

Connected to Codford



Lest we Forget

World War I



18572 PRIVATE

E. G. POOLMAN

DEVONSHIRE REGIMENT

17TH JULY, 1916

Ernest George POOLMAN

Ernest George Poolman was born at Codford St. Mary around 1894 to parents Walter & Elizabeth Poolman (nee Dowdell). His birth was registered in March quarter, 1894 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire. Ernest's parents – Walter & Elizabeth had married in 1890 at Warminster Register Office.

The 1901 Census recorded Ernest G. Poolman as a 7 year old living with his family at 3 Bank Lane, Totnes, Devon . His parents were listed as Walter Poolman (Rural Postman, aged 33, born Codford St. Mary, Wilts) & Elizabeth Poolman (aged 29, born Hanging Longford, Wilts). Ernest was one of three children listed on this Census, all born at Codford St. Mary – Gertrude M. (aged 8) then Ernest & Sidney (aged 2).

The 1911 Census recorded George Poolman (listed as born Salisbury, Wilts) as a 17 year old Butcher's Assistant living with the Mitchell family at Hill View, East Street, Ashburton, in a 9 roomed dwelling. The Mitchell family consisted of Robert Mitchell (Butcher, aged 42) & his wife Elizabeth Mitchell (Assisting in business, aged 41). They had 2 children listed on the Census (one child had previously died) – Annie Mitchell (Assisting in business, aged 19) & Ronald Mitchell (at School, aged 14). A 17 year old boarder was also listed – Dorothy Fairweather (Draper's Assistant).

Ernest George Poolman married Adela Lillian Irene Martin on 22nd November, 1914 at Newton Abbott, Devon. Their marriage was registered in the December quarter, 1914 in the district of Newton Abbott, Devon.

Ernest George Poolman enlisted at Plymouth on 11th January, 1915. He was attached to A.S.C. (Army Service Corp) with a service number of S/4/043924. He was a married, Butcher, aged 21 years & 9 months. Ernest's next of kin was listed as his wife "Madelia" Lillian Irene Poolman of North Street, Ashburton, Devon & his religion was Church of England. Pte Ernest George Poolman was posted at Aldershot on 11th January, 1915. He was discharged on 31st January, 1915 – Para 392 (iii) King's Regulations – not being likely to become an efficient soldier. He had served for only 21 days. (6 pages of Pte Ernest George Poolman's Service Record file still survives).

Pte Ernest George Plymouth also has a Pension Record File. A note, dated 22nd January, 1915, is contained in the Pension file written by Lt Readman (?) R.A.M.C. (Royal Army Medical Corp) to C.C. A. Coy. which reads: "Please note: this man has a contracted finger; he refuses an operation to remedy it. I am of the opinion that he could do his duty, but he has been rec. for discharge by the Camb. Hospital. Will you discharge him on K. R.'s para 392 please."

Pte Poolman's "Application for Discharge of a Recruit as not likely to become an efficient Soldier" form states "Cause of objection to be fully stated here – Contracted finger right hand".

Births were registered in the district of Newton Abbott, Devon for William G. Poolman in the June quarter, 1915 & Leonard Poolman in the September quarter, 1916. Both were listed with their mother's maiden name as Martin.

Ernest George Poolman re-enlisted at Newton Abbott. His address at the time of enlisting was Ashburton, Devon. He was attached to Devonshire Regiment & given a service number of 18572. (Pte Poolman's service record with Devonshire Regiment appears to have not survived.)

Private Ernest George Poolman was killed in action on 17th July, 1916. He was attached to 2nd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment at the time of his death.

Private Ernest George Poolman was buried in Cambrin Churchyard Extension, France - Plot O. 47. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private E. G. Poolman, 18572 of 2nd Bn., Devonshire Regiment. No family details are listed.

2nd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment

August 1914 found the 2nd Devons in Egypt, where their first task was to protect the Suez Canal. Arriving at Southampton in October, they absorbed drafts of reservists before landing in France on 6th November.

By mid-November, 1914 they were at Messines (close to the 1st Devons) where, in two tours in the trenches near Neuve Chapelle, they suffered 20 casualties and lost another 70 men to sickness (mostly frostbite). In December they captured a German position known as the Moated Grange cost 128 casualties. They remained in this area until March 1915, when they lost heavily in an attack on the German lines on the 10th before next day repulsing a German counter-attack. Their losses in March totalled 284 men.

An attack on Aubers Ridge in May 1915 cost another 250 casualties. Remaining in this sector until April 1916, they moved to the Somme to prepare for the offensive. On 1st July, the 2nd Devons attacked between Ovillers and La Boisselle, losing 232 killed and 199 wounded, many of whom fell to German machine guns in what they called Mash Valley. On 18th and 29th July at Cuinchy they repulsed two German attacks before being withdrawn to rebuild their shattered Battalion.

(Information on 2nd Battalion from [The Keep Military Museum](#) – Home of the Regiments of Devon and Dorset)

Private Ernest George Poolman was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. His Medal Index Card does not show a date or place that he first entered a Theatre of War.



British War Medal & Victory Medal

Newspaper Items:

ROLL OF HONOUR

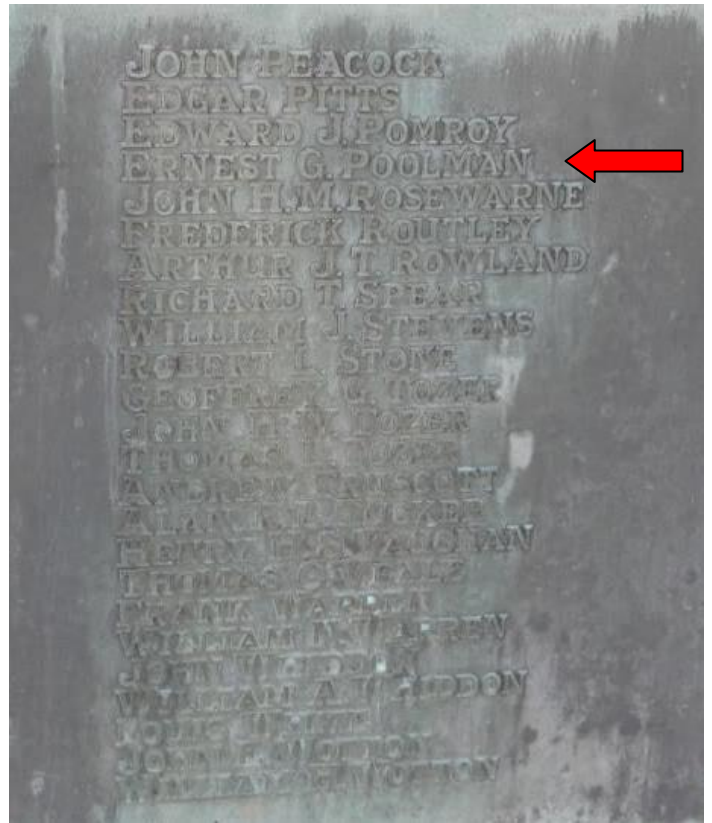
IN THE RANKS

Killed – Devon Regt. : A, Edwards (Cullompton), F. England (Torquay), A. H. J. Hartnell (Crediton), **E. J. Poolman (Ashburton)**, C. Spiller (Hawkchurch)

(*Western Times* - 29 August 1916)

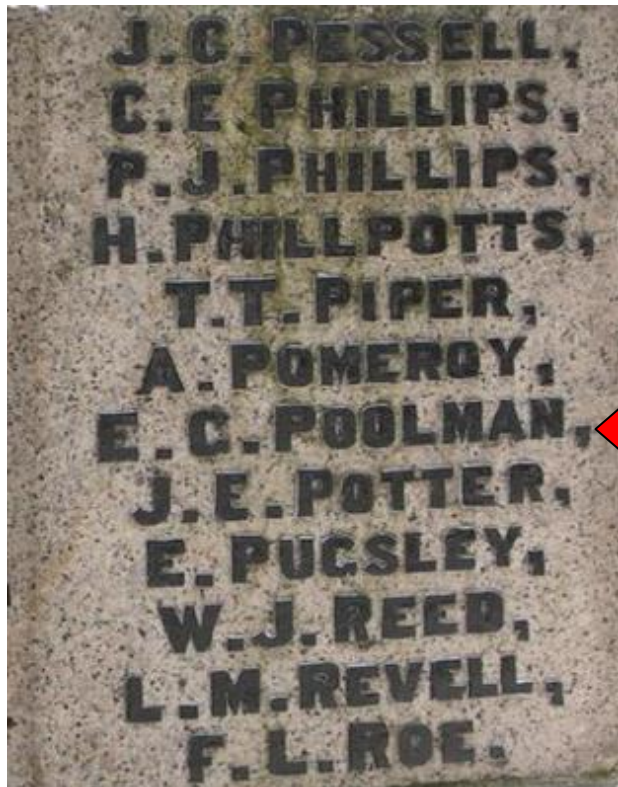
(Note – Wrong initial in newspaper article – should be E. G. Poolman)

Ernest G. Poolman is remembered on the Ashburton War Memorial, Devon.



Ashburton War Memorial, Devon (Photo by David Smith 2012)

E. G. Poolman is also remembered on the Totnes War Memorial, Devon.



Totnes War Memorial, Devon (Photo by andifox 2015)

Cambrin Churchyard Extension, France

Cambrin is a village about 24 kilometres north of Arras and about 8 kilometres east of Bethune, on the road to La Bassee. Cambrin Churchyard Extension is on the south side of the main road, 200 metres from the Mairie. The Commonwealth plot will be found behind the church.

At one time, the village of Cambrin housed brigade headquarters but until the end of the First World War, it was only about 800 metres from the front line trenches. The village contains two cemeteries used for Commonwealth burials; the churchyard extension, taken over from French troops in May 1915, and the Military Cemetery "behind the Mayor's House."

The churchyard extension was used for front line burials until February 1917 when it was closed, but there are three graves of 1918 in the back rows. The extension is remarkable for the very large numbers of graves grouped by battalion, the most striking being the 79 graves of the 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and 15 of the 1st Cameronians (Row C), the 35 of the 2nd Royal Welch Fusiliers and 115 of the 1st Middlesex (Row H), all dating from 25 September 1915, the first day of the Battle of Loos.

Cambrin Churchyard Extension contains 1,211 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 8 being unidentified. There are also 98 French, 3 German and 1 Belgian burials here.

(Information from CWGC)



Cambrin Churchyard Extension *(Photos courtesy of David Milborrow)*





Cambrin Churchyard Extension



Photo of Pte E. G. Poolman's CWGC headstone in Cambrin Churchyard Extension, France.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)

