

DRIVER RICHARD JOSEPH WINTERS TAYLOR

T/30637, 9th Auxiliary Horse Company, Army Service Corps

Died aged 26 on 23 November 1918

Buried with honour at *Tournai Communal Cemetery Allied Extension, Belgium*; IV D 6

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



*Tournai Communal Cemetery
Allied Extension*



*Richard Taylor (left) & Brother
Arthur [Art Taylor, nephew]*



*Army Service
Corps*

RICHARD JOSEPH WINTERS TAYLOR was born in Tewkesbury in 1892 to Joseph Winters Taylor and Emily Margaret (formerly Cleal). In 1901 the family was living in 13 Spring Gardens although Joseph was absent at the time; Emily's occupation was described as a 'Linen Collar Maker' working from home. Joseph and Emily had a total of nine children of whom six were still alive in 1911, when the family was living at No.1 Clarkes Alley, High Street. Richard, an old pupil of Trinity Schools, was then a Blacksmith 'Striker' and Joseph was a Labourer.

Richard appears to have volunteered immediately after the outbreak of war, possibly even before. His medal records indicate that he left for France on 17 August 1914, thereby qualifying for both the '1914-15 Star' medal and the right to be called an 'Old Contemptible'.

In view of his pre-war occupation, it was natural that he should join one of the Horses Transport Companies in the Army Service Corps. There were four companies in each division, known collectively as the Divisional Train; they were the 'workhorse' of the Division in terms of carrying stores and supplies and providing the main supply line to the brigades of infantry, artillery and other attached units.

Richard was posted to the 4th Company of the 5th Divisional Train as a Driver. The Division was part of the original British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and remained on the Western Front until late 1917, when it moved to Italy for a short time before returning to France in 1918.

Richard's medal records suggest that he

served with the same unit for the duration of the war but the CWGC database lists him as part of another company at the time of his death: the 9th Auxiliary Horse Company. This unit was at the disposal of the GHQ of the BEF in France, rather than under the command of a subordinate formation. His medal records seem incomplete; it is likely that his company was temporarily assigned to another formation at the time he became a casualty.

Driver Richard J.W. Taylor died of wounds on 23 November 1918, almost two weeks after the Armistice, probably following treatment at the Hôpital Notre-Dame in Tournai, Belgium. He was buried in the nearby *Tournai Communal Cemetery Allied Extension*. There was no information in the local newspapers about Richard until a brief report in December 1918.

As is evident from the photograph, Richard's younger brother, **Arthur**, also volunteered to fight in the war and joined the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. He survived the war and, by 1936, had emigrated to Australia where his son, Art, was born. Richard's uncle, **Driver Albert Cleal** [†] of the Royal Horse Artillery, died of wounds on 19 July 1916 during the campaign in Mesopotamia (now Iraq).

Richard's friend, **Frederick Goodwin**, volunteered at the same time and served with the 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, being wounded in the right side during the Gallipoli Campaign in August 1915. After hospitalisation, he was discharged but re-enlisted voluntarily and was promoted to Lance Corporal in 1918. He survived the war and lived in Tewkesbury.