

PRIVATE WILLIAM HERBERT JONES

23403, 10th Alberta Regiment (Canadian Infantry)

Died aged 21 on 25 September 1916

Buried with honour at *Puchevilliers British Cemetery, France*; IV E6

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



British Cemetery, Puchevilliers



Pte. W.H. Jones
[Graphic 21/10/1916]



Canadian Infantry

WILLIAM HERBERT JONES was born in Yorkley in the Forest of Dean in 1895, one of six sons of William Henry Jones from Whitecross and Emma Jane (formerly Edwards) from Coleford. The couple married in 1881 and lived at Parkend, where a daughter, Rosena, was born. From around 1885 until 1888 the family lived in America where three more children were born. Seven more children, including William Herbert, were born following the family's return to the Forest of Dean and all eleven were still alive at the time of the 1911 Census. William Henry was primarily an inn-keeper: in 1891 at the Cock Inn at Awre and in 1901 at the Railway Inn at Parkend, both in the Forest of Dean. He also owned mines in the Forest of Dean until 1906, when he sold them and moved to Tewkesbury, becoming a property owner and antique dealer as well as a publican; from 1907 to 1910 he ran the George Inn in the High Street. In 1911 the family was living at Hardwick House, 36 High Street. William Herbert attended the Abbey Schools and was a member of the Church Lads' Brigade. In 1911 he was helping his father in the business as a furniture dealer, and then worked for Dr. Devereux before emigrating to Canada in December 1911 to work in iron smelting.

In common with many British emigrants, William volunteered soon after the outbreak of war, enlisting on 18 September 1914 with his brother, Raymond, in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Quebec. His attestation papers show his forenames as William Henry rather than William Herbert; he also falsified his age by giving his birth year as 1891, possibly because he may have been under-age for overseas service at the time of enlistment. The papers show that

he had previously served in militia units in Gloucestershire and Ontario. William appears to have initially joined the 7th Canadian Infantry Battalion but was posted later to the 10th Battalion as part of the 1st Canadian Division (the First Contingent). The Division sailed for England in October, spending three months training on Salisbury Plain before moving to France where it landed in early February 1915. The *Register* reported that William was wounded by bayonet in the chest in October 1914, presumably during training, after which he was granted leave in Tewkesbury.

The battalion fought in major actions in the *Battles of Ypres 1915*, in particular at *Gravenstafel* (noted for the German gas attack on 22 April), with the valiant Canadian defence and counter-attack. In June 1916 the Division was still near Ypres and was involved in the *Battle of Mount Sorrel*, an attempt by the Germans, initially successful but eventually repulsed, to capture the last dominating observation position in front of Ypres. The battalion was not involved at the start of the *Battles of the Somme 1916*. However, it moved there on 10 September, taking over the front line, where it was involved in a series of successful, defensive operations near La Boiselle, during which William was wounded.

Private William Herbert Jones was severely wounded in the buttock, losing much blood. Although an excellent patient, he died of his wounds on 25 September 1916 at a Casualty Clearing Station in Puchevilliers, near Amiens, and was buried in the nearby *British Cemetery*.

William was the first emigrant to Canada from Tewkesbury to be killed in the war.