

LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM GEORGE PROSSER

10210, 7th (Service) Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 23 on 8 August 1915

Remembered with honour on *Helles Memorial, Turkey*; Panel 101 to 104

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey

and on the Congregational Church Memorial at the Methodist Church



*Helles Memorial,
Turkey*



*L/Cpl. W.G. Prosser
(Graphic 11/9/1915)*



*Gloucestershire
Regiment*

WILLIAM GEORGE PROSSER was born in 1892 at Malvern, the only son of George Prosser and Emily (formerly Harris). George came from Cradley and Emily was born in West Malvern. The family, including a daughter, Florence Mabel, moved to Tewkesbury between 1894 and 1901. In 1901 they were living at 18 Jeynes Row and George worked as a corn porter. By 1911 the family had moved to 1 Quay Street and George was the manager of a sack hiring company. William was educated at the Council Schools and, as he is commemorated by the Congregational Church, his family must have worshipped there. For a time he served as a Telegraph messenger at the Post Office but, at the outbreak of war, he was working for Messrs Mitchell & Butler, the brewers based in Birmingham. According to his obituary in the *Register*, *'he considered it his duty to enlist. He was quite a respectable young man'*.

William Prosser enlisted as a volunteer in the Gloucestershire Regiment at Tewkesbury, in August 1914 judging by his service number. He was assigned to the 7th Battalion, formed at Bristol in August 1914 as one of the first Kitchener's Army units. It came under the command of the 13th (Western) Division. After completing training in England, the Division left from Avonmouth in June 1915 and sailed via Egypt to land on 19 July in the Helles sector on the southern tip of the Gallipoli peninsula.

The climax of the Gallipoli campaign came on 6 August 1915 when a final attempt was made by the British to end the deadlock by

breaking out of the Anzac perimeter and seizing control of the peninsula. The 7th Battalion launched their attack on a feature known as Chunuk Bair on 8 August, as part of the plan to break out of the cove, where the Anzacs had been held since the 25 April. The *Battle of Chunuk Bair* (6-10 August 1915) was one of a number of battles in what was known as the August Offensive. Although the plan was sound, previously-taken aerial photographs were deceptive, as they did not reveal timber-reinforced overhead protection on the Turkish trenches, or a steep gully interrupting the line of advance. The fighting was bloody and confused and both sides inflicted 'friendly fire' casualties. Despite that, elements of the battalion reached the crest of Chunuk Bair and, as Turkish reinforcements arrived, repulsed repeated attacks throughout the day. The dwindling band of survivors was relieved on the evening of 8 August but, two days later, the position was lost to a major Turkish offensive. The 7th Battalion alone lost every officer and sergeant and over 350 other ranks.

Lance Corporal William George Prosser was listed as killed in action on 8 August 1915. His body was never recovered or identified and he is commemorated instead on the *Helles Memorial* at the southernmost tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. He was awarded the '1914-15 Star' medal. The *Register* reported that *'His parents received a letter written by him two days before he met his death'*, which occurred only a month after he had arrived.