

ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON
WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Samuel Waiter

Name: Samuel Waiter

Rank: Private

Service Number: 24363

Regiment: Hampshire regiment

Battalion/Unit number: 19th Battalion

Date/year of Birth: c. 1878

Place of Birth: Pitminster Somerset

Place of Residence: 3 Gloucester Street Taunton

Date of Death: 27th November 1918

Place of Death: Camiers

Burial/Memorial: Etaples Military Ceremony

Samuel Waiter was born in Pitminster the son of Henry and Selena Waiter. He had six siblings and in 1911 was living with his widowed father, his older married sister Florence and younger brother and sister Nell and Harry in Gloucester Street. Also living there were Florence's teenage children, Maud and Elsie, who worked with their mother in a Silk Factory. Samuel was employed by the Great Western Railway as a cleaner at the 1911 census.

Samuel probably enlisted early in the war, possibly even before, as his enlistment record that he had served a year at home and 3 years 6 months overseas when he died just after the Armistice in November 1918. However his medal card only records the Victory and War medal not the 1914/15 stars; consequently he may not have gone overseas until 1916. He had a nephew [Alfred Waiter](#), who died in 1915, who was a serving soldier pre-1914. There is also another member of the Waiter family (Henry) who served in the Army Service Corps. (Most likely his younger brother Harry).

Samuel joined the Hampshire Regiment, however it is not possible at this time to know where he served. His unit is given as the 19th Battalion, but records of this battalion are so far not forthcoming. In 1918 three battalions of the Hampshires were

serving in France or Flanders. Enlistment records state that he died at Camiers which was a base hospital, so it is likely that he had been wounded and died of wounds. He could have been brought there from the frontline battle areas.

During the First World War, the area around Etaples was the scene of immense concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals. It was remote from attack, except from aircraft, and accessible by railway from both the northern or the southern battlefields. In 1917, 100,000 troops were camped among the sand dunes and the hospitals, which included eleven general, one stationary, four Red Cross hospitals and a convalescent depot, could deal with 22,000 wounded or sick. In September 1919, ten months after the Armistice, three hospitals and the Q.M.A.A.C. convalescent depot remained.