

CORPORAL HARRY WILLIAM HYETT

240811, 1st/5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 22 on 5 April 1917

Buried with honour in *Unicorn Cemetery, Vend'huile, France*; I F 23

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



*Unicorn Cemetery,
Vend'huile*



*Cpl. H.W. Hyett with
his father [Paul Turley]*



*Gloucestershire
Regiment*

HARRY WILLIAM HYETT had his birth registered in Ross, Herefordshire, in 1894 to William Edmund Hyett and Louisa (formerly Jones). William was a baker from Ashleworth whilst Louisa was from Newent. In 1901 they were living in Gravel Walk but by 1911 had moved to Machine Court, High Street, at which time they had had a total of 11 children, with eight surviving. The censuses for 1901 and 1911 note, however, that Harry was living with his grandparents, William and Martha Hyett, at Brick House, Highnam. William senior was also a baker but Harry was employed in 1911 as a clerk in the office of the brewer, Ind Coope & Co. of Gloucester.

Harry enlisted in the 5th Territorial Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, early in September 1914. In the photograph, he is wearing the *Imperial Service Brooch*, issued to those who volunteered to serve overseas. He landed at Boulogne with the 1st/5th Battalion on 29 March 1915, as part of the 48th Division, thus meriting the '1914-1915 Star' medal.

The division first participated in the *Battles of the Somme* (1 July-18 November 1916). By the spring of 1917 the battalion was in pursuit of the Germans as they carried out a strategic withdrawal towards the *Hindenburg Line* (14 March-5 April 1917). Occasionally the Germans would make a stand and on 5 April 1917 the battalion was involved in an attempt to capture the village of Lempire. The operation was a success – at a cost of 57 casualties in the action.

Corporal Harry William Hyett was killed in action on 5 April 1917 during that assault. The *Register* of 14 April 1917 printed an eloquent obituary: 'a letter was received from [his] Platoon Commander, conveying the information that Corpl. Hyett was killed almost instantaneously by a bullet whilst gallantly leading his Lewis [machine] gun section, the whole of which did splendidly, but was unlucky in losing several others ... Corpl. Hyett was always very cheerful with a complete devotion to duty'. Cpl. Hyett's body was recovered and buried initially in La Paulette British Cemetery, Ronssoy, but following the Armistice all the graves were transferred from this small cemetery to *Unicorn Cemetery, Vend'huile*, near St. Quentin. A War Gratuity of £12.10s. was awarded to his father in August 1919. Harry's father also enlisted in the Army Service Corps in January 1915 and served for the duration of the war on home service.

Further tragedy struck the family after Harry's death, when four of his siblings died between 1918 and 1920. Ronald was scalded to death at the age of three in March 1918, whilst seven-year-old Tom and 21-year-old Nora died in October, possibly during the influenza pandemic which ravaged Europe. Another brother, Reginald, was only 6 days old when he died in 1920. The *'family sorrow'* did not end there as yet another son, Edward, born on 23 April 1916, was killed in action in 1943 whilst serving as a Flying Officer in the RAF during World War II.