

ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON
WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

William Phillips



Name: William Phillips

Rank: Private

Service Number: 1250

Regiment: West Somerset Yeomanry

Battalion/Unit number: 2nd/1st

Date/year of Birth: 1895

Place of Birth: Thurloxtton

Place of Residence: 14 Raleigh Terrace, Cheddon Road,
Taunton

Date of Death: 23rd February 1915

Place of Death: England

Burial/Memorial: St James Church Cemetery

William Phillips is listed in the 1911 census as being an office boy living at home with his parents Frank (a joiner) and Emily. He joined the 2nd/1st Battalion of the West Somerset Yeomanry, which served as a cavalry unit intended for home defence. The Battalion was attached to the 2/2nd South Western Mounted Brigade in January 1915 and moved to Woodbury in Devon. Shortly afterwards, on 23rd February 1915, Private Phillips died without seeing active service while stationed at Minehead. The exact details of his death remain a mystery, but it appears that he drowned and his body was later washed up on the foreshore at Warren Point, just in the parish of Dunster. The Taunton Courier published this obituary on 3rd March 1915:

"News was received at Taunton on Tuesday of the death of Trooper Wm Phillips, aged 20, son of Mr and Mrs F. Phillips, of Lyngford View, Raleigh Terrace, Cheddon Road, Taunton. The deceased, who in civil life was a clerk, recently joined the B Squadron of the West Somerset Yeomanry, and was stationed with the Reserve Regiment at Minehead, where he was employed as an orderly-room clerk. Of a genial disposition, he was well known and had many friends in Taunton, to whom the news of his tragic death came as a great shock, his body being found on the foreshore at Warren Point, just in the parish of Dunster, and it being apparent that death had resulted from drowning. He was for some years a member of the St Andrew's Company of the C.L.B. Cadets, and at the outbreak of war he assisted the bugle band at recruiting meetings, and later he assisted the National Reserve Bugle Band. Being employed at the Market House Wine and Spirit Vault, and formerly at Messrs. Small and Sons' Depot in High Street, he came into contact with a large number of people, all of whom speak of him in the highest possible terms. He visited Taunton as recently as Saturday afternoon last, and was then in the best of spirits. The greatest sympathy is felt for Mr and Mrs Phillips, who have two other sons on active service, whilst the fourth and youngest son failed to pass the test."



Gravestone of William Phillips, located in St James Cemetery, Staplegrove Road, Taunton