

# Durrington Cemetery

## War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

### World War I



**22025 RIFLEMAN**

**J. STERLING**

**ROYAL IRISH RIFLES**

**28TH OCTOBER, 1918**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Rifleman J. Sterling is located in Grave Plot # 314  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## James STERLING

James Sterling was born in Glasgow, Scotland around 1900.

James Sterling lived at Cullybackey, County Antrim & enlisted at Ballymena & was attached to 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion was an Extra Reserve Battalion that had been formed in August, 1914 at Newtownards. The Battalion moved to Carrickfergus in April, 1915 and on to Newry in April, 1917. The idea of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion was it stayed in the UK and supplied drafts to the Regular Battalions overseas. Training was carried out in 1918 in the Military Camps in the Salisbury Plain area in Wiltshire, England. The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion had moved to England in April 1918, going to Larkhill in the Salisbury Plain area in Wiltshire.

From South Wiltshire Coroner's Inquests into death of Riflemen James Sterling & John Frater – courtesy of [Salisbury Inquests](#)

*The County Coroner (Mr F H Trethowan) held an inquest on Wednesday evening concerning the deaths of two young riflemen, John Frater, aged 17, and James Stirling, aged 18, of the 4th Royal Irish Rifles, who were killed as a result of an accidental explosion of a bomb on Normanton Downs, near Stonehenge, on Monday.*

*They were walking over the downs, as it was officially stated they were entitled to do, whilst bombing practise was proceeding, as no red flag was shown at the time. A witness said he saw one of the men kick at "something," which turned out to be a 16lb unexploded bomb, which upon impact exploded and killed both Frater and Stirling.*

*It was stated by a military officer that the ground is periodically searched for unexploded bombs but no record was kept from which it could be stated definitely that all unexploded bombs had been found.*

*A verdict was recorded that the two men died from injuries caused by the accidental explosion of a bomb, and the military authorities intimated that an enquiry would be held with a view to effecting precautions against the recurrence of similar accidents.*

A death for James Stirling, aged 18, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire, England.

Riflemen James Sterling was buried in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire in Grave /Plot Number 314 on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1918. His death is acknowledged by Commonwealth War Graves Commission & as such he has a CWGC headstone but does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Rifleman J. Sterling 22025 of 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles. There is no additional family information listed for him.

Rifleman James Stirling is remembered in Ireland's Memorial Records (an 8 volume set compiled by The Committee of the Irish National War Memorial, originally published in 1923. These volumes provide information on over 49,000 Irish men and women who died in the Great War.) with the following details:

*Stirling, James. Reg. No. 22025. Rank, Rifleman, 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Rifles; died of wounds, home, October 28, 1918; born Glasgow.*

Photo of Rifleman J. Sterling's Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



*(Photo by Ian King- 2010)*