

PRIVATE JAMES JEYNES

18805, 10th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 37 on 17 August 1916

Remembered with honour on *Thiepval Memorial*; Pier and Face 5A and 5B

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



Thiepval Memorial, France



1914-15 Star Medal



Gloucestershire Regiment

JAMES JEYNES was born in Ashchurch in 1879 to William Jeynes and Mary (formerly Baylis). William was an agricultural labourer from Wormington whilst Mary was born in Grafton; they had at least eight children. The family settled in Ashchurch in about 1870 and both the 1871 and 1881 Censuses recorded them living in Aston-on-Carrant. William died in 1881 aged 49 and by 1891 Mary had moved to Tewkesbury, living at 17 Double Alley with three children. James was educated at Holy Trinity School, after which he worked for draper George Watson and then Collins & Godfrey. He was a member of the local football and cricket clubs. In 1901 he was working as a railway labourer, one of a number who were lodging in Withington, a village on the Midland and South West Junction Railway that crossed the Cotswolds between Cheltenham and Swindon. By 1911 he had moved back to Saffron Road, Tewkesbury, living with his mother and his sister Fanny; he was a 'fitter's labourer'.

James volunteered in January 1915 in the Gloucestershire Regiment, his medal records showing that he served with three of the regiment's Kitchener Battalions and that he arrived in France on 18 June 1915. Accordingly he was awarded the '1914-15 Star' medal.

However, he was evidently posted for a time to the 7th Battalion which disembarked in July 1915 at Gallipoli, where it is known that James contracted a severe bout of dysentery. After he recovered, James was transferred to the 10th Battalion – in time for the *Battle of Loos*. The

battalion suffered very heavy casualties and their experiences are described in the book *'In the Shadow of Lone Tree'*, in which James is mentioned.

The battalion, part of the 1st Division, remained near Loos in reserve until early July 1916 when it transferred to the Somme front, arriving in Albert one week after the start of the *Battles of the Somme*. The *Register* reported that James had been 'wounded in the back' but that his mother had received letters from Lt. Stanley Priestley and from James himself, who said that his wound had 'nearly healed'. However, just two weeks later the *Register* reported his death.

Private James Jeynes was killed in action on 17 August 1916 during the *Battle of Pozieres*, when the battalion was in the front-line trenches at Bazentin-le-Petit. The War Diary noted: '17/18 August – Co-operated in a bombing attack with the 1st Btn Royal Highlanders who were making an attack on the enemy intermediate line in front of Martinpuich. The attack was unsuccessful.' The diary reported casualties of 72 men killed, wounded and missing. His body was never recovered nor identified and he is commemorated instead on the *Thiepval Memorial to the Missing*.

In his obituary, the *Register* recorded that Private James Jeynes was 'a fine specimen of British manhood' and that 'he was a steady, respectable man of genial, happy disposition, a general favourite, and the best type of British workman'.