

George William Bell 1899 – 1918

20.10.1918 Died of wounds

Kortrijk, West Flanders
I.B.5 Bissegem Communal
Cemetery

Age: 19

Location Information

Bissegem Communal Cemetery is located 26 km east of Ieper and 2 km west of Kortrijk town centre. From Ieper town centre the cemetery is located via the N8 Meenseweg, a road connecting Ieper to Menen and onto Bissegem.

500 metres after crossing the Kortrijk ring road (R8), lies the right hand turning from the N8 Meensesteenweg onto Driekerkenstraat.

The cemetery lies 1 km after this right hand turning on the left hand side of the Driekerkenstraat on the junction with Kerkvoetweg.

Historical Information

Bissegem Communal Cemetery contains the graves of 25 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War, all dating from late October 1918 and the Allied advance to victory. The eight Second World War burials all date from late May and early June 1940 and the withdrawal to Dunkirk ahead of the German advance.

Born	Parents & Siblings at Home	Locations	Marriage / Other	Jobs / Rank
3 rd Q 1899 Layer Marney Siblings 1896 Charles 1897 Bertie 1898 Florence 1899 George 1906 Reginald	Charles W & Martha Ann (nee Taylor of Birch) 1901 2 brothers 1 sister 1911 3 brothers 1 sister	1901 Dukes? Cottage, Layer Marney 1911 Bush Cottage, Layer Marney 1920s/30s Leys Cottage, Layer Marney		1911 Schoolboy 1918 Corporal 56506 Lancashire Fusiliers 18 th Battalion Resident Tiptree

Lancashire Fusiliers during World War 1



Since 1815 the balance of power in Europe had been maintained by a series of treaties. In 1888 Wilhelm II was crowned 'German Emperor and King of Prussia' and moved from a policy of maintaining the status quo to a more aggressive position. He did not renew a treaty with Russia, aligned Germany with the declining Austro-Hungarian Empire and started to build a Navy rivaling that of Britain. These actions greatly concerned Germany's neighbours, who quickly forged new treaties and alliances in the event of war. On 28th June 1914 Franz Ferdinand the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne was assassinated by the Bosnian-Serb nationalist group Young Bosnia who wanted pan-Serbian independence. Franz Joseph's the Austro-Hungarian Emperor (with the backing of Germany) responded aggressively, presenting Serbia with an intentionally unacceptable ultimatum, to provoke Serbia into war. Serbia agreed to 8 of the 10

terms and on the 28th July 1914 the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia, producing a cascade effect across Europe. Russia bound by treaty to Serbia declared war with Austro-Hungary, Germany declared war with Russia and France declared war with Germany. Germany's army crossed into neutral Belgium in order to reach Paris, forcing Britain to declare war with Germany (due to the Treaty of London (1839) whereby Britain agreed to defend Belgium in the event of invasion). By the 4th August 1914 Britain and much of Europe were pulled into a war which would last 1,566 days, cost 8,528,831 lives and 28,938,073 casualties or missing on both sides.

The Regiment raised 30 Battalions and was awarded 63 Battle Honours and 6 Victoria Crosses losing 13,640 men during the course of the war. From 1915 to October 1916 the famous author J. R. R. Tolkien served as a second lieutenant in the 11th Battalion of the Regiment until he contracted 'trench fever' during the Battle of the Somme.

17th (Service) Battalion (1st South-East Lancashire) and 18th (Service) Battalion (2nd South-East Lancashire)

03.12.1914 The 17th formed and the 18th formed on the 13.01.1915, both as a bantam Battalion in Bury by Lieutenant-Colonel G E Wike and a committee.

16.03.1915 The 17th moved to Chadderton near Oldham and then to Masham, Yorks to join the 104th Brigade of the 35th Division.

08.04.1915 The 18th moved to Garswood Park, Ashton-in-Makerfield and then to Masham, Yorks to join the 104th Brigade of the 35th Division.

27.08.1915 Both Battalions taken over by the War Office and moved to Cholderton, Salisbury Plain.

29.01.1916 Mobilised for war and landed at Havre and the Division engaged in various action on the Western Front including;

During 1916

The Battle of Bazentin Ridge, The fighting for Arrow Head Copse, Maltz Horn Farm, and Falfemont Farm.

Early 1917 Ceased to be a bantam Battalion.

During 1917

The pursuit of the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, The fighting in Houthulst Forest, The Second Battle of Passchendaele.

During 1918

The First Battle of Bapaume, The Battle of Ypres, The Battle of Courtrai, The action of Tieghem.

11.11.1918 The 17th ended the war in Belgium, Grammont and the 18th in Belgium, Paricke west of Grammont.

19th (Service) Battalion (3rd Salford) (Pioneers)

15.01.1915 Formed at Salford by Mr. Montague Barlow M.P. and the Salford Brigade Committee.

Mar 1915 Moved to Conway, North Wales and then to Catterick Bridge and joined the 96th Brigade of the 32nd Division.

25.08.1915 Taken over by the War Office and moved to Codford, Salisbury Plain.

22.11.1915 Mobilised for war and landed at Havre and then transferred to the 14th Brigade of the same Division and engaged in various action on the Western Front.

29.07.1916 Transferred to G.H.Q. Troop and became a Pioneer Battalion.

07.08.1916 Transferred to the 49th Division as a Pioneer Battalion and the Division was engaged in various actions on the Western Front including; The Battle of Flers-Courcelette

During 1917

Operations on the Flanders Coast (Hush), The Battle of Poelcapelle.

During 1918

The Battle of Estaires, The Battle of Messines, The Battle of Bailleul, The First Battle of Kemmel Ridge, The Second Battle of Kemmel Ridge, The Battle of the Scherpenberg, The pursuit to the Selle, The Battle of the Selle, The Battle of Valenciennes.

11.11.1918 Ended the war in France, Odomez north of Valenciennes.