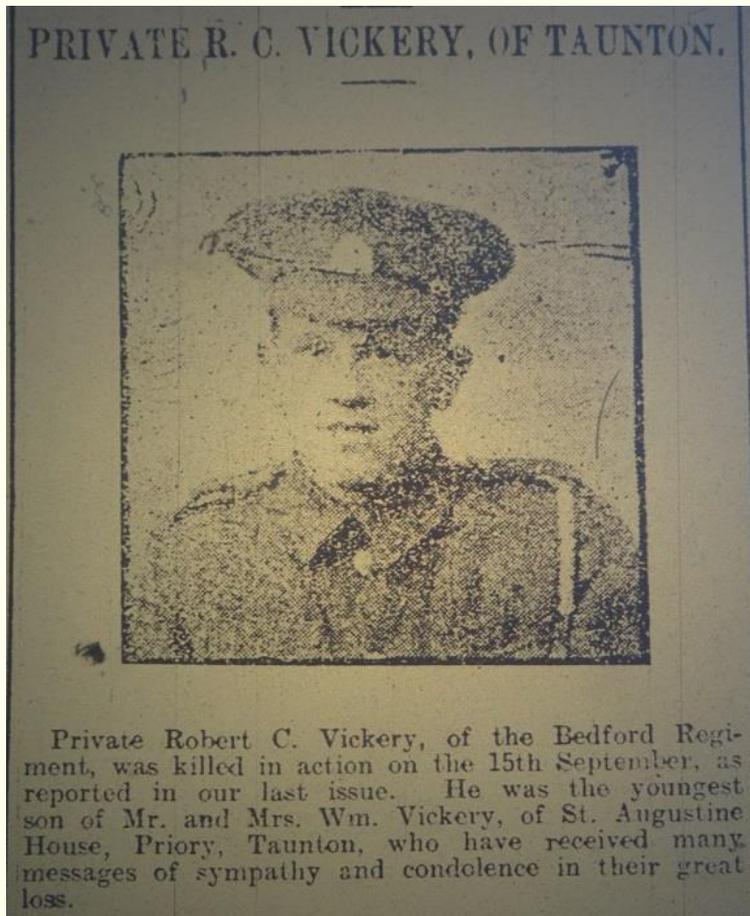


ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON

WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Robert Vickery



Name: Robert Cecil Vickery

Rank: Private

Service Number: 19766

Regiment: Bedfordshire

Battalion/Unit number: 8th Battalion

Date/year of Birth: 1895

Place of Birth: Taunton

Place of Residence: St Augustine House, Priory Avenue

Date of Death: 15th September 1916

Place of Death: Vicinity of Flers-Courcelette, Somme, France

Burial/Memorial: Thiepval Memorial

Son of William and Sarah Vickery, Robert Cecil was one of three children. William was a carpenter and builder with his own business and in 1911 eighteen year old Albert was working with his father as a carpenter and joiner while Robert, aged sixteen, was working as a hairdresser's assistant. His sister, Cicely May, was a dressmaker's assistant. Both of Robert's grandmothers were living with the family at St Augustine House.

Albert was a mechanic in the RAF, while William was a pioneer sergeant in the 1/5th Somerset Light Infantry.

As part of the 8th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment, Robert saw action in the Battle of the Somme. He died during the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, part of the overall Battle of the Somme. Flers-Courcelette began on 15th September 1916 and lasted for a week, is notable for witnessing the first ever use of a tank in military action and saw over 29,000 British casualties.

The following obituary was printed in the Somerset County Gazette on 14th October 1916:

"On Tuesday Mr. and Mrs. WM. Vickery, of St. Augustine House, Priory, Taunton, received official information that their youngest son, Private Robert Cecil Vickery, of the Bedford Regiment, was killed in action on the 15th September. This was the first information to reach them, and the news of their sad news naturally came as a great blow to them, although they had feared something had happened owing to the absence of letters. Private Vickery, who was 21 in March last, served his apprenticeship to the hairdressing with Mr Clements, High Street, and was in a situation in London when the war started. He thereupon enlisted, and since then had been twice home on leave, the second time being exactly twelve months ago to the date of his death. He was an old boy of St. Mary's School (now the Askwith Memorial), and a former chorister at St. Mary's church. A bright lad, much liked by his friends, Private Vickery is another of Taunton's sons to lay down his life in the great war. His father, Mr Wm. Vickery, is well known for his long service in the Volunteers and Territorials (a record of 25 years). The last twenty months of his service has been spent in India during the present war. His only other son, Second Air Mechanic Albert H. Vickery, is serving with the Royal Flying Corps."