

PRIVATE ARTHUR WILLIAM WALLACE

48834, 2nd Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment

Died aged 25 on 5 March 1918

Buried with honour at *Dochy Farm New British Cemetery, Zonnebeke, Belgium*; VII B 3

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross and in the Abbey



Dochy Farm New British Cemetery



Worcestershire Regiment

ARTHUR WILLIAM WALLACE was born in Tewkesbury in 1893, the only son of Elisha Wallace and Mary Ann (formerly Awford). Elisha was a Railway Labourer from Gretton whilst Mary Ann (Annie) was originally from Deerhurst. The family was living in Gravel Walk in 1901 but Elisha died in 1906.

The family surname appears in two versions in the different sources of information. Wallace was the surname used when Elisha's birth was registered in September 1849; it was also the surname on the birth records for Arthur in 1893 and his sister Ellen in 1898. However, on Elisha and Mary's marriage record in 1890, Elisha's death registration, and the various census returns up to and including 1911, the surname Wallis was used. The limited information on the military records uses Wallace as the surname which tends to suggest that this is the true name.

In 1911 Arthur was a 'Baker and Confectioner', first with W. H. Roberts (112 High Street) and then Mrs. Heath (130 High Street). He lived with his mother, whose occupation was described as a 'Charwoman, Domestic', and his sister, Ellen, at 2 Old Baptist Chapel Court. By 1918 the family had moved to Back of Newland, Barton Road.

Arthur was conscripted in March 1916 into the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment. This was a regular pre-war battalion and, at the beginning of August 1914, was stationed in Aldershot as part of the 5th Infantry Brigade in the 2nd Division. This division was part of the original British Expeditionary Force (BEF) sent

to France on the outbreak of war. The battalion landed at Boulogne on 14 August 1914.

On 20 December 1915 the battalion was transferred to the 100th Infantry Brigade in the 33rd Division. The battalion gained fame during the *First Battle of Ypres* when the British line had been breached around the village of Gheluvelt.

Private Arthur William Wallace was sent to France on 29 October 1917, no doubt as part of a replacement draft, and was killed on 5 March 1918 – according to the *Tewkesbury Register*, 'somewhere in front of Ypres'.

According to the battalion War Diary for early March 1918, the battalion was in the front line in the vicinity of Ypres for a period of four days before being relieved by the 9th Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, on 6 March. For the day of 5 March 1918, the Diary simply comments '*Battalion in line*'; no reference is made to any actions or casualties. On the day before Arthur's death the battalion had received a visit from a group of Welsh MPs and the Divisional Commander.

In the absence of any record of specific activities, it is most likely that Arthur was the victim of trench warfare, killed perhaps by a stray shell or sniper's bullet.

Private Arthur William Wallace's body was recovered and he is buried in *Dochy Farm New British Cemetery, Zonnebeke, Belgium*. The cemetery was created after the Armistice, when isolated graves were brought in from the battlefields of Passchendaele and elsewhere.