

## CORPORAL WILLIAM HENRY JORDAN

1802, 5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment; later 246112, Labour Corps

Died aged 28 on 5 November 1918

Buried with honour at *Cheltenham Cemetery*; A1 972

Commemorated on Tewkesbury Abbey Memorial and on Cheltenham War Memorial



*Cheltenham Cemetery*



*1914-15 Star Medal*



*Gloucestershire Regiment*

**WILLIAM HENRY JORDAN** was born in Tewkesbury in 1890 the only child of Henry Jordan, a local labourer, and Julia (formerly Oakley) who came from Upton-on-Severn. By 1901 the family had moved from the High Street to the Quay and Henry was working for Rice the Miller. William was educated at the Trinity School. However, Henry died in 1910 and William was working on the Quay as a 'coal labourer for coal and hay merchant'. On 27 December 1916 William married Rebecca Jones in Tewkesbury but they did not have any children. By 1918, the family's home address was 23 King Street, Cheltenham.

William was a pre-war soldier in the 5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, one of the regiment's Territorial Force battalions. His regimental number indicates that he originally enlisted around March 1913.

At the outbreak of war, Territorial Force battalions were mobilised and those willing to serve overseas were allocated to new units, in William's case to the 1st/5th Battalion formed in August 1914 in Gloucester as part of the South Midland Brigade, South Midland Division. On 29 March 1915 William landed with his battalion at Boulogne, thereby qualifying for the '1914-15 Star' medal.

Soon afterwards the formation became the 145th Infantry Brigade, 48th (South Midland) Division, which saw action in a number of campaigns in France and Flanders, including the *Battles of the Somme* in 1916, the *German*

*Retreat to the Hindenburg Line* in 1917 and the *Third Battle of Ypres* in 1917.

In November 1917 the Division moved to Italy where it took part, inter alia, in the fighting on the Asiago Plateau. In September 1918 the battalion left the 48th Division and returned to France where it was attached to the 75th Infantry Brigade in the 25th Division.

It is not clear how long William served with the 1st/5th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, but at some stage he transferred to the Labour Corps (Agricultural Company). The Corps was manned by officers and other ranks who had been medically rated below the 'A1' condition needed for front-line service; many were soldiers who had been wounded and were returning to duty. This suggests that perhaps William had either been wounded or suffered an illness which affected his level of fitness.

**Corporal William Henry Jordan** died in the UK of pneumonia on 5 November 1918, less than a week before the Armistice; his death was registered in Bristol, perhaps in one of the many military hospitals in the city. He was buried in *Cheltenham Cemetery* and is commemorated on the Cheltenham War Memorial.

His death is recorded in the book *Leaving All That was Dear* by Joe Devereux and Graham Sacker, which commemorates casualties from Cheltenham and the surrounding area.

Although William was born and raised in Tewkesbury he is only commemorated in the town as a Volunteer in the Abbey Memorial.