

Durrington

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War I



22965 PRIVATE

W. J. STOW

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S (WILTSHIRE REGIMENT)

7th JULY, 1916

Peace Perfect Peace

William James STOW

William James Stow was born at Devizes, Wiltshire, to parents William & Sarah Ann Stow (nee Burton). William's parents had married at Holy Trinity Church, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire in 1886. His birth was registered in the district of Devizes, Wiltshire in the June quarter of 1889.

The 1891 Census recorded William J. Stow as a 2 year old, living with his parents & younger brother, at Long Newton, Chippenham, Wiltshire. His parents were listed as William Stow (Police Constable of Wiltshire, aged 29, born Market Lavington) & Sarah A. Stow (aged 32, born Bradford on Avon). William's younger brother was listed as Frederick Stow (aged 9 months, born Long Newton). Also living with the family was Clara A. Nicholls (aged 12, General Servant).

The 1901 Census recorded William Stowe as a 12 year old, living with his family at Durrington, Wiltshire. His parents were recorded as William Stowe (Police Constable, aged 40) & Sarah A. Stow (aged 43). Five children were listed in this Census – Edith (aged 13), then William, Fredrick (aged 10), Agness A. (aged 8, born Long Newton) & Louisa (aged 7, born Long Newton).

A death was registered in June quarter of 1908, in the district of Devizes for Sarah Ann Stow, aged 50.

The 1911 Census recorded William James Stow & his brother Fredrick Stow living as boarders with the Bowden family in a 5 roomed dwelling at Hacturn Cottages, Durrington. William James was recorded as a 21 year old General Labourer & Frederick Stowe as a 20 year old Waggoner on a Farm. The Bowden family consisted of Harry Bowden (Foreman Ammunition Column- Military, aged 34), Daisy Bowden (aged 31), Harry Bowden – son of Harry (aged 7), & Doris Mary Bowden – daughter of Harry (aged 3). Also listed was another boarder Thomas George Coles (aged 23, General Labourer).

William James Stow enlisted at Devizes with Duke of Edinburgh's - Wiltshire Regiment. He was given the rank of Private & a service number of 22965. Private Stow's records show that at the time of his death he was attached to 1st Battalion, Duke of Edinburgh's - Wiltshire Regiment.

Pte William James Stow was killed in action on 7th July, 1916, aged 27 years.

War Diary – 1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment

Location: France, Leipzig Salient

Entry: 12.15 a.m. On the early morning of the 7th orders were received that another attack would be made on the same objective as that attacked by D Coy on night of 5th. This was known to be the very strongest part of the Leipzig Redoubt. While the conference about this attack was being held, a very violent hostile counter attack was made on the trench captured by C Coy. This commenced about 1.15 a.m. The enemy attempted to rush the trench from the front and both flanks, also working down the C T trenches with the first sudden rush they managed to reach the very edges of the trench into which they dropped bombs and opened fire. Lieut R J A Palmer the only officer in the trench and the men under him with great coolness beat off this attack and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Very heavy bombing followed in the next 2 hours and intermittently until 5.30 a.m. D Coy in this attack were pushed up to the support of C Coy from Battn HQ. The attack on the left was timed to begin at 9.30 a.m. and orders for the operation were as
©Wiltshire OPC Project/Cathy Sedgwick/2013 updated 2014

follows:- A & B Coys under Lieut Gosden OC A Coy, were selected to make the assault. The attack was made in 2 waves each consisting of 3 platoons, the remaining 2 platoon held in reserve. At 9.30 a.m. after 30 secs intense bombardment by guns and Stokes mortars, the assault was made and the trench successfully captured. This was not accomplished without difficulty as the enemy did not seem to be taken by surprise, manning their parapet very heavily as our troops arrived. Previous to the assault our snipers had been placed in the shell holes in front of their line and fired 30 rounds of steel nosed bullets at the machine guns which had caused so many casualties in the previous attack by D Coy. Whether silenced by our snipers or by the bombardment, at any rate the enemy machine gun did not fire during our advance. During this advance Lieut Gosden was killed, 2nd Lieut Ross wounded and 2nd Lieut Sharpe wounded and missing believe killed. This left 2nd Lieut Clegg commanding the trench. 2nd Lieut Snelgar being in charge of carrying parties in Quarries. 1 p.m. In this attack a large number of Germans were killed and 23 were taken prisoner, 5 of them being wounded. The captured trench was consolidated but being very wide afforded very little cover. But for incessant bombing from the left flank, no great difficulties were experienced until about 1.30 p.m. when the enemy opened a terrific bombardment with high explosive. There was practically no protection in any part of our position particularly in the newly captured trench and in the Quarries. The bombardment lasted for about 5 hours and our casualties were enormous about 160. Two Coys of the 3rd Worcs Regt who had been utilised as carrying parties were now put in to reinforce the line and suffered equally heavily. 2nd Lieut Clegg and 2nd Lieut Snelgar were both wounded and Capt Knubley was sent up to direct operations. 2nd Lieut Hayward C Coy was also wounded slightly in the hand but remained at his post and was afterwards killed. Other casualties were Lieut L A H B Morris, killed, 2nd Lieut Petter wounded, 2nd Lieut S J Terry (Adj) wounded. Capt R L Knubley wounded, died of wounds later. Casualties among NCO's and men about 219. At about 6.30 p.m. 2 Coys of the 3rd Worcs Regt and 2 Coys of the 8th Loyal North Lancs Regt under the Command of Lieut Col Davidge 3rd Worcs. The Battn went into dugouts at Crucifix Corner.

Pte William James Stow was buried in Serre Road Cemetery No. 2, Beaumont-Hamel and Hebuterne, France in Plot IX. F. 15. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The CWGC lists William James Stow as the son of William Stow of "Riverdale", Durrington, Wiltshire.

Pte William J. Stow was entitled to the British War & Victory Medals. His Medal Index Card does not show when he had entered a Theatre of War.

W. Stow is remembered as a Casualty of WW1 in the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book for Durrington.

Pte William Stow is also remembered on the Durrington War Memorial, Wiltshire.
©Wiltshire OPC Project/Cathy Sedgwick/2013 updated 2014



(Photo courtesy of Ian King 2010)

Serre Road Cemetery No. 2, France

The village of Serre is 11 klms north-north-east of Albert.

In June, 1916, the road out of Mailly-Maillet to Serre and Puisieux entered No Man's Land about 1,300 metres south-west of Serre. On 1st July, 1916, the 31st & 4th Divisions attacked north & south of this road & although parties of the 31st Division reached Serre, the attack failed. The 3rd & 31st Divisions attacked one more on 13th November, but again without success.

Early in 1917, the Germans fell back to the Hindenburg Line and on 25th February, Serre was occupied by the 22nd Manchesters. The village changed hands once more in March, 1918 and remained under German occupation, until they withdrew in August.

In the Spring of 1917, the battlefields of the Somme and Ancre were cleared by V Corps and a number of new cemeteries were made, three of which are now named from the Serre Road. Serre Road Cemetery No. 2 was begun in May, 1917 & by the end of the war it contained approximately 475 graves., but it was greatly enlarged after the Armistice by the addition of further graves from the surrounding area, including graves from around 16 smaller cemeteries.

There are now 7,127 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, mostly dating from 1916. Of these, 4,944 are unidentified. (CWGC)



(Photographs courtesy of [In Memory](#) by Pierre Vandervelden)

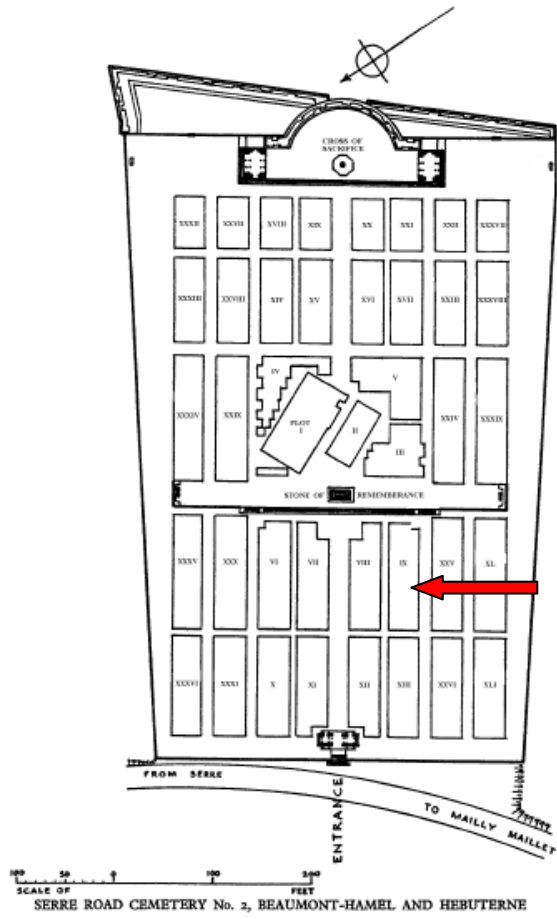




(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



(Photo from CWGC)



SERRE ROAD CEMETERY No. 2, BEAUMONT-HAMEL AND HEBUTERNE