermath of the British defeat Kressenstein favoured a counter-attack against Murray but was over-ruled by his more cautious commander Djemal Pasha. Murray, aware of the likely reaction in London to the attack's failure relieved Dobell of command, with cavalry General Chetwode taking his place. Nevertheless shocked officials in London took the opportunity to purge the high command with Murray himself being recalled to London. In his stead was sent Sir Edmund Allenby, another British general whose star appeared to be on the wane. (Correctly) regarding his redeployment from the Western Front to

Palestine as a sign of failure - he was never on easy terms with BEF Commander-in-Chief Sir Douglas Haig - Allenby engineered a spectacular revival of his and his army's fortunes in a series of comprehensive British victories in Palestine. The Turkish forces had been reinforced well and were entrenched in. The result was a defeat and British casualties were 6,325. In late October the Division took part in the 3rd Battle of Gaza.

3rd Battle of Gaza. With Edmund Allenby's appointment to command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the wake of two failed attacks at Gaza in March and April 1917 - replacing Sir Archibald Murray who was recalled to London - he was tasked by British Prime Minister David Lloyd George with the capture of Jerusalem by Christmas 1917. In the light of the British army's two recent failures it appeared a tall order in spite of clear British numerical supremacy in the area. Allenby nevertheless delivered Jerusalem to London handily in time for Christmas with over two weeks to spare. In order to ensure the fall of Jerusalem however Allenby needed first to break the Turkish line at Gaza-Beersheba overseen by recently arrived German commander Erich von Falkenhayn, the former army Chief of Staff. Allenby opened preparations by first relocating his GHQ from a first-class Cairo hotel to the front

line; a symbolic act designed to boost the flagging morale of the British troops. Next he amassed reinforcements of men, artillery, gas shells and tanks, adamant that he would not proceed until certain of victory. Seven infantry divisions plus a Light Horse unit (nicknamed the Desert Mounted Corps and consisting of both horses and camels) were assembled, a total of 88,000 men. Ranged against him were the Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies, totalling just 35,000 men stretched out along a 40km line. A key component of Allenby's plan was the securing of Beersheba's water supplies at an early stage during the planned attack - its wells. Both earlier attacks at Gaza had to some extent foundered on account of water shortages - an ever-present concern in desert warfare - and Allenby understood that establishing command of water supplies would be a key factor in his wider plan of capturing Jerusalem. Thus the Third Battle of Gaza - also referred to as the Battle of Beersheba - was initiated early on the morning of 31 October 1917. Not for Allenby a frontal attack, as at the Second Battle of Gaza. Instead he resolved to take the Turkish forces by surprise in the relatively lightly defended area of Beersheba (a plan initially proposed by General Chetwode), deploying 40,000 troops in the area. He nevertheless ensured a hefty British presence directly in front of Gaza. Three

divisions, aided by a heavy artillery presence of 218 guns, bombarded the garrison for six days before the attack began in order to fool the Turks into believing that a full frontal attack was imminent. Allenby's ploy, which demanded the utmost secrecy in planning, succeeded in its entirety. British RFC aircraft - of newly deployed Bristol fighters - ensured British air superiority, crucial in preventing German aircraft from detecting British troop movements. Allenby deployed infantry forces to take Beersheba from the front while despatching his Light Horse unit far to the east. Following an all-day battle an Australian Light Horse unit finally penetrated the Turkish defences and secured control over the town's wells before the Turks could execute a prepared plan to contaminate them. The Turkish Seventh Army meanwhile retired to the stronghold of Tel es Sheria commanded by German commander Kress von Kressenstein's Eighth Army. Panicked there by another diversionary attack to the east by a 70-strong camel company, the Turkish defenders began to scatter believing it to be a large-scale flank attack, thus leaving the flank of Seventh Army exposed. Promptly exploiting this Allenby struck north at Tel es Sheria at dawn on 6 November splitting Seventh and Eighth Armies. Allenby hoped to trap Kressenstein's Eighth Army at Gaza but

the Turks retreated in some haste further up the coast, Gaza being abandoned on 6-7 November. Meanwhile Eighth Army established itself in Jerusalem preparatory to a stand against the British. Having concluded the successful capture of Gaza Allenby next turned his attention to the fall of Jerusalem, which he succeeded in securing the following month.

The offensive was successful and Beersheba was captured.

In November and December the Battalion advanced through Palestine in appalling conditions, very hot, insufficient water (3 pints every 48 hours) and rough tracks through the Judean Hills in the Khamsin season. But by Christmas they had taken Jerusalem. March 1918 the Battalion was engaged at Tell Azur a fiercely fought battle of attack and counter attack with a lot of hand to hand fighting but the Turks were finally driven off.

This ended the Battalion's involvement in Palestine and in June it returned via Italy to Proven, Belgium.

FRANCE

June 1918 they returned to France arriving at Les Cinq Chemins on 1st July 1918. They drew new equipment and a period of training and acclimatizing followed. On 18th July Marshal Foch had ordered a major counter offensive between Chateau Thierry and Soissons. They went into the field at 7.40am on 23rd July at Poiseux. and immediately

experienced very heavy shellfire, high standing corn made it difficult to move through, casualties occurred from enemy machine guns before the attack had proceeded many yards. Attack was held up at 12.00 due to units on flank either side failing to advance at all. At nightfall relieved by 1/4 Cheshires.

Casualties heavy - 8 Officers and 230 ORs.

Continuous shelling for the whole night and experienced gas shells for the first time, it made the evacuation of the wounded very difficult.

24th July moved to reserve trenches.

25th July Shelled heavily French Aeroplane felled in our lines.

26th/27th Heavy shelling tried to move to new location but trenches filled with water. Casualties so far (estimated) 10 Officers wounded, 23 ORs killed, 206 wounded, 19 missing. Relieved by French Battalion.

28th July Moved back to new bivouacs.

August 1st. Back in the line. on 1st August they were in action at Bucy Le Bras Ferme. Much of the Brigade had moved forward and following were the advance HQ contingent including Major Whitehouse, suddenly and unexpectedly a group of Germans appeared in front of them from a dugout and Major Whitehouse was shot in the head and died instantly. Major Whitehouse was a local man, his father was the Vicar of Sellack.

Total casualties for month of July. 36 Killed, 256 Wounded, 18 Missing, 64 Sick Total. 362.

2nd - 30th August. In reserve, billets and bivouac at Zeggars Capel, Hezeel and Proven. Re-organising, baths, divine services, training three drafts 160men, 140 men and 50 men arrived (very young many were under 19), brigade sports.

31st August. Bn under orders to move at short notice.

September 1st Marched to Lumbres, train to Abeele, marched to Scherpenburg.

2nd Sept. Divisional Reserve

3rd. In the front line. Reorganising front line.

4th. 4.30am Bn formed up ready to move. 5.30am Artillery and Machine gun barrage began. Right Coy moved on but were held up by barbed wire which had not been cut by artillery fire, left Coy failed to reach objective and were back in Farmer Trench, right Coy failed to reach objective and were back in original position.

5th - 7th Sept. Situation as normal
Casualties for September 16 killed, 55 wounded, 18 missing.

235499 Private Edward Jones was killed in action on 5th September 1918. He is buried at Wytschaete Military Cemetery.



Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
JONES, Edward	Hereford R	Priv	*1899 235499
Medal	Enl.	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	27/10/16 B	271	Near Nord 235499
BRITISH	15 DEAN	27/11 A 30	
Honour of War first service (2.0)			
Date of entry theatre 9-8-16			

He was awarded



1914/15 Star

Soldiers who died in the Great War

Name: Edward Jones
Birth Place: Gannerew, Monmouth
Residence: Daystone Leys, Nr. Monmouth
Death Date: 5 Sep 1918
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Hereford
Rank: Private
Regiment: The Herefordshire Regiment
Battalion: 1st 1st Battalion
Regimental Number: 235499
Type of Casualty: Killed in action

In Memory of
 Private
E Jones

235499, 1st/1st Bn., Herefordshire Regiment who died on 05 September 1918 Age 23

Son of William and Maria Jones, of Crocker's Ash, Monmouth.

Remembered with Honour
Wytschaete Military Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

36796 Private William Cornelius Mahoney



2nd Company
Machine Gun Corps.

William Cornelius Mahoney

William Cornelius Mahoney was born 17th February 1898 in Llangrove.). His father was William Mahoney a Farm Labourer of Llangrove and his mother was Sarah Jane Brown (previously married to Watkins) originally from Presteigne.. In 1901 William Mahoney was living with his parents and his half brother Frederick Frank Watkins at Colling (Collin) Bill, Llangarren. His father was a Carter on a

Farm. 1911 and William was living in Llangrove and was a 'worker on Farm' – aged 13. He was living with his father William Mahoney, his mother Jane (she had dropped the Sarah), his four brothers Thomas aged 9, Stanley aged 8, Francis aged 5 and Hubert aged 3. Also living there was their half brother Frederick Watkins aged 21 who was a Farm Labourer. William's father died in 1950 and his mother in 1949

The Great War

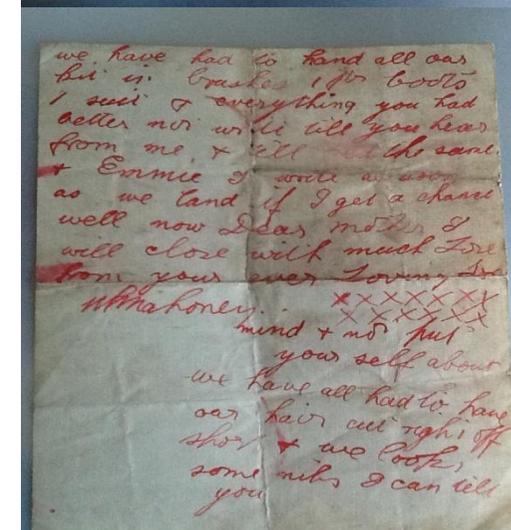
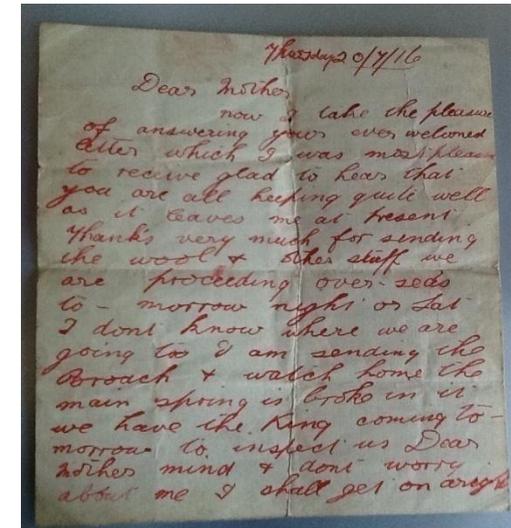
2346 Private William Mahoney enlisted at Llangarron in early September 1914 (Ross Gazette 17/9/1914) when he was aged 16. He went into KA (Kitchener's Army). But because of his youth he was put into the Herefordshire Regiment which was a Territorial Force Regiment, he was too young to join the regular army.



It remained a part-time form of soldiering (hence the nickname "Saturday Night Soldiers"), whose stated role was home defence. Men were not obliged to serve overseas, although they could agree to do so.

He transferred to the Machine Gun Corps (infantry) as a Private with the number

36796 and was sent to France on 21st July 1916 and 'Died of Wounds' on 20th August 1916. The night before he went to France he wrote to his mother.



The Machine Gun Corps

The army took only the fittest and the best to try and satisfy the demand for more, and yet more, intelligent young men to man the guns.

"No military pomp attended its birth or decease. It was not a famous regiment with glamour and whatnot, but a great fighting corps, born for war only and not for parades. From the moment of its formation it was kicking. It was with much sadness that I recall its disbandment in 1922; like old soldiers it simply faded away". So said former machine gunner George Coppard, in his epic autobiography "With a machine gun to Cambrai".



Machine Gun Corps in training at Grantham, Soldiers were hand picked for this unit and were deeply unpopular with the Germans, and often it was a fight to the death-no prisoners. They were known as the Suicide Club in some quarters.

Private Mahoney went to France on 21st July 1916 and he probably arrived at his unit at Franvillers on 30th July because that was the date the name of the Coy was changed to No 2 Coy MGC.



British Vickers machine gun crew wearing PH-type anti-gas helmets. Near Ovillers during the Battle of the Somme, July 1916. The gunner is wearing a padded waistcoat, enabling him to carry the machine gun barrel. IWM photograph Q3995, with permission. Note that the left hand soldier has an MGC badge on his shoulder.

No 2 Coy MGC

Poizieres/Mametz Wood/High Wood July 1916. 30th. The Company moved to Bivouac at Henencourt Wood and stayed On rest and training until 13th August. **August 1916.**

1st Aug. Inspected by Corps Commander.
2nd Aug. Coy inspected by G.O.C 2nd Infantry Brigade.
13th Aug. Coy moved to Maxse Redoubt
14th Aug. Coy relieved 111 MG Coy in the front line.

15th at Mametz Wood
16/27/18th Coy in the line.
18th/19th Aug. Coy guns supported an attack by 2 Infantry Brigade on the enemy intermediate line. The attack was particularly successful and the machine guns injected heavy losses on the enemy. Casualties 3 Officers wounded 8 ORs killed 11 ORs wounded.
One of those wounded was William Cornelius Mahoney. He was sent back to Mericourt-L'Abbe to one of the casualty Clearing centres based there (36th and 38th Casualty Clearing Stations and the 2/2nd London CCS).

The Casualty Clearing Station was part of the casualty evacuation chain, further back from the front line than the Aid Posts and Field Ambulances. It was manned by troops of the Royal Army Medical Corps, with attached Royal Engineers and men of the Army Service Corps. The job of the CCS was to treat a man sufficiently for his return to duty or, in most cases, to enable him to be evacuated to a Base Hospital. It was not a place for a long-term stay.

Private Mahoney 'Died of Wounds' on 20th August 1916. He is buried at Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'Abbe

Soldiers who died in the Great War

Name: William Mahoney
Birth Place: Llangarren, Hereford
Residence: Llangrove
Death Date: 20 Aug 1916
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Hereford
Rank: Private
Regiment: Machine Gun Corps
Battalion: (Infantry)
Regimental Number: 36796
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre
Comments: Formerly 2346, Hereford Regt.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
MAHONEY	M G C	Pte	36796
William			
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
Victory	In 99/101 B27	2623	
Dunsan	at	at	
Bras			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

He was awarded



British War Medal Victory Medal



In Memory of
 Private
W C Mahoney

36796, 2nd Coy., Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) who died on 20 August 1916 Age 18
 Son of William and Sarah Jane Mahoney, of Old Grove Lodge, Llangrove, Ross, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour
 Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'Abbe

Commemorated in perpetuity by
 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

17767 Private William George Maxfield



1st Battalion
Princess Victoria's
Royal Irish Fusiliers

William George Maxfield

William George Maxfield was born in Welsh Newton on 7th May 1883. His parents were John Maxfield 1861 - 1929 and Mary Ann Williams 1858 - 1900. By 1891 the family had moved to Merthyr

Tydfil and were still there in 1901 when William George was a haulier in a coal mine. He does give his place of birth as Welsh Newton. John Maxfield (William's father) above was born in Llangrove and Emily and William were born in Welsh Newton. John's brother was Robert Maxfield who was killed at Rorke's Drift. Sergeant Maxfield who was assegaied and burnt to death in the hospital. In 1911 William was a border at the home of James and Mary Ann Jones. In December quarter 1913 he married Emily Ann Jones (above) in Neath and in 1914 they had a son William J Maxfield.

The Great War.

William George Maxfield enlisted into the Royal Irish Fusiliers early in the war. It seems a strange unit for a Herefordshire lad working in Wales to join but it appears the Irish Fusiliers had an impact in the area as several local lads joined them.

Royal Irish Fusiliers

1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Fusiliers was at Shorncliffe serving with 10th Brigade, 4th Division when war broke out in August 1914. They moved at once to York and then to Harrow on the 18th of August to prepare for service overseas. They proceeded to France on the 23rd of August, landing at Boulogne, and crossing France in time to provide infantry reinforcements at the Battle of Le Cateau.

They were in action at the The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne and at The Battle of Messines in 1914.

Following training William Maxfield joined the 1st Battalion in the field arriving in France on 15th May 1915.

18th May 1915 1st Battalion at La Brique when 76 reinforcements arrived from the transport. 19-26th At the front. Heavy shelling, removing debris from trenches, heavy gas attack on 24th, draft of 76 joined on 26th. 27th relieved by Hants regt. and marched to bivouac at Flamertinghe Chateau. On 30th Divisional 'Follies' as entertainment.

In 1915 they fought in The Second Battle of Ypres. Between the 5th of November 1915 and 3 February 1916, 12th Brigade were attached to 36th (Ulster) Division, providing instruction to the newly arrived Division. In 1916 moved south and were in action during the Battles of the Somme. In 1917 they were at Arras, in action during the The First and Third Battles of the Scarpe. On the 3rd of August 1917 they transferred to 36th (Ulster) Division and joined 107th Brigade on the 24th. They were in action in the The Battle of Langemarck during the Third Battles of Ypres and the The Cambrai Operations where the Division captured Bourlon Wood..

This was some of the fiercest fighting of the whole war. The battles listed above are all well documented in various internet

and book form and the 1st Battalion war diaries are available on line and from the National Archives to download. Private Maxfield fought his way through these battles and we take up his story at the beginning of 1918 just after the end of the battle of Passchendaele.

December 25th 1917 Christmas Day. Christmas was celebrated but the Turkeys did not turn up. Companies had dinner in Estaminets and Officers and Sergeants had dinner in the evening. Started to snow.

January 1918. The January war diaries are missing,

On the 8th of February 1918 they transferred to 108th Brigade still with 36th (Ulster) Division. In 1918 they were in action on the Somme, in the Battles of the Lys and the Final Advance in Flanders

February 1918. In brigade reserve positions until 5th of the month, then moved on 6th into the front line relieving 10th Royal Irish Rifles. Quiet. relieved by 10th RIR on the 7th and proceeded to Brigade reserve line. 8th Transferred from 107th to 108th Brigade and moved into their reserve line. 9th Moved to supply line and relieved 9th Royal Irish Fusiliers situation quiet. 12th Two men killed and two wounded. 13th fine and quiet, 14th weather getting colder. 15th Relieved 12th RIR in front line. Stayed in front line until 22nd quiet, weather fine and took over further portions of the front line.

23rd relieved by 12th RIR and moved into support billets at Essigny Station all quiet. Remainder of month battalion on working parties, baths, weather generally fine but with some rain at end of month.

March. 1918. 1st. March The battalion was holding the front line at a position opposite St Quentin, everything quiet. Held same position of the line until 5th 'Barrosa Day' on 4th Germans entered the line 'apparently lost' we captured 1 officer and 6 ORs. 6th Relieved and marched to billets at Grand Serracourt stayed in billets until 14th training, celebrated Barrosa Day on the 11th. 15th relieved the 12th RIR in Cutting - Brigade reserve. In support until the 19th. On 20th still in support but information received that a German attack was expected on morning of 21st.

21st March. Barrage opened at 4.30am. Battalion took up position in battle zone and was heavily engaged in a fight which lasted for many hours, forced to withdraw before superior numbers before the end of the day.

9 Officers missing and 1 wounded. 10 ORs killed, 55 wounded and 275 missing. 22nd. Battalion still in action, crossed the canal at the bridge at Grand Seracourt shortly before noon and took up position at Happencourt, towards evening Bn again crossed the canal and took up position at Somette Eaucourt. 23rd Battalion holding outpost along bank of Somette

Eaucourt 1 officer and 100 OR casualties. Orders to take up position at Villeselve and then withdrew to Avaicourt.

Remainder of month moved to Erches, into a position at Andechy, on 27th the Battalion was cut off by the enemy but an officer and 19 men got away. Marched to Taismil and then by train to Gamaches and then marched to Ault--Sur-Mer on 31st March.

April 1918. 1st At Ault Battlion occupied with cleaning as had just returned from operations on the Somme. 2nd. 108 OR reinforcements arrived. 3rd. Entrained at EU and marched to billets in Herzeele, stayed until 9th of the month training, resting, parades, Bn. inspected by Corps Commander. Divine service on 7th, 4 OR reinforcements arrived and 60 ORs returned from leave. 9th moved to Poperinghe by rail on detraining the enemy shelled the railhead and killed 1 OR and wounded 6 others. Marched to Siege Camp. 10th Marched to Kemmel and into huts and trenches on the Kemmel-Lindenhoek road. Draft of 125 ORs arrived. 12th The Bn was attacked in front of Wulverghem, got out of the trenches and met the enemy in the open. 2 Officers were killed and 1 wounded but no mention of ORs.

13th April 1918 Held a position on the top of the ridge in front of Wulverghem, enemy attacked but was driven back. In this

period at Kemmel 9-13th April 43 men of the battalion were killed in action.

Private Maxfield was wounded by a rifle bullet and taken prisoner at Messines (Kemmel) on 13th April 1918. He was sent to Freidericksfeld Prisoner of War camp/Lazaret in Germany and died there on 7th November 1918 (four days before the end of the war). He was buried at Friedericksfeld. He was re-interred in Hamburg Cemetery in 1923 when commonwealth soldiers from 120 burial grounds were all brought together and buried in Hamburg.

They had fought through **Ypres 1915 '17 '18**, Gravenstafel, St. Julien, Frezenberg, Bellewaarde, **Somme 1916 '18**, Albert 1916, Guillemont, Ginchy, Le Transloy, **Arras 1917**, Scarpe 1917, **Messines 1917 '18**, Langemarck 1917, Cambrai 1917, St. Quentin, Rosières, **Lys**, Bailleul, Kemmel, Courtrai.

UK. Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: William George Maxfield
Birth Place: Bridgend, Glam.
Residence: Giffach, Goch, Glam.
Death Date: 7 Nov 1918
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Bridgend
Rank: Private
Regiment: Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers)
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Number: 17767
Type of Casualty: Died
Theatre of War: Western European

Campaign: 1914-15.		(A) Where decoration was earned.	
		(B) Present situation.	
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.
(A) MAXFIELD R. J. Fus. Pte. 17767			
(B) W.G.			
Action taken		MEDAL IN WHICH INCLUDED (if any)	
		VICTORY MEDAL <i>8/10386 168</i>	
		15/11/18 <i>15/31 26</i>	
THEATRE OF WAR, (1) France		QUALIFYING DATE 18. 5. 15. <i>E/765703/1</i>	
		<i>63/9/14/86</i>	

He was awarded



1914/15 Star British War Medal Victory Medal

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1001	MAUR	P/O	4th	Kemmel, 24.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1002	Edward	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1003	William	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1004	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1005	James	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1006	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1007	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1008	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1009	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15
1010	John	Private	1st	Messines, 13.4.18	Wounded by rifle bullet	17767	1st Bn. P.V. Fus.	France	18.5.15

international Red Cross (German Prisoner of War records)

William Maxfield 2nd from top.

His record states

Name and number.

Captured Messines 13/4/1918

G.G in (Blicken) cannot really read it but G.G. means Gewehr-Geschoss - that is shot (wounded) with a rifle bullet, presumably he died later.

It also says born Welsh Newton 9.5.83
 Next of Kin Mr J Maxfield Near Llan Grove, Ross, Herefordshire



Friedrichsfeld POW camp May 1918
Back row second from right is an Irish Fusilier's cap badge on a soldier from Wales.

In Memory of
Private
W G Maxfield

17767, 1st Bn., Royal Irish Fusiliers who died on 07 November 1918

Remembered with Honour
Hamburg Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

54470 Rifleman John Miller



1/7th Battalion
Prince of Wales's Own (West
Yorkshire) Regiment.
"Leeds Rifles"

John Miller

He was born in Croydon on 2nd July 1891 and baptised as an adult in Ross on 2nd March 1910. His parents were John Miller a Carpenter and Martha Smith, they were married in Croydon in 1891. By 1911 he had moved to Rectory Farm, Ross and was a Farm Labourer. On 18th July 1915 he married Henrietta Christine Williams at the Parish Church of St Matthews in Northampton. Henrietta

came from Llangrove and after the marriage they lived at Penguithal, Llangarron.

The Great War

John Miller joined the army and went into the Army Service Corps with the number 1213. We don't know precisely when he joined but it would appear by his number it was at the beginning of the war. Certainly he was a Private in the ASC when On May 15th 1915 he married Henrietta Christine Williams in Northampton. Henrietta Williams was born 1884 her father was a Farmer of 8 acres at Upper Park, Llangarron and in 1891 Henrietta C Williams (mother) and Henrietta C (daughter) were living at Yew tree cottages Llangarren. In 1901 Ann Mapp Head (living on Parochial relief) and Henrietta Williams (Boarder) were at Penguithal, Llangarren and in 1911 Henrietta Williams Head (mother) Henrietta Williams daughter Penguithal, Llangarren.

Private Miller transferred to the 1/7th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own) "The Leeds Rifles" and was sent to France. Again we are unsure of when he went but soldiers with numbers starting 54000 begin to appear in CWGC lists on 9th October 1917 and in substantial numbers.

1/7th West Yorkshire Regt. (Leeds Rifles)
extracts from war diaries

October 1917.

9th Oct. Batt. had moved from Vlamertinghe to La Brique and moved into assembly positions and marched to Calgary Grange. Attack commenced at 5.20am. Very difficult the tracks being almost impossible to follow. Crossed the Stroombeek and achieved first objective and went into shell holes. Moved to second objective and enemy machine guns and snipers in carefully concealed positions were very active and in 3 companies all the officers and most of the senior NCOs had become casualties making it difficult to obtain accurate information. The enemy were able to fire through the barrage preventing our advance. The Batt. on the morning of the 10th Oct. moved back to Calgary Grange as the shell holes were too indefinite for the gunners to find. Casualties were substantial but not listed in the diaries. However the CWGC lists 109 killed in action on this date. 10th. Relieved by 4th Bn. 3rd New Zealand Rifle Brigade. 11th Bivouacked at Wieltje in old front line. 12th Moved to Oudezeele and in training until end of month.

November 1917. At Steenvoorde, Ypres, Westhoek, Dickebusch, Potijze. In training, support, carrying parties, making shelters, working parties.

December 1917. 1st-17th. Potijze, Canal Area near Ypres. Training, working parties, patrols reconnoitring in support. 17th - 23rd. In the line at Veer Fme. nothing to report. 24th at Anzac Farm working parties and moved on 30th to Vancouver camp 31st Bathing.

January 1918. At Vancouver camp, 4-7th in trenches. 5th Patrols sent out but quiet day Then moved to Dragoon Camp and Staple. Working parties, training, re-fitting, parades, inspections etc, . Moved to Staple then training, re-fitting etc. until end of month.

February 1918. Moved to Houlle for musketry, training, drill competitions, Brigade rifle grenade competition, football matches, moved to Montreal camp, Brandhoek on 12th and working on lines near Zonnebeke until 23rd of month when went back into the line taking a brigade frontage in front of Ypres. 23/4 attempted raid resulting in our capturing 15 prisoners. Quiet days in the line until end of month.

March 1918. At Garter point, Hussar camp, Potijze, in trenches at Broodseinde, In the front line, other times salvaging, working parties. Alternated with 1/5th West Yorks in trenches near Zonnebeke. On 30th relieved the Buffs in the line at West Farm Camp interior economy, shelled in afternoon with casualties.

April 1918. Bn. moved to Tower Hamlets in the line, 3 quiet days then on 5th moved to tunnels at Tor Top after relief

by Yorks and lancers. On 6th moved back into the line until 9th when relieved by 1st PWO and moved into billets at Bankhof Camp. On 10th camp was shelled with casualties and Bn moved by light railway to Chippewa Camp at 9pm orders to move to Parret Camp near Kemmel troops very tired but marched there in splendid style and arrived at Lincoln Camp at 4am. Next day 11th moved into the line at Wyteschaete and formed defensive positions i dugouts. On 16th heavy barrage and enemy attacked. 17th orders to move to Siege Farm and stayed until 23rd of month. 24th back into the Vierstraat line. 25th 2.30am enemy barrage opened and he attacked at 6am. 7.30pm Bn withdrawn and moved back to Ouderdom. Remainder of month at Hoograaf on interior economy and inspection by GOC.

May 1918 In Farm at K23. Trainig and fre-organising. On 5th moved to Tunnellers camp at St Jan Der biezen. Still training, bathing, rifle ranges, musketry. On 26th moved to Cormette, same routines as before. On 31st Moved to Proven area.

June 1918. On 3rd relieved DLI in reserve. On 4th moved to Brake camp working parties, training etc. until 12th when moved to Ypres. Remainder of month quiet, nothing to report except on 26th a raid was made on the enemy but

no prisoners were taken. 30th moved to Siege camp

July 1918. Batt employed building green line near Vlamertinghe. Training, sports gala, On 15th relieved 1/5th W. Yorks at the front (Zillebeke). Nothing to report Coys relieved each other at the front. On 22nd relieved by 117th Inf. Regt. USA and moved back to Orillia Camp. Training, Rest, Interior economy, bathing. On 30th medal presentations. 31st relieved KOYLI at the front on extreme left flank of BEF.

August 1918. 1st at Potijze Nothing to report except training, relieved on the 8th. Moved to Billets at Proven (Herzelee) on 19th of month. Moved to La Panne on 23rd until 29th when moved to Ternas until end of month, training.

September 1918. 2-11th at Mt. St Eloy training. 11th relieved Argyle and Sutherlands at Plouvain relieved on 16th. Moved to Rly Embankment. Training on 24th moved to Arras, training interior economy, bathing until end of month. October 1918. 1st-6th at Arras training. 7th Moved by bus and march to Cagnicourt. 8th spent providing accommodation. 9th moved by march to Raillencourt. 10th moved to Morenchies and next day went into assembly positions preparatory to attack on enemy positions at Avesnes-Le-Sec. 9.00 zero hour barrage opened and moved forward to attack. 9.05 enemy opened with HE gas shells. Front line companies went

over crest of ridge, prisoners coming in fast and many machine guns captured. 10.05 enemy counter attack launched from railway accompanied by tanks. Tanks driven off by Lewis gun fire. 1.30 further advance impossible due to heavy casualties. 12.00 heavy enemy shelling and machine gun fire. October 12th advance continued and aircraft reported enemy retiring. 13th a quiet day. 14th Relieved Duke of Wellington Regt. in Left sector. 15th Heavy shelling along whole front. 16th relieved by Duke of Wellington Regt and moved to sugar factory. 17th moved by march to billets in Escadeuvres. 18th-25th Training, baths, rest. 20th moved to Iwuy.

Casualties are not given for the attack on 11/12th but the CWGC list 63 men of the Battalion who died on those dates and wounded/missing would have added very considerably to that total. Rifleman John Miller died on 25th October 1918. The records do not say Killed in Action or died of wounds but it seems likely he was wounded or missing during the attack on 11/12th of October and died on 25th.

He is buried in Belgrade Cemetery at Namur, Belgium. There were a number of Casualty Clearing Stations there which would seem to add to his being wounded on 11th.

Soldiers who died in the Great War

Name: John Miller
Residence: Penguithal, Llangarron, Ross-on-Wye
Death Date: 25 Oct 1918
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Hereford
Rank: Private
Regiment: Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire) Regiment
Battalion: 1st 7th Battalion
Regimental Number: 54470
Type of Casualty: Died
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre
Comments: Formerly 1213, A.S.C

Name	Regt.	Regt. No.
MILLER John	W. Yorks.	54470
Date	Regt.	Remarks
25 Oct 1918		dec?
Theatre of War first served in		
Date of entry theatre		

He was awarded



The British war medal and Victory medal



In Memory of
Rifleman
J Miller

54470, 1st/7th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 25 October 1918 Age 28

Husband of Henrietta C. Miller, of Penguithal, Llangarren, Ross, Herefordshire.

Remembered with Honour
Belgrade Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

A/201774 Rifleman Alfred George Morris



18th Batt. (Arts & Crafts)
King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Alfred George Morris

Alfred George Morris was born at Briton Ferry, Glamorganshire in March Quarter 1876. His parents were Harry Morris a domestic gardener originally from London and Elizabeth his wife from Ledbury. By 1881 the family were living at Crocker's Ash and were still there in 1891. In 1901 Alfred had left home but his parents stayed on in Crocker's Ash until at least the 1911 census and probably beyond when Harry died in 1919. Alfred George had 3 brothers: William; Frank and Tom Percy and 3 sisters Olive Virginia (Alfred's twin),

Catherine and Amy. In 1901 Alfred had left home and was boarding with John John a Blacksmith and his family at 21 Prince St, Newport, he put his trade down as Blacksmith. In March Quarter 1907 Alfred George Morris married Elizabeth Mary Ball from Newport. In December they had a daughter Beatrice Irene. At the 1911 census Alfred, Elizabeth and Beatrice were all living at 20 Julian Rd, Newport, a good sized property where Alfred was a 'Gentleman Servant' - Groom Gardner. In June Quarter 1912 they had another daughter Kathleen and a son Leslie in March Quarter 1916. All three went on to marry in the 1930s.

The Great War

Records do not show when Alfred George Morris enlisted but they do show he enlisted at Newport. It is most likely that he was conscripted when the 'Married Men's' conscription came into force in June 1916, however many volunteered earlier when it became obvious that conscription was coming. He enlisted as M/2/150892 Private Alfred Morris Army Service Corps.



The 'M' at the beginning of his number indicated he was in the 'Motor Transport' section of the ASC.

He was then transferred to the 18th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps (Arts & Crafts).

Why Arts and Crafts?

Some Service battalions had this sort of title added after their official designation, for instance there was the 16th (Service) Battalion KRRC (Church Lads Brigade) - formed from past and present members of the Church Lads Brigade and the 18th (Service) Battalion KRRC (Arts and Crafts) was raised at Gidea Park by Major Sir Herbert Raphael, who was a Liberal MP and owned Gidea Park. I don't know where the (Arts and Crafts) appellation came from but the most plausible thought I have come across is it lies in Sir Herbert Raphael's connections with the Garden City movement of the late 1890's onwards, which in turn had strong links with The Arts & Crafts Movement. Much of Arts & Crafts theory would chime in well with the rifles regiment traditions of the rifleman encouraged to think for himself, use initiative and act independently. The rifles emphasis on mastery of the "craft" of musketry would also resonate with the core Arts & Crafts principle of the master craftsmen, while the abhorrence of the Arts & Crafts towards workers subsumed as unskilled automata in industrial mass production could be paralleled with rifles attitudes to the mindless drill of the line regiments.

A/201774 Rifleman Alfred George Morris 18th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps (KRRC). Again records do not show when he joined this regiment but the 18th Batt. did not serve in

France until 3rd May 1916 when they landed at Le Havre. They were in 122nd Brigade 41st Division.

122nd Brigade

12th Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment
15th Battalion The Hampshire Regiment
11th Battalion The Royal West Kent Regiment
18th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps.

The Commonwealth War Graves records do not show any casualties with number starting 201000 (or thereabouts) until July 1917 this usually gives a clear indication of the time of entry at the front especially where casualties had been substantial. A large contingent of reinforcements arrived at the front for 18th KRRC during week ending 14th July 1917 (194 in total) and it is likely he was part of this group, several of those who died on 31st July had numbers in this range and were also transfers from ASC, But to be sure I have included details of action from early June 1917. It gives a flavour of what Rifleman Morris went through.

1917

The Battle of Messines 7 - 14 June 1917 was conducted by the British Second Army, under the command of General Herbert Plumer, on the Western Front near the village of Messines. The offensive forced the German Army to move reserves to Flanders from the Arras and Aisne fronts, which relieved pressure on the French Army. The tactical objective of the attack at Messines was to capture the German defences on the ridge, which ran from Ploegsteert ("Plugstreet") Wood in the south through Messines and Wytschaete to Mt. Sorrel, to deprive the

German Fourth Army of the high ground south of Ypres. The ridge commanded the British defences and back areas further north, from which the British intended to conduct the "Northern Operation" to advance to Passchendaele Ridge, then capture the Belgian coast up to the Dutch frontier. British casualties numbered 16,000 of which one third were killed.

The Battle of Pilckem Ridge 31st July - 2nd August, 1917 (Hill 60) was the opening attack of the main part of the Third Battle of Ypres in the First World War. The battle took place in the Ypres Salient area of the Western Front. The Allied attack had mixed results; a substantial amount of ground was captured and a large number of casualties inflicted on the German defenders, except on the tactically vital Gheluvelt plateau on the right flank. The German defenders also recaptured some ground on the XIX Corps front, from the Ypres–Roulers railway, north to St. Julien. After several weeks of changeable weather, heavy rainfall began in the afternoon of 31 July and had a serious effect on operations in August, causing more problems for the British who were advancing into the area devastated by artillery fire and which was partly flooded.



Battle of Pilckem Ridge

Rifleman Alfred George Morris was Killed in Action during this battle on the 31st July 1917.

Below are some accounts of the fighting on 31st July 1917.

"The Battalion on that day holding positions in the sub-sector south of the Ypres-Commines Canal and attacking the enemy's line at Hollebeke. Moving forward through mist, drizzling rain and thick deep mud, the progress of the 18th KRRC was slow. The enemy taking full advantage and pouring machine gun fire into the oncoming troops" (William Collings book - Herefordshire and the Great War).

122 Brigade attacked south of the canal with the 18th King's Royal Rifle Corps and 11th Royal West Kents, with the 12th East Surreys in support. After a fierce fight, Oblique Support Trench fell to the Royal West Kents. The attacking troops then came under fire from houses along the Hollebeke Road. The KRRC

were held up by machine gun fire from around Hollebeke Church. At 8am the Royal West Kents took up the attack on the village. They had cleared it by 11.30am and started to consolidate the ruins. The final position was just 100 yards short of the final objective, the Green Line. That night the 12th East Surreys came up and pushed on to capture Forret Farm"

From 24th to 31st (July) we continued to hold this line. Artillery fire was very active and caused many casualties. On 31st the attack was launched under the most unfavourable conditions. The weather had broken on the 27th and the ground had become so churned up that it was almost impossible to move. A thick mist and drizzling rain made progress slow. The enemy held his line by machine gun posts cleverly hid in shell-holes and brought a withering fire to bear on the attacking party. This, combined with the appalling state of the ground brought the attack to a standstill just short of its objective, which was Hollebeke. The Battalion had suffered such heavy losses that it had to be withdrawn the same night.

From the diary of 'Sapper Martin' edited by Richard Van Emden. - below
31.7.17 At 4 a.m. in spite of most atrocious weather the attack was made on a 14 mile front. French and Belgian troops cooperating with British. We were on the extreme right, the battalions engaged being the 11th RW Kents and the 18th KRRC... Our objective was Hollebeke village, Fritz spotted the preparations... and shelled our front line unmercifully so we suffered a large number of casualties before the attack. The KRRs met a

very strong resistance and suffered accordingly. They should have taken the village but those who got through at all lost direction with the result that the Kents found themselves with an exposed flank which was subjected to fierce machine-gun fire....For eight days our men have been in trenches under the worst possible conditions regarding weather and shellfire and to expect them to make an advance now is asking too much. The state of the country is indescribable owing to the recent rains and natural marshy nature of the ground churned up into a filthy sloppy mess by all manner of shells. Rifles and machine-guns are chocked with mud and unusable.

Alfred Morris is buried at Voormeleele Enclosure No 3. Ypres, Belgium



Soldiers who died in the Great War

Name: Alfred George Morris
Birth Place: Gloucester, Glam.
Death Date: 31 Jul 1917
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Newport, Mon.
Rank: Rifleman
Regiment: King's Royal Rifle Corps
Battalion: 18th Battalion
Regimental Number: A/201774
Type of Casualty: Killed in action
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre
Comments: Formerly M/2/150892, R.A.S.C.

Social	Rank	Page	Remarks
60 MORRIS Alfred G	11994/C. Rec	A/201774	
Victoria	M/101 B/15 1996		
Battalion	18th		
Rank			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry into service			

He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal



In Memory of
Rifleman
A G Morris

A/201774, 18th Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps who died on 31 July 1917

Husband of Mrs. E. M. Morris, of 20, Julian St., Newport, Mon.

Remembered with Honour
Voormezele Enclosure No.3




Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

14411 Private Wallace Palmer



1st Battalion
South Wales Borderers
Formerly of



Manchester Regt. 3rd Royal Fusiliers

Wallace Palmer

Was born in Welsh Newton in 1875. At the 1871 census Wallace's mother Ann Palmer was living with her mother Mary Palmer, her sister Mary Palmer and Ann's son Alfred aged 3 months, she was listed as 'single' and they were living at Pembridge Castle. By 1881 census Wallace's mother Ann has now got three children and is still listed as single. They are all living at Newton Farm, Welsh Newton. In 1891 census Ann was

the Head of the household and a laundress, was still single and had another son Harold. Wallace and his brother Alfred were both labourers. The following year 4523 Private Wallace Palmer joined the 3rd Battalion South Wales Borderers at Brecon on 21st December 1892. The 3rd Battalion was a Territorial Force unit (part time soldiers) and not regular army. He was 18 years old 5ft 7ins tall, weighed 131lbs, had a fresh complexion, grey eyes and brown hair and no distinguishing marks or scars. On 17th February 1893 7484 Private Wallace Palmer joined the regular army and enlisted into the 3rd Battalion Royal Fusiliers. He was posted with the South Wales Borderers in the UK until 10th February 1894 when he was posted to Egypt still with the South Wales Borderers. In February 1895 he was granted 'good conduct pay' and on 15th April 1895 he was posted to Gibraltar. On 15th October 1897 Wallace Palmer transferred to the Manchester Regiment at Gibraltar and his service record indicates it was something to do with the Military Police.

In February 1899 he received another Good Conduct pay award and also elected to serve under "Special Army Order 2/4/98" this confused me a little as it is generally known as 'The Missing Order' but it was 'the Messing Order' and it simply

meant that a soldier could be paid at a rate where he would feed himself. 23rd August 1899 he left the 1st Battalion Manchesters and joined 3rd Battalion Royal Fusiliers still in Gibraltar.

20th May 1901 and they were posted to Egypt he stayed there until 24th March 1903 when he returned to the UK where he stayed until he was discharged on 16th February 1905 on completion of his first period of engagement.

He returned to Welsh Newton and at the 1911 census he was living at Welsh Newton Common and working as a general labourer.

On 14th December 1912 Wallace Palmer a Labourer from Welsh Newton was fined at Harewood End 5/- with 9/- costs for keeping a dog without a licence.

The Great War

In 1914 Wallace Palmer would have been recalled to the colours and 14411 Private Wallace Palmer was sent to the 1st Battalion South Wales Borderers. The regiment went to France on 13th August 1914 and Wallace Palmer joined them on: 26th January 1915 the regiment was at Givenchy it was a quiet day 2nd Lt. Russell arrived at 3pm with a draft of 92 men (including Wallace Palmer). Heavy firing at times during the night but no attack.

At Givenchy until 3rd February, very cold, with snow and high winds. Then marched to Lapugnoy and new billets. 4th and 5th Feb settling down and cleaning up. 6th G.O.C inspected regiment, sing song in the theatre in the evening. At Lapugnoy until 25th Feb. Inspections, baths, cleaning, sing songs in the evenings, sports kit arrived (boxing gloves and footballs), new Vickers Machine Guns arrived.

26th February back into the trenches at Festubert. Fairly quiet with some shelling and the Germans seemed to be preparing an attack by removing wire but it did not happen. Relieved on 7th March and went into billets at Essars. Not good billets - dirty. Stayed on the Divisional Reserve until 14th March then moved to Hingette until 23rd March employed on cleaning, training, digging, entrenchments and bomb throwing.

23rd March took over Indian Trenches at Neuve Chapelle stayed until April 6th. A lot of very heavy shelling, German aeroplanes over our trenches, water in the trenches started to subside, enemy sent over a lot of 'coal boxes' (5.9" howitzers that threw up a lot of black smoke). Increasing number of casualties. Back to Hingette until April 14th training, route marches on standby to move in one hour. 15th April into trenches at Richebourg L'Avoue until 24th April, trenches wet and incomplete a lot of shelling from both

sides, steady number of casualties and sick. Hingette until 8th May.

9th May Rue du Bois - 5.00am heavy bombardment from our guns assault started 5.40am. Failed to gain the German trench because a ditch had not been properly bridged. Along with the Cameronians, Scots Guards and Glosters we assaulted the 1st, 2nd and 3rd lines but failed our objectives for the same reason.

We sustained casualties. 9 Officers and 224 men.

The Battalion was then in trenches and billets at Cuinchy, Bethune, Vermelles, Beuvry until 23rd August. There was a great deal of shelling with a constant flow of casualties.

In the 'war diaries' for South Wales Borderers each day is meticulously detailed with anything of note and many items of interest 'new boots issued', the weather, any activities and so on.

Under August 23rd 1915 there is a typed entry and it had been attached with a paper clip.

23rd August 1915 Omitted from original diary

Wallace Palmer died of wounds and is buried at Choques Military Cemetery. No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station was posted here. Most of the burials in this cemetery were casualties who died at the Clearing Station from wounds received at the Bethune front. In the week or so prior to

his death it had been a relatively quiet period but the day before (22nd August) 'A' and 'D' Coys were bombed and Captain Hammond was wounded and in the afternoon there had been some slight shelling and 2/Lt Hewitt was wounded. It does not mention any 'other ranks' being wounded, but war diaries did tend to be meticulous about recording 'officer' casualties but much less so about ORs. This would fit in with a death at a CCS on 23rd August. He would have been wounded just before or on this date, the CCS were situated fairly near to the front and casualties could be got there very quickly by field ambulance, equally when the casualty was stabilised they were returned either to duties or to Base Hospitals.

The Casualty Clearing Station was part of the casualty evacuation chain, further back from the front line than the Aid Posts and Field Ambulances. It was manned by troops of the Royal Army Medical Corps, with attached Royal Engineers and men of the Army Service Corps. The job of the CCS was to treat a man sufficiently for his return to duty or, in most cases, to enable him to be evacuated to a Base Hospital. It was not a place for a long-term stay.



Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
hvk PALMER Wallace	S. Wales Bord.	Plt	14411
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	1/1/15	403	Died of 23.8.15
BRITISH	do	do	
15 YEAR	2/1/18	423	
Theatre of War first served in 1 France			
Date of entry therein 26.1.15			

He was awarded:



1914/15 Star - British War Medal- Victory Medal

In Memory of
Private
Wallace Palmer

14411, 1st Bn., South Wales Borderers who died on 23 August 1915 Age 40

Son of Mrs Palmer, of Hill Cottage, Welsh Newton, Monmouth.

Remembered with Honour
Chocques Military Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: Wallace Palmer
Birth Place: Welsh Newton, Hereford
Death Date: 23 Aug 1915
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Hereford
Rank: Private
Regiment: South Wales Borderers
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Number: 14411
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

3747 Flt/Sgt.
Reginald Tom Parry
A.F.M



No. 57 Squadron
Royal Flying Corps
1915 - 1918



Royal Air Force.
15th Aircraft Acceptance Park.

Reginald Tom Parry

He was born in Mar quarter 1894 in Trewarne Farm, Llangrove. At the 1901 census Tom R Parry (as he then was) aged 7 was living at 1Rose Villas, Rock Crescent, Monmouth with his widowed mother Mary Elizabeth Parry(his father had died in 1898) His brother William Parry (he was born Wilfred George Parry) aged 10, his older sister Hilda M Parry aged 8 (she was actually Hannah May born Jun 1892), younger brother Victor Herbert Parry aged 3 and the Marfell family who are visitors. In he was at Rock Crescent, Monmouth and interestingly Hannah May aged 18, Reginald Tom aged 17 and Victor Herbert aged 13 were all still at school. This indicates a family of some substance and wealth at a time when most children left school at an early age. Reginald Tom Parry's parents were. George Parry born 1840 in Llanrothal and Mary Elizabeth Walter born 1859 in llangarron and at her marriage was living at Treverven, Llangarron.

The Great War

Prior to joining up Reginald Tom Parry's occupation was a Motor Cyclist. At enlistment his birth place was Llangarren, Ross, Herefordshire and his religion was CofE he was 5ft 5 ¾ ins tall, had brown hair, brown eyes and a fresh complexion. He joined the Army in the Royal Flying Corps on 20th February 1915. On 20th June 1917 he was promoted Sergeant.

His rank was Sergeant Mechanic but his 'trade' was First Class Pilot. On 1st September he left for France to join 57 Squadron RFC.

57 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps was formed on 8 June 1916 at Copmanthorpe, Yorkshire. In December 1916 the squadron was posted to France equipped with the FE2d. The squadron re-equipped with Airco DH4s in May 1917 and commenced long range bombing and reconnaissance operations near Ypres in June of that year. Following the armistice the squadron was assigned to mail carrying duties before returning to the UK in August 1919 and then disbanding on 31 December of that year.



FE2d

57 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps was formed on 8 June 1916 at Copmanthorpe, Yorkshire. In December 1916 the squadron was posted to France equipped with the FE2d. The squadron re-equipped with Airco DH4s in May 1917 and commenced long range bombing and

reconnaissance operations near Ypres in June of that year. It was one of the few bomber units to produce flying aces, having five on strength. William Edward Green scored nine wins, James Grant and Forde Leathley eight,¹ E. Graham Joy seven (plus one later in 205 Squadron), and Arthur Thomas Drinkwater scored six, all in Airco DH.4s.



DH4

20th June 1917 he achieved a 'first class' qualification as a Pilot.

On 26th November 1917 he was admitted to 20 General Hospital at Dannes Camier, Etaples with 'Syncope' (Flying)

Syncope: Partial or complete loss of consciousness with interruption of awareness of oneself and ones surroundings. When the loss of consciousness is temporary and there is spontaneous recovery, it is referred to as syncope or, in nonmedical quarters, fainting.

On 1st April 1918 Reginald Tom Parry transferred from the Royal Flying Corps into the newly formed Royal Air Force with the rank of Sergeant Mechanic.

27th May 1918 he was transferred to 2 Aircraft Acceptance Park at Hendon his unit was 203 J.D.S.

On the following day 28th May 1918 his unit was transferred to No 1 Aircraft Acceptance Park at Radford, Coventry. On 16th August 1918 he was still at A.A.P 1 in Radford but his unit was now CD 9 pilots.

30th December 1918 Sergeant Mechanic Parry gained an *excellent proficiency* as a Pilot. British aircraft in WW1 were manufactured by a variety of companies (ie not always the main companies such as Sopwith, the Royal Aircraft Factory, the Aircraft Manufacturing Company et al) and in many instances sub-contracted out from the main manufacturer. Before they could be sent out to their allotted squadrons they first had to be assembled fully and flight tested - this was carried out at one of the Aircraft Acceptance parks. Often, new aircraft were transported by rail to an Acceptance Park in sections, where they were assembled. Aircraft Acceptance Parks were also used to store the flight-tested machines until they were required in the field.

There is no record of his move to 15 Aircraft Acceptance Park but on 2nd May 1919 Reginald Tom Parry died in Nell Lane Hospital, West Didsbury, Manchester (result of a flying accident).

The purpose of the Aircraft Acceptance Parks was to assemble and test new aircraft, as an 'excellent' pilot Reginald Tom Parry would almost certainly have been flying these aircraft and as can be seen from the item below Reginald Tom Parry was killed while flying (crashed) it is entirely possible that this was while 'testing' one of the newly assembled aircraft.

He had service in France from 1st September 1917 until 19th December 1917 Reginald Tom Parry in November 1918 was a Serjt. Mec (Sergeant Mechanic) and he was gazetted on 2nd November 1918 with the **Air Force Medal (A.F.M.)**. The award was given to personnel of the British Armed Forces and other Commonwealth Forces for an act or acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst flying though not in active operations against the enemy. Other ranks were eligible for the award. Recipients were entitled to use the letters A.F.M. after their name.

He was awarded



AFM British War Medal Victory Medal



Welsh Newton Churchyard

Reginald Parry Service record.

Official No. 3447 CHRISTIAN NAMES Reginald Tom SURNAME Parry

1 BIRTH Date: 20.02.1897 Place: Llangarren, Carmarthenshire

2 RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION: Catholic

3 CURRENT ENGAGEMENT IN H.M. FORCES: (a) Period: 20.02.1897 to 14.02.1918 (b) Rank: Private

4 PRIOR ENGAGEMENT IN H.M. FORCES: (a) Period: 14.02.1918 to 14.02.1918 (b) Rank: Private

5 CIVILIAN OCCUPATION: (a) Description: M.A. Reginald (b) Name and Address of last Employer: M.A. Reginald, 33.11.19, Llangarren, Carmarthenshire

6 MARRIAGE: (a) Date: 25.12.1917 (b) Whether verified from Marriage Certificate: Yes

7 PERSON TO BE INFORMED OF CASUALTIES: Name: Mrs. Reginald Parry, Address: Llangarren, Carmarthenshire

8 DESCRIPTION ON ENGAGEMENT IN H.M. FORCES: Height: 5 feet 5 1/2 inches, Chest: 33 inches, Hair: Brown, Colour of Eyes: Brown, Complexion: Dark

9 TRANSFER TO R.A.F. RESERVE: Date: 14.02.1918

10 DISCHARGE: Date: 14.02.1918

11 RECALLED FROM R.A.F. RESERVE: Date: 14.02.1918

In Memory of
Flight Sergeant
Reginald Tom Parry
A F M
3747, 15th Aircraft Acceptance Park, Royal Air Force who died on 03 May 1919 Age 25
Son of George and Mary Elizabeth Parry, of Trewarne, Llangarren, Ross.

Remembered with Honour
Welsh Newton (St. Mary) Churchyard

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

23531 Private Thomas Alfred Scudamore



2nd Battalion
King's Shropshire Light
Infantry

Thomas Alfred Scudamore

He was born in Llangarron (Probably Ruxton Court) in 1896. His parents were Alfred Henry Scudamore a farmer from Llangarron and Gertrude Evans originally from Cross Ash. In 1901 the family were

living at Ruxton Court where Thomas's father Alfred was a farmer. In 1911 they were still there and Thomas was working on the farm.



Ruxton Court about 2000

The Great War

His number indicates he enlisted in the early part of 1915. He went into the King's Shropshire Light Infantry 2nd Battalion and was sent with them to the Balkans.

SALONIKA

In December 1915 the 2nd Batt. King's Shropshire Light Infantry was sent with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. The Salonika Campaign: In October 1915 a combined Franco-British force of some two large brigades was landed at Salonika

(today called Thessalonika) at the request of the Greek Prime Minister. The objective was to help the Serbs in their fight against Bulgarian aggression. But the expedition arrived too late, the Serbs having been beaten before they landed. It was decided to keep the force in place for future operations, even against Greek opposition. The Greek Chief of the General Staff in Athens had told them " You will be driven into the sea, and you will not have time even to cry for mercy" (Some Greek factions, including King Constantine, were pro-German). The outcome of the Gallipoli campaign was in the balance and most shipping in the area was involved so they really had no choice. In December 1915 the British element fought a battle at Kosturino, north of Lake Doiran, after withdrawing from Serbia. After this there was little action except for occasional air-raids on Salonika. During the first four months of 1916 the British Salonika Force had enough spade work to last it for the rest of its life. Large amounts of barbed wire were used and a bastion about eight miles north of the city was created connecting with the Vardar marshes to the west, and the lake defences of Langaza and Beshik to the east, and so to the Gulf of

Orfano and the Aegean Sea. This area was known as the 'Birdcage' on account of the quantity of wire used. The Bulgarians and Austrians also fortified the heights of the hills surrounding Salonika during the same time which had dire consequences later on. The original two Brigades eventually were reinforced by larger units until 22nd, 26th, 27th and 28th Divisions were there. If the Bulgarians had descended from their Doiran and Struma heights it would have been very difficult to 'push us into the sea', for the force was deployed to fortify an advanced defensive line. The Salonika Force dug-in until the summer of 1916, by which time the international force had been reinforced and joined by Serbian, Russian and Italian units. The Bulgarian attempt at invasion of Greece in July was repulsed near Lake Doiran. At the beginning of Oct 1916, the British in co-operation with her allies on other parts of the front, began operations on the River Struma towards Serres. The campaign was successful with the capture of the Rupell Pass and advances to within a few miles of Serres.

2 KSLI was sent to Salonika in December 1915 and spent nearly three years fighting the Bulgarians in Macedonia, for the most part based on the Struma front. From June 1916 to December 1917 2 KSLI was in trenches at Neohari and in the final offensive against Bulgaria, it was one of the first allied units to enter enemy territory.

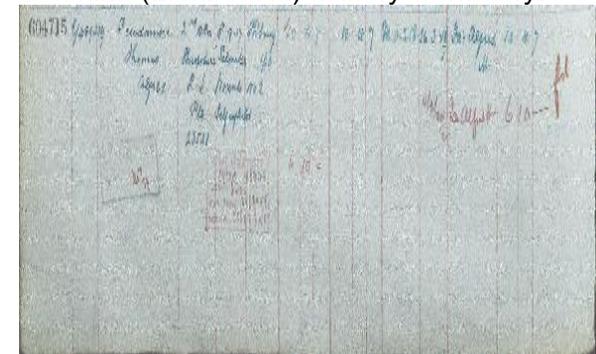
The Battalion took part in the final offensive against Bulgaria in September 1918.

The campaign in Macedonia was considered by many to be a "side-show". The Allied army was known back home as the "Gardeners of Salonika" due to the apparent lack of activity and people would comment "If you want a holiday, go to Salonika". Despite the view of those at home life in Macedonia was far from easy. The British Salonika Force not only had to cope with the extremes in temperature but also malaria. By 1916 it was possible to evacuate the most serious cases. However, with the introduction of unrestricted submarine warfare in April 1917 this was no longer possible. Consequently the cases of malaria soared as the infected men were compelled to stay in Macedonia. Hospital admissions in 1917 alone were 63,396 out of a strength of about 100,000 men. By early 1918 the

British were again able to evacuate the worst cases and under the 'Y' scheme nearly 30,000 were evacuated.

Many men suffered numerous relapses made worse by having to remain in Macedonia. Even when they were finally evacuated many would still suffer relapses for many years to come.

Whether because of illness, malaria or the constant stress of battle conditions something serious affected Private Scudamore because he 'self inflicted' a serious wound on himself and died on 8th September 1917. He is buried at Salonika (Lembet Rd) Military Cemetery.



Register of soldiers effects

It states Died 8.9.17 Salonika Wounds
Self inflicted

Name	Company	Regt.	Regt. No.
SCUDAMORE	T.S.L.I.	9th	23531
Thomas A.			
Medal	Serial	Page	Remarks
Victory	J/102.392305		
British	do	do	
Spain			
Theatre of War in which served in			
Date of entry therein			

He was awarded



British War Medal Victory Medal

UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: Thomas Alfred Scudamore
Birth Place: Ruxton, Herefords
Death Date: 8 Sep 1917
Death Location: Salonika
Enlistment Location: Ruxton
Rank: Private
Regiment: King's (Shropshire Light Infantry)
Battalion: 2nd Battalion
Number: 23531
Type of Casualty: Died
Theatre of War: Balkan Theatre



In Memory of
Private
T A Scudamore

23531, 2nd Bn., King's Shropshire Light Infantry who died on 08 September 1917

Remembered with Honour
Salonika (Lembet Road) Military Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

8610 Private Charles Watkins



1st Battalion
South Wales Borderers.

Charles Watkins.

He was born in Wormbridge in 1887. His father Thomas was a labourer from Wellington, Herefordshire and his mother was Mary Pritchard also from Wellington. 1891 Living at Wormbridge. 1901 Charles was a 'Cattleman' at the farm of William Lewis in Wormbridge.

He became a career soldier joining the SWB about early 1905.
Number 8341 joined on 28th January 1904
Number 8841 joined on 31st July 1905
The regiment was in Karachi at the time so Private Watkins was sent there in 1907/8 and in 1909 they moved to Quetta, India (now Pakistan). In 1910 the Battalion moved back to Chatham and on

1911 census Charles Watkins is in barracks at Chatham. In 1913 they moved to Borden near Sittingbourne in Kent and in August 1914 following the outbreak of the Great War they moved to France

The Great War

8610 Private Watkins went to France arriving on 27th August 1914. His regiment was already in France having landed at Havre on 12th August and had already seen considerable action. Charles Watkins joined his unit at the front as part of a draft of 100 reinforcements on 5th September 1914. As they arrived an order for a further withdrawal was to place the next day but this was later cancelled, this was seen as excellent news as the 1st Army Corps was to get on the same line at La Chapelle as the 2nd Army Corps, 2 Cavalry Brigades and a Cavalry Division. Battalion bivouacked in a stubble field at Rozoy.

Sept.6th Vaudry. Moved to Courlay and then to La Chapelle Eiger to take the offensive, Queens were advanced guard and our Bn was at head of main body, enemy aeroplanes very active and we had to take cover in the woods. At 9am the battle had already begun and the enemy were advancing from the east Le Plessis Vaudry. At 10am heavy artillery fire from the front, we arrived at La Chapelleiger and halt and after several ours push on again. The enemy retired to N.E. We

had a very tiring day buttomorrow we hope to surround three German Army Corps and capture them, our bivouac was a very dirty place.

Sept. 7th. Choisy. Moved off at 10am as brigade advanced guard, the cavalry are fighting to our front on the river Marne to finf ghr enemy gone he is retiring with some speed. We marched 25 miles, a very hot and tiring day.

Sept.8th Moved at 5am towards Ferte-Gaucher and hear that the enemy are demoralised and cooked and pass through villages that are in a fearful state and the inhabitants are pleased to see us again, the short German occupation was not appreciated. We advanced to the West and passed the 1st Brigade and 1st Cavalry Division, they had suffered many casualties.

Sept 9th. Battle of the Marne
Push off again to take the bridge at Nogent which we found unoccupied. Our cavalry which had already crossed was fired upon by our R.A."Silly Asses", it isquite obvious they are not the enemy. Sound of large battle to our left. "Officer responsible of RA ought to be shot in my opinion" We move North and all the villages are broken and signs of retreating enemy everywhere, dead horses, graves etc. Move to bicouac and had an ecellent dinner which our interpreters managed to get. Eggs, tea, bacon and fresh bread.

10th Sept. Advance guard, Germans retreating West to North East and crossing our front. Divisional cyclist 'come in for it' and shelled at 1000 yards 20 or so killed and wounded. Orders to move to Sommerland and billet which we did. Interpreters give us another excellent meal Bread, eggs, potatoes and jam and six 'good bottles' as the French would say. Found large bath and 'all hands to boil water to clean up in.

11th Sept. Marched to Villeneuve and into billets. Information that a French army on our right had defeated a German army but it does not look as though it was correct.

12th/13th Sept. Marched North East to Bazocke where there was a good battle going on by the sound of the guns and rifle fire. Moved into billets at Vaucare and because of the heavy rain are thankful for a roof. Mail and parcels from home.

14th-28th September 1914 Battle of the Aisne

The French Fifth and Sixth Armies (under d'Esperey and Maunoury), aided by the British Expeditionary Force (BEF, under Sir John French), launched a frontal infantry assault upon the Germans' defensive positions across the river at the Aisne upon their arrival on 13 September. Having established a bridgehead north of the river on 14 September, the Allies continued to assault the Germans on the plateau above them; German counter-

attacks were in place within hours however, forcing the Allies back. Once again the German forces demonstrated the present superiority of defensive warfare over its offensive counterpart, deploying machine gun fire and heavy artillery in the defence of their positions. Small advances were achieved by the Allies, but these could not be consolidated.

Already scaled back by the Allies on 18 September, fighting was abandoned on 28 September once it finally became clear that neither side, in particular the Allies, would be able to mount frontal attacks upon the well-entrenched positions of the enemy. Additionally, the French were finding themselves under increased pressure at Reims. Instead, both forces attempted to manoeuvre past the other in a northwards movement, in the so-called 'race to the sea', begun by French Commander-in-Chief Joseph Joffre, moving his forces north-west so as to attack the exposed German right flank at Noyon (the First Battle of Albert).



Allied trench at the Aisne Sept. 1914

The Battalion had a very difficult time in this battle, they were shelled, sniped and suffered numerous attacks.

The War Diaries recorded casualties for the Battle of the Aisne (1st SWB) as 90 Officers and Men killed, 98 Wounded and 12 Missing.

These missing men were of 'D' Company and had apparently surrendered.

The Diary states "May they be spared to reach England again and be tried by Court Martial and get what they deserve and never has the 24th Surrendered yet, and in spite of casualties the rest of the Regiment stuck to it and fought as Englishmen and 24th men could fight".

Private Charles Watkins was in 'D' Company but was not one of those who surrendered.

Private Watkins was wounded during the Battle of the Aisne and Died of his wounds on 20th September 1914. He is buried at Villeneuve St Georges. and in the Great War there was a British Ambulance Station there and No 3 Clearing Hospital, Villeneuve



Soldiers who died in the Great War

No 3 Clearing Hospital, Villeneuve

Name: Charles Watkins
Birth Place: Wormbridge, Hereford
Death Date: 30 Sep 1914
Death Place: France and Flanders
Enlistment Place: Brecon
Rank: Private
Regiment: South Wales Borderers
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Regimental Number: 8610
Type of Casualty: Died of wounds
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
WATKINS Charles	South Wales Borderers	Pte	8610
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	5/1/101 ^B	86	D of W. 30-9-14
BRITISH	do	145	
14 STAR	5/1/16	1445	
Clasp: 2/proc.			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein 27-8-14			

He was awarded



1914 (Mons) Star with clasp and roses War Medal and victory medal

In Memory of
Private
C Watkins

8610, 1st Bn., South Wales Borderers who died on 30 September 1914

Remembered with Honour
Villeneuve-St. Georges Old Communal Cemetery




Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

53981 Private Alfred Williams



1st Battalion
Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Formerly
2230 Private Williams



South Wales Borderers

Alfred Williams

He was born in Llangarren in 1891. Alfred's parents were James Williams from Llangarren and Emily Elizabeth Davies also from Llangarren. In 1901 the family were living at Buckscot, Llangarren and James, Alfred's father was a jobbing gardener. In 1911 Alfred and the family were living at Holly Cottage, Llangrove. James was a Nursery man and Alfred and his brother John Henry were both gardeners.

James Williams, Alfred's father was born in Llangarren in 1863. 1871 James was living with Mary and Anne Meredith at Yew Tree Cottage. at 1881 he was living at Yew Tree Cottage, Llangarren with Mary Meredith aged 88 and was described as her 'Nephew' son'. Also there was Anne Meredith aged 62 and Mary's daughter and the schoolmistress. James was a General Labourer.

Emily Elizabeth Davies Alfred's mother was born in Llangarren in June quarter 1876. 1871 and Emily is with her parents Henry and Elizabeth Davies at Mount Craig, Goodrich, the substantial home of Edmund Jones. Her father was an agricultural labourer.

at 1881 she was visiting Langstone Cottage, the home of Thomas Willcox, a coachman and his family. Emily's occupation was 'servant' aged 14. They married in March quarter 1890.

The Great War

Alfred Williams enlisted at Brecon into the South Wales Borderers, this regiment was one of the most successful regiments in the army at recruiting so his Regimental (Army) number of 2230 is very low. It would almost certainly be the case that he joined at the beginning of the war. He transferred later to the 1st Battalion the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. This regiment had been on the Western Front since 1914. Alfred's medal card has no date of 'first entry' into a theatre of war and no 'Star' medal was awarded. This meant that he did not service overseas before 1916. It is most likely that he was part of the many reinforcement drafts that went out to replace the huge losses at Ypres and The Somme.

The 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers

from 1st July 1916 (First Day of the Somme)

1st July

7.30am Orders received to support Manchesters at Bottom Wood, Sunken Road and Cemetery Road.

10.30am Verbal message from HQ that Zero hour would be 10.30.

2.30pm Manchesters assaulted and came under severe enfilade machine gun fire from Wing Corner very few reached Sunken Road, the Battalion became

disorganised because of the loss of officers.

4.20pm Called to Support Manchesters Regiment pushed forward with bombing raids by 10.30pm A Coy occupied Sunken Rd and Rectangle, B Coy was in our front line C Coy was in Quarries. Losses were 4 Killed; 35 Wounded, we had taken 200 prisoners and captured a Heavy Trench Mortar

2nd July Ordered to seize Rose Alley this was successful accomplished and our patrols were the first to enter Fricourt. Casualties 1 missing 4 Wounded 38 Other Ranks reinforcements.
3rd July. Ordered in bivouac NW of Carpet Wood at night ordered to consolidate a position at southern face of Mametz Wood. Owing to the guide losing his way the Battalion did not arrive at their destination until daybreak only to find the position still in the hands of the enemy, orders to withdraw back to bivouac. Casualties 2 missing.

4th July Battalion told to capture and consolidate the position Quadrangle Trench - Wood Trench - Strip Trench There was severe fighting in this operation with attack and counter attack. The Batt. casualties were 8 Killed 57 Wounded.

6th - 10th July the Battalion was at rest at Heilly. 58 OR reinforcements arrived from base. 10th - 13th July Battalion at Citadel. 14th July Battalion moved to White Trench via Fricourt and Mametz. General Attack

on enemy's second line of defences at High Wood and Bazentin. Very severe fighting from 2am until 8pm. Casualties were 9 killed, 32 wounded and 9 missing. 15th July at Martinpuich. Casualties 3 killed 21 wounded 3 missing.

16th July Windmill- Cemetery line. Casualties 1 killed 18 wounded 3 missing. 17th July Mametz Wood, shelled in the afternoon. Casualties 13 wounded 1 missing.

18th July in the line at Mametz Wood. Casualties 3 killed 11 wounded.

19th July Occupied the trench at Bazentin Village. Casualties 1 killed 14 wounded.

20th July General assault at High Wood. Casualties 1 killed 17 wounded.

In the period since the commencement of operations total Battalion casualties were: Killed 32 Wounded 242 Missing 16
22nd July 1 casualty **2nd Lt. Siegfried Sassoon to hospital**

To end of month at La Chaussee in billets. The Battalion then stayed at La Chaussee and Dernancourt in billets until 25th August. Large numbers of reinforcements were drafted in to make up the losses from July.

26th August the Battalion moved up to the edge of Delville Wood (Devil's Wood to the troops) by means of bombing. Attacked ALE Alley with D.L.I. (Durham Light Infantry) but hung up by lack of rifle grenades. D.L.I. gained the end of ALE

and took 50 prisoners. Our battalion casualties were 15 killed; 56 Wounded; 1 missing.

28th August Pushed along ALE with D.L.I. a bombing attack along ALE gained 100 yards of trench. Our Batt. casualties 18 Killed; 39 Wounded; 5 Missing; 5 Sick.

29th August. Further attack on ALE but no progress due to enemy Machine Guns, three further attempts without success, shelling all day.

Casualties 15 Killed; 48 Wounded; 7 Missing; 5 Sick.

Night of 29th/30th Battalion relieved by South Staffs and moved to camp at Bonte redoubt.

September - in the line at Montauban, Delville Wood, ALE alley and Hop Alley
3rd Sept. Attacked Ginchy and Guillemont with Royal Warwicks and Royal Irish. 'A' Coy were held up at Hop Alley, Royal Irish failed at Ginchy because of casualties, 'B' Coy RWF were holding at Beer but with heavy casualties.

Royal Welsh Fusiliers casualties 25 Killed; 136 Wounded; 89 Missing; 4 Sick. 76 reinforcements.

5th-20th Sept. In Billets and training. Total of 505 reinforcements arrived.

21st Moved into 'poor condition' trenches at Ploegsteert Wood (Plug Street to the troops). There until 25th with daily list of casualties.

27th At Papot - cleaning up and specialist training

28th Concert in the evening.

29th Back to Ploegsteert Wood trenches.
On 2nd October there were 2 casualties -
returned to base *Under Age*.

For the remainder of the year the Battalion
were involved in Trench Warfare at
Ploegsteert, Beaumont Hamel and
Bertrancourt, much of the time was in the
front line but also in Billets, training and
the inevitable working parties. There was
an almost constant casualty rate of killed,
wounded and missing of 3,4 or 5 a day
when in the trenches.

1917

January - Battalion at Bertrancourt, on the
9th our artillery again shelled our trenches
with casualties - 8 Wounded; 2 died of
Wounds; 3 to Hospital.

10th made an attack on Leave Trench and
Triangle, took both. Casualties 3 Killed,
8 Wounded.

11th Attack on Munich Trench and patrols
sent out, enemy artillery active all night.
Casualties 6 Killed; 6 Wounded; 1 Died
of Wounds; 1 Missing. 12th - In the line
Casualties 3 Killed; 9 Wounded; 2 to
Hospital.

13th In reserve at Burn Work on 15th
marched to Louvencourt working parties
until the 21st. January when moved to
Rubempre until 17th February, this was a
period of rest, training and drill but with a
constant casualty list to Hospital.

25th/26th February ordered to attack at
Serre. Fierce fighting but all objectives

were taken. Casualties 10 Killed; 30
Wounded; 2 Died of Wounds; 4 Missing.
27th. Patrols sent out all day to try and
establish contact with Divisions either side,
heavy shelling in the afternoon. Relieved
and moved back to Durn Work.

Casualties 1 Killed; 28 Wounded; 5
Missing; 2 Died of Wounds; Captain
Hawes and 2nd Lt S. Sassoon 'struck off'
(Moved from the Battalion).

March Battalion at Lealvillers then on
10th moved to Maily Maillet. On 18th
March back in the front line opposite
Corsilles. Then at Courcelles until 3rd

May, training, working parties, church
parades and platoon competitions,
3rd May 1917. At Bullecourt

7.45pm Orders for attack received and
moved forward to forming up line.

9.00pm Battalion shelled with gas shells.

10.25pm Moved up for attack near
railway embankment. Advance was
ordered.

11.50pm 2 platoons missed direction
trying to get in touch with 'A' Coy. Lt
Soames entered the trench with a few
men but was forced to withdraw.
4th May 1917.

12.30am. 'A' Coy reported held up by
strong wire and our barrage, trench
strongly held.

1.30am Patrols reported that A,B & C
Coys were still held up by the enemy's
wire and our barrage, the wire was being
cut but it was very thick.

3.10am Orders were received to withdraw
200 yards and the Warwickshires and
Manchesters would attack our original
objectives with RWF in support. the
bombardment would commence at
3.40am. It was impossible to do this in
the time and we had many casualties
during the bombardment.

4.00am the Warwickshires and
Manchesters came under very heavy fire,
every endeavour was made to reorganise
them but it was almost impossible in the
dark.

During the rest of the day the enemy
shelled the railway embankment heavily
5.20am orders to attack original objective -
all artillery would cease firing on the
village. The Brigade Major told us the
artillery would barrage the trench North of
the village. This caused us heavy
casualties.

Casualties. 9 Men were Killed; 39
Were Wounded and 11 were Missing.

53981 Private Alfred Williams was one of
those killed on this day.

The following day the attack continued but
was again held up by thick wire and orders
for relief from the 9th Devons was
received.

A further 13 Men were Killed; 37
Wounded and 12 Missing.

What is terrifying about this war diary account is the number of casualties involved. I have not included them all by any means but just picked out the larger numbers on a huge number of other days there were 'relatively' smaller numbers of 2,3 or 4 but when they are all added up it is a colossal number.

Alfred Williams' body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Arras Memorial

The ARRAS MEMORIAL commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918, the eve of the Advance to Victory, and have no known grave. The most conspicuous events of this period were the Arras offensive of April-May 1917, and the German attack in the spring of 1918. Canadian and Australian servicemen killed in these operations are commemorated by memorials at Vimy and Villers-Bretonneux. A separate memorial remembers those killed in the Battle of Cambrai in 1917.

UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919

Name: Alfred Williams
Birth Place: Llangrove, Hereford
Residence: Llangrove
Death Date: 4 May 1917
Death Location: France & Flanders
Enlistment Location: Brecon
Rank: Private
Regiment: Royal Welsh Fusiliers
Battalion: 1st Battalion
Number: 53981
Type of Casualty: Killed in action
Theatre of War: Western European Theatre
Comments: Formerly 2230, South Wales Borderers.

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
WILLIAMS	S Wales Bord	Pte	2230
	R W Fus		53981
Alfred			
Medal	Ball.	Page	Remarks
Victory	3/2/102	B19 6/23	
Durron	- do	-	
Sea			
Theatre of War first served in		NW/4/20 326	
Date of entry therein		R.W. 26/4/17	

He was awarded



British War Medal Victory Medal

In Memory of
Private
Alfred Williams
53981, 1st Bn., Royal Welsh Fusiliers who died on 04 May 1917

Remembered with Honour
Arras Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission