

ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON
WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Walter Joe Phillips

Name: Walter Joe Phillips

Rank: Private

Service Number: 202132

Regiment: Somerset Light Infantry

Battalion/Unit number: 2nd/4th

Date/year of Birth: 1889

Place of Birth: Taunton

Place of Residence: 14 St Augustine Street, Taunton

Date of Death: 9th April 1918

Place of Death: Berukin, Palestine

Burial/Memorial: Ramleh War Cemetery

Walter Phillips was employed as a Collar Cutter, and married Lily Strickland in 1914. His parents were Joseph and Sarah Ann Phillips, and his father was a cab driver.

As part of the 2nd/4th Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry, Private Phillips would have traveled to the Middle East as part of the 75th Division, and it was here that he died on 9th April 1918. He would have been involved in fighting the Turks of the Ottoman Empire in Palestine. On 9th April the Division was involved in the Battle of Berukin, a village about twenty miles north of Jerusalem. The Somersets first had to take a hill under heavy fire, and later in the day were needed to help defend the village of Berukin against an Ottoman counterattack, with the Divisional War Diary recounting fierce hand to hand fighting through the streets of the village.

After his death, Walter's wife Lily remarried and moved to Staplegrove, just to the north of Taunton.