Geoffrey Walter Akerman 1896 - 1919



Geoffrey Walter Akerman was born 20th April 1896 at Seend, Wiltshire to Albert Edward and Ada Akerman. The 1901 census shows the family living in a rented house at Sells Green, Seend, Geoffrey then was the only child, aged 4 years. Geoffrey went attended Seend Parish School and he can be found in the National Schools Admission Register 1870-1940 Seend Parish School Register, date of admission 05/03/1902 (his name has incorrectly been spelt Jeffrey).

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National Schools Admission Register

1911 Census shows the family now living at Trowbridge Place, Seend, and Near Melksham. The father Albert Edward is a farmer and his wife Ada is working on the farm, Geoffrey is 14 years old and now has a 5 year sister called Winifred Ada Akerman.

Geoffrey Walter Akerman was Attested and Embodied 19th October 1915 at Chippenham. His medical inspection report states that he was 5' 3" tall, his physical development was fair and he was considered fit for the Territorial Force and was on home duties until 15th September 1916, he was transferred to The Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire) Regiment as a Private and 1st October 1916 he was transferred to The Royal Scots Fusiliers and went as part of the M.E.F. (Mediterranean Expeditionary Force) to Salonika in Macedonia.

Geoffrey died 13th January, 1919 from Pneumonia & Influenza at No. 40 Casualty Clearing Station, in Salonika.

Geoffrey Walter Akerman is commemorated on the War Memorial and plaque at Seend Holy Cross Church.





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Royal Scots Fusílíers duríng World War I



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 rivalling 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 19 Battalions; it was awarded 58 Battle Honours and 4 Victoria Crosses losing 5,600 men during the course of the war.

8th (Service) Battalion

- 01[°]Oct-1914 Formed at Ayr as part of the Third New Army and then moved to Codford St. Mary, Salisbury Plain in the 77th Brigade of the 26th Division.
- Nov 1914 Moved to Bristol.
- April 1915 Moved to Sutton Veny.
- 20-Sep-1915 Mobilised for war and landed at Boulogne.
- Nov 1915 Moved to Salonika and engaged in various actions against the Bulgarian Army including;
- 1916 The Battle of Horseshoe Hill.
- 1917 The Battles of Doiran.
- 1918 The Battle of Doiran.
- 30-Sep-1918 Ended the war near Strumica N.W. of Lake Doiran, Macedonia.

UK Commonwealth War Graves 1914-1921 Register

SOFIA WAR CEMETERY

SOFIA War Cemetery is 2 kilometres North-East of the railway station, on the far side of the Town Cemetery. It contains German and Serbian War Plots, and between them is the British plot, containing the graves of 160 soldiers and airmen from the United Kingdom (three of whom are unidentified) and one demobilised British soldier. The plot is enclosed by a low stone wall.

Sixty six of these graves (mainly those of prisoners) were brought from DUBNITZA CEMETERY, RADOMIR CEMETERY and MILITARY CEMETERY, SOFIA TOWN CEMETERY and VARNA (or STALIN) PROTESTANT CEMETERY.

In 1960 a new plot 3 was formed to contain 83 burials concentrated from RUSE (formerly RUSCHUK) British Cemetery and one burial from RUSE (formerly RUSCHUK) JEWISH CEMETERY.

The Register records particulars of 157 War Graves.

There are also 38 War Dead from the 1939-1945 War.

THE REGISTERS OF THE WAR DEAD

ACKERMAN, Pte. G.W., 33419. 8th Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers. 13th January, 1919. III. D. 13.

ADAMS, Pte. Frederick James, 35606. 11th Bn. Worcestershire Regt. 14th January, 1919. Age 40. Husband of Milly Adams, of "Raviloe," Totland Bay, Isle of Wight. III. E. 15.

ALLEN, Cpl. D.R., 31865. 12th Bn. Hampshire Regt. 13th December, 1918. III. C. 9.

AMOR, Lce. Cpl. Edgar William, 36129. 8th Bn. Duke of Cornwall's Light Inf. Died of pneumonia 19th December, 1918. Age 26. Son of the late Mr.and Mrs.W.R.Amor; husband of Edith Marian Amor, of "Taringa," Bloomfield Park, Bath. Born at Wrington, Somerset. III. D. 15.

ANDREWS, Pte. William, 128047. 78th Coy. Machine Gun Corps (Inf.). 18th December, 1918. Age 20. Son of Charles Edward and Annie Andrews, of 33, Allerton Terrace, Eagley Bank, Bolton. III. E. 7.

ARCHER, Pte. T.G., 28422. 8th Bn. Oxf. and Bucks Light Inf. 29th Nov., 1918. III. D. 10.

AYLIFFE, Pte. Gilbert Edwin, 74534. 78th Coy. Machine Gun Corps (Inf.). Died of pneumonia 5th December, 1918. Age 26. Son of Edwin and Ellen Ayliffe. Born at Oaksey, Malmesbury, Wilts. III. C. 1.

BACKHOUSE, 2nd Lt. St. J.S. Cameron Highlanders and Royal Air Force. 3rd April, 1918. I. D. 2.

BAILEY, Lce. Cpl. E.W., 38218. 107th Field Coy. Royal Engineers. 21st December, 1918. III. C. 4.

BAILEY, Pte. W., 18466. 6th Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers. 20th March, 1916. I. B. 2.

BANT, Pte. A.E., 16193. 8th Bn. Oxf. and Bucks Light Inf. 17th December, 1918. III. A. 18.

BARLOW, Pte. E., 202436. 2nd/5th Bn. Durham Light Inf. 14th November, 1918. I. E. 5.

BARTON, Serjt. Harold Remington, 39332. 80th Field Amb. Royal Army Medical Corps. Gold Medal of Serbia. Died of pneumonia 10th December, 1918. Age 27. Son of T.J.and Ellen Barton, of "Thornlea," Street Rd., Glastonbury, Somerset. Born at Bridgwater, Somerset. I. A. 8.

BEATTIE, Pte. J., 14000. 8th Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers. 15th November, 1918. I. C. 10.

BECK, Pte. C.N., 16225. 8th Bn. Oxf. and Bucks Light Inf. 4th December, 1918. III. A. 16.

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(n.b. unfortunatley surname has not been spelt correctly by Commonwealth War Graves Commission).



(Pictures Commonwealth War Graves)

GEOFFREY WALTER AKERMAN SERVICE RECORDS (includes Army death notice telegrams and personal effects information).

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