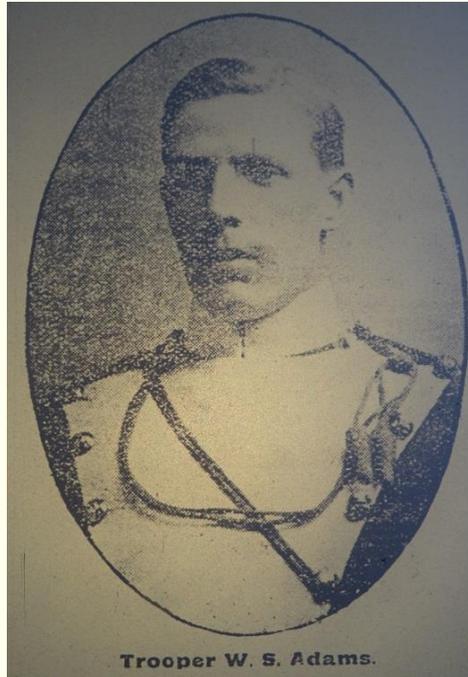


ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON

WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

William Simon Adams



Name: William Simon Adams

Rank: Trooper

Service Number: 6514

Regiment: Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line (incl. Yeomanry and Imperial Camel Corps)

Battalion/Unit number: 17th Lancers (Duke of Cambridge's Own) attached 2nd Life Guards

Date/year of Birth: 1885

Place of Birth: Taunton, Somerset

Place of Residence: 15 Roughmoor Cottages, Taunton

Date of Death: 31st October 1914

Place of Death: Ypres

Burial/Memorial: Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial

William was born in about 1885 in Taunton. He was the son of George Adams and his wife Jane. George was a thatcher born in 1842 in Curry Mallett and apprenticed in the village where he learned his trade. George moved eventually to Taunton and by 1888 was married to Jane and living in the Elms Cottages at Staplegrove, where they raised their family.

William had two brothers as indicated by the census, Cecil James and Victor Edward. Both Cecil and William died in Flanders early in the Great War.

In 1901 William was living with his family in the Elms Cottage but by 1911 he had joined the 17th Lancers and was serving with his unit in India. The 17th Lancers were based in India from 1905 until the start of the Great War. The Somerset County Gazette notes that he had seen 7 years service with the Lancers in India and on returning to England had joined the Somerset Mounted Police based in Weston super Mare. In the Taunton Deane enlistment list his address is given as 15 Roughmoor Cottages, Frieze Hill, which was his parents address and that he had re-joined the 17th Lancers attached to the 2nd Lifeguards.

It is not quite clear with whom William was serving when he died. The 17th Lancers formed part of the Sialkot Cavalry Brigade which landed in Flanders on 7th November 1914, however William was reported as missing presumed killed at Ypres according to an item in the Somerset County Gazette in July 1915 in an addendum to the notice on his brother Cecil's death.

Trooper W.S. Adams, it is feared, has lost his life, as he was reported missing on October 31st of last year, during an attack upon the Zanvoorde trenches. He saw seven years service in India and on returning to England joined the Somerset Mounted Police. He was stationed at Weston-super-Mare. He was aged 29.

It is likely that he was attached to the 2nd Lifeguards, part of the combined Household Cavalry Composite Regiment which comprised the Lifeguards, Blues and Royals the three most senior cavalry regiments. This unit took part in the Battle of Gheluvelt on 30th /31st October, which was a bloody and significant event in the First Battle of Ypres in 1914. As indicated above William is likely to have been one of the many who fell in the trenches at Zandvoorde.

William is commemorated on the Ypres Menin Gate Memorial, one of four memorials for those missing in action in France and Flanders, but whose bodies were never recovered. It contains 54,629 names.

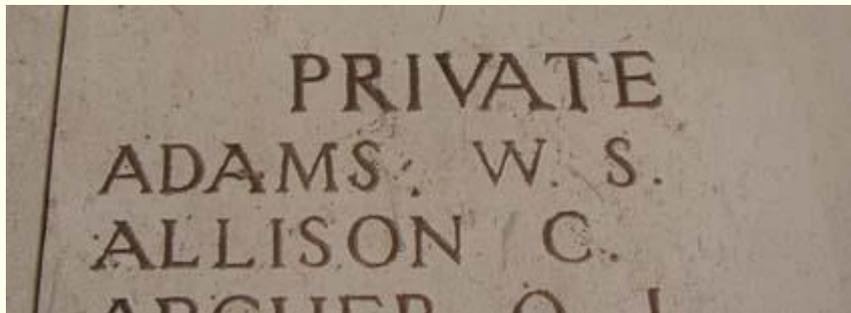
There is a British cemetery at Zandvoorde where men of the 1st and 2nd Lifeguard are buried. Although his name is not there the information for that cemetery provides a relevant note with regard to his probable fate:

On 30 October 1914, the village of Zantvoorde (now Zandvoorde) was held by the 1st and 2nd Life Guards, numbering between 300 and 400 men. It was bombarded for over an hour with heavy guns and then taken by the 39th German Division and three attached battalions. The whole front of the 3rd Cavalry Division was driven back to the Klein-Zillebeke ridge. The

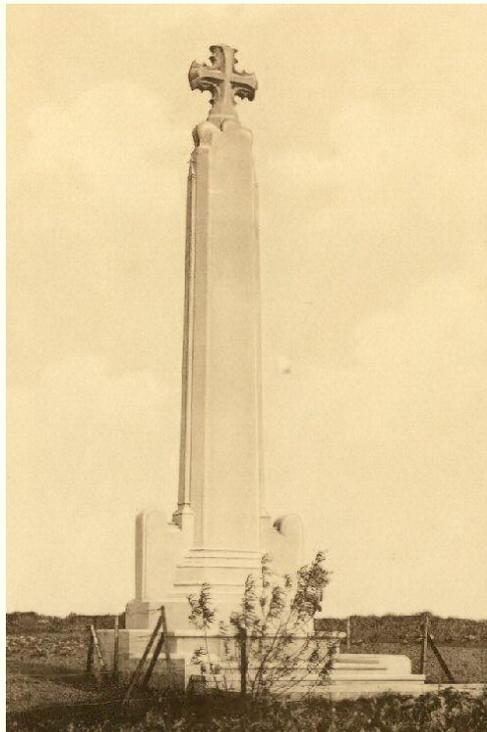
village could not be retaken and remained in German hands until 28 September 1918. Unveiled by Lord Haig in May 1924, stands on the South side of the village at the place where part of the Brigade was annihilated in 1914.

Zantvoorde British Cemetery was made after the Armistice when remains were brought in from the battlefields and nearby German cemeteries. Many were those of soldiers who died in the desperate fighting round Zantvoorde, Zillebeke and Gheluvelt in the latter part of October 1914.

There are now 1,583 servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 1,135 of the burials are unidentified.



Inscription for W.S. Adams on the Menin Gate, Ypres



Household Cavalry Memorial at Zandvoord