

Buckland Brewer Stories



Frank Prance was private in the 159th Labour Corps Royal Berkshire Regiment. He was born on 4th November 1894 in Parkham, Devon. Before the war he was working as a cattle man for Richard Boundy at Whitely Farm, Bradworthy. He enlisted in Exeter in the Devonshire Regiment on 1st April 1916 and later transferred to the 159th Labour Corps in the Royal Berkshire Regiment. He was killed in action on 5th October 1918. His parents were living at Houndapit, Kilkhampton. He is buried at Queant Road Cemetery, Buissy, France.

George Albert Kent was a private in the 2nd/8th Worcestershire Regiment. He was born in Parkham, Devon on 26th December 1894. In 1911 he was working as a horseman for Montague Boundy at Frain's Farm. When the war began, he was working in Exton, Devon and he joined the 7th Battalion Devonshire Regiment on 15th September 1914. It wasn't long before he was sent to the Western Front. On 8th December 1916 he died in hospital of wounds he had received possibly the day before. He is commemorated at St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.

George Stoneman was a private in the 8th Devonshire Regiment. He was born at Park Farm, Buckland Brewer, Devon on 1st September 1885 and before the war he worked as a teamster on a farm. In 1907 he married Beatrice Johns from Langtree. Beatrice already had a two year old daughter Lily, but it is unknown if George was the father. They did go on to have four more children. His death was wrongly reported in March 1916 in local newspapers and George did survive until later that year. In September 1916 his regiment were at Delville Wood, and he was killed on the 6th while acting as a stretcher bearer. He was buried at Dartmoor Cemetery, Becordel-Becourt, France.

Harry Gorrell was a private in the 20th Battalion Canadian Infantry. He was born on 14th February 1886 in Buckland Brewer, Devon. Before the war he was working as a teamster for Charles Withecombe at North Hele, Buckland Brewer. It is possible that he emigrated to Canada aboard the 'Virginian' from Liverpool on 1st April 1910. He arrived at Halifax, Nova Scotia. On 17th March 1915 he enlisted at Toronto, Ontario in the 20th Battalion Canadian Infantry. He stated at the time that he was a labourer and that he had previously served three years in the Yeomanry.

He sailed with his battalion from Montreal on 16th May aboard the SS Megantic arriving in England on 24th May 1915. A few months later on 14th September 1915 he sailed to France from Folkestone. He was admitted to the No.6 Canadian Field Ambulance on 22nd July 1916 with conjunctivitis and was discharged on 25th July. On 15th September 1916 he was reported missing, believed wounded and was later presumed dead. He has no grave and is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, France.



Frank Prance



George Kent



George Stoneman



Harry Gorrell

James Cock was a corporal in the 19th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers. He was born in Gorwood, Buckland Brewer, Devon in 1896. He was educated at Shebbear College and on 23rd November 1915 he enlisted and trained with the Somerset Light Infantry before transferring to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Soon after he was sent to France but returned to Devonport Hospital when he developed trench foot. Eventually he returned to France and took part in the advances at Cambrai where infantry supported tank attacks for the first time. On 23rd November 1917 James was killed during an attack on an area near Bourlon Wood. He is remembered on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France.

William John Littlejohns was a private in the 8th Battalion Devonshire Regiment. He was born in Abbotsham, Devon and was one of ten children. In 1911 he was working for Thomas Pengilly at Summerville, Hartland as a horseman/farm labourer. On 6th November 1916 he married Elizabeth Jane Glover at Bideford Register Office. At the time he was working at Burrough Fram, Buckland Brewer. He enlisted at Bideford in March 1917 and initially served in the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. He later transferred to the 8th Battalion Devonshire Regiment. On 26th October 1917 he was killed in action during an attack Gheluvelt near Ypres during the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele). He is buried in the Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium. He left a widow and a daughter Dorothy and his brother Walter Charles died of wounds on 22nd September 1918.

Thomas Parkhouse was a private in the 7th Battalion of the Gloucester Regiment. He was born in Buckland Brewer, Devon on 14th February 1894. In 1911 he was a general farm servant at North Hele, Buckland Brewer at the home of Frank and Edith Andrew. He enlisted in Bideford in September 1914 in the 7th Service Battalion Gloucester Regiment. Initially serving as part of the 39th Brigade, 13th Division in Gallipoli and Egypt. In February 1916 they arrived in Mesopotamia (Iraq). In February 1917 they took part in the British advance to relieve units surrounded by Turkish forces at Kut. On 3rd February they crossed the Hai River, south of Kut. Turkish fire halted the attack, and they were pinned down for the rest of the day. Thomas was killed during this action. He has no grave and is commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Magil.

William Hearn was a private in the 9th Battalion Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry. He was born in West Putford, Devon on 28th July 1890. In 1911 he was working as a farm servant for William Damerel at Bulkworthy. On 26th March 1914 he married Ada Braund at Parkham Wesleyan Church. On 18th April 1916 he enlisted in the 9th Battalion Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry at Barnstaple, but died less than two months later on 3rd June 1916 of heart failure after a short illness. He was buried at Wareham Cemetery.



John Cock



William Littlejohns



Thomas Parkhouse



William Hearn

William Mitchell was a gunner in the 24th Division Royal Field Artillery. He was born in Buckland Brewer, Devon on 19th January 1897 and attended Frithlestock and Buckland Brewer Schools. In 1911 he was working as a carter on Eckworthy Farm for Arthur Phillips. On 15th January 1915 he enlisted in Bideford in the Royal Field Artillery but died just one month later on 15th February 1915 of epidemic cerebral spinal meningitis at the Sanatorium in Preston, Brighton. He was buried in Bear Road Cemetery, Brighton.

William Shaxon was a sergeant in the 2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment. He was born in 1888 in Northam, Devon. In 1901 he was working as a cow boy at Frain's Farm and in 1905 he enlisted in the 4th Battalion Devonshire Regiment. He had previously attempted to join the Royal Marines but had been unfit due to his eyesight. He was listed as a farm labourer. In 1911 he was a Lance Corporal in the 2nd Battalion Devonshire Regiment stationed in Malta. The 2nd Battalion were stationed in Malta from 1910 to 1912 and then moved to Egypt. While in Egypt William married Hannah Chadburn in 1914. She was born in Bulwell, Nottinghamshire.

The 2nd Devons returned to England in 1914 and became part of the Expeditionary Force sent to France. On 1st July 1916 the first day of the Battle of the Somme they were north of La Boisselle heading for Pozieres. William was by now Sergeant in the regiment and at 7.30am he went over the top with his troops. They were met by a hail of fire and William was lost presumed killed. He was buried in Ovillers Military Cemetery. On 27th July 1917 he was awarded the Military Medal.



William Mitchell



William Shaxon