

## LANCE CORPORAL ALBERT GEORGE TAYLOR

23146, 7th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 22 on 15 December 1916

Remembered with honour on *Basra Memorial, Iraq*; Panel 17

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



*Basra Memorial: Rolls of Honour\**



*1914-15 Star Medal*



*Gloucestershire Regiment*

**ALBERT GEORGE TAYLOR** was born in the Spring of 1894 in Tewkesbury, the son of Fanny Taylor who in 1895, a year after her son's birth, married Henry Mann; the family lived at 8 Spring Gardens from at least 1901 to 1917. In 1898 a step-brother, Walter Mann, was born. In 1901 Albert was living in Eagles Alley with his widowed grandmother Anne Taylor, away from his mother. It could have been that Albert was a 'lively' lad since he was brought before the courts twice: in 1906 he was '*severely cautioned for Stone throwing at Holy Trinity Church*', and in 1909 – at the first meeting of the new Juvenile Court – he was fined 2/- [10p] for playing football in Oldbury Road while three accomplices were fined only 1 shilling [5p].

In 1911 Albert was still living at 7/8 Spring Gardens with his step-family, employed as an 'errand boy at Ironmongers'. After working for ironmonger, Arthur Macdonald, he joined the Great Western Railway and worked as a fireman in South Wales. This explains why he enlisted at Bridgend in May 1915 and why, perhaps, he was not included on the Abbey Volunteer Memorial. He was drafted into the Kitchener 7th Gloucestershire Battalion in the 13th (Western) Division, which disembarked in Gallipoli in July 1915. Albert's medal roll shows that he was awarded the '*1914-15 Star*' medal.

Albert disembarked in the Balkans on 14 November 1915 and suffered from enteric fever whilst serving there. **Private William J. M. Parker** [†] had already been killed in July with the battalion at Gully Ravine; in August, in the *Battle of Chanuk Bair*, **Private William G.**

**Prosser** [†] was killed, along with 350 men of the battalion. It is likely, therefore, that L/Cpl. Albert Taylor was a reinforcement and was evacuated successfully in December 1915. The battalion was sent initially to Egypt to defend the Suez Canal, but in February was despatched with the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force to Basra to relieve the *Siege of Kut* in late 1916.

The British attack was eventually launched on the night of 13/14 December 1916 on both banks of the River Tigris. Approximately 50,000 men, organised in two corps, were involved in the advance. Progress was slow, if sure, on account of heavy rain and an overriding concern to minimise casualties. It took a full two months to clear the west bank of resistance below Kut.

**Lance Corporal Albert George Taylor**, like **Private N. J. Mann** [†] in the Worcesters, was evidently killed during the attack on 15 December 1916 but no details are known. L/Cpl. Taylor's body was not recovered and his name only is commemorated on the *Basra Memorial* in Iraq\*, along with the names of 40,000 other Commonwealth soldiers. Albert's step-brother **Private Henry Walter Mann** [†] was also killed in action, on 21 March 1918 - and his mother, Fanny, died aged 40 in June 1918.

\*In 2014 the CGWC advises that it is not possible to visit the Basra Memorial in Iraq. The photograph caption is:

*'The Rolls of Honour held at the Commission's Head Office commemorating by name all the Commonwealth casualties who died in Iraq during the two World Wars'*