

PRIVATE SAMUEL HATHAWAY

202727, 2nd/4th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 23 on 27 August 1917

Remembered with honour in *Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium*; Panel 72 to 75

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium



Gloucestershire Regiment

SAMUEL HATHAWAY was born in 1893 in Tewkesbury, the third and youngest son of Harry Hathaway and Annie (formerly Beesley). Harry was born in Tewkesbury and his occupation on the 1901 and 1911 Censuses was described as 'Hay Trusser' and 'Hay Turner' respectively. Samuel's older brothers were William Thomas and Harry, and there were four younger sisters, Emily, Beatrice May, Mabel and Lily. There was probably another son born in 1913. A pupil at the Senior Council School, Samuel was also a *'fairly regular attender at Abbey Sunday school'*.

On both the 1901 and 1911 Censuses the family was living at 21 East Street, Tewkesbury. By 1911 Samuel was 17 years old and his occupation was given as 'Labourer', the same as both of his older brothers. The family were later living at 2, Pansy Cottage, Back Mount Pleasant, Chance Street.

Samuel is not credited with being a volunteer: he enlisted on 29 February 1916 with the 2/4th (City of Bristol) Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. This battalion was originally formed at Bristol in September 1914 as a home service (second-line) unit. In August 1915 the battalion became part of the 183rd Infantry Brigade, 61st (2nd South Midland) Division (which was eventually disbanded in France on 20 February 1918). The Division landed in France on 24 May 1916 and, after eight months' training, Samuel disembarked in France on 11 October.

Private Samuel Hathaway was killed on 27 August 1917 during the *Third Battle of Ypres*, sometimes referred to as *Passchendaele*. In fact

the *Third Battle of Ypres* comprised a series of set-piece battles, the most recent being the *Battle of Langemarck*. This was followed by a succession of subsidiary operations between 19 and 27 August in which the 2/4th Gloucesters were heavily involved. The attacks on 27 August were minor operations which were costly and inconclusive, so these operations were halted amidst tempestuous weather.

On 27 August the battalion was in the area of St. Julien and took part in an attack alongside the 2/8th Worcesters to capture part of the German third line. Unfortunately the attack was not successful, according to the Battalion War Diary: *'the failure to reach the objectives was chiefly due to the mud and to the men having to lie in water for 12 hours prior to the attack'*.

The *Tewkesbury Record* confirmed that they were *'impeded by bad weather and mud'*. It reported that Private Hathaway served in the *'Lewis Gun section [and was shot] instantly in the heart'*. **Cpl. Harry (Henry) Knight** [†] also lost his life. The battalion suffered heavy casualties: three officers and 180 Other Ranks..

Private Samuel Hathaway's epitaph in the *Record* was that he was *'one of the most willing and hard working men'* and that *'he died a soldier's death whilst advancing to attack the enemies of King and Country'*. He is commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing at *Tyne Cot Cemetery* in Belgium; the Memorial lists the names of nearly 35,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers who have no known grave.