



LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM HENRY (HARRY) BROWN

SERVIVE NO. 10819

DIED 12th JUNE 1915 AGED 33

Harry Brown, as he was known, was one of 95 men wounded on 4 June 1915 in the planned, big attack in the struggle for Krithia (see Fig. 2 - sketch map detailing the position of the Hampshires). The Regimental History comments that after all they and the rest of the 29th Division had endured since landing this attack was asking too much of the surviving officers and men¹. Two Hampshire officers were killed on 4 June 1915 action and six wounded, whilst 56 other ranks were killed or missing². Harry died of his wounds on board *HMS Grantully Castle* six days later on 12 June 1915³. He is buried in East Mudros Military Cemetery.

Harry had been born in Newbury, Berkshire⁴, but had spent most of his life 'in the neighbourhood of Odiham⁵. On 1 February 1899 he enlisted for service in the Militia or 3rd Battalion, The Hampshire Regiment at Winchester, for which he was only liable to attend an annual training camp. for giving his address at the time as Hook Villa Cottage, Hook, near Winchfield, where he was a groom working for Mrs Payne⁶. He was described as being aged 17 years and 9 months, 5'6½" tall, with a fresh complexion, brown hair and brown eyes. He weighed 116 lbs. As there is no trace of him in the 1901 census, it seems likely that he was embodied during the South African War and would live in barracks at the time. This could explain his promotion to the rank of Corporal in March 1900. He then purchased his discharge on 18 February 1903.

In 1911 Harry was living in Poland Lane, Odiham⁷ for, at this time he was working as a chauffeur/coachman for Captain Charles Petre of Poland House. Later he moved to Southampton to be in service to Colonel Lloyd (late of Itchel Manor), enlisting in 3rd Bn. Hampshire Regiment at the start of the war⁸. He then 'became attached to the 2nd Bn Hants Regt, and was soon promoted to Lance Corporal⁹, a rank he held

¹ The Regimental History of The Royal Hampshire Regiment, p.85

² War Diary of The 2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment, 12 June 1915

³ War Diary of The 2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment, 12 June 1915

⁴ UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-1919 database, www.Ancestry.co.uk

⁵ Obituary in the Hants & Berks Gazette, 3 July 1915

⁶ British Army Service Records on Findmypast.co.uk – TNA ref: WO96 / 642 / 231

⁷ 1911 Census, Odiham, Hampshire - ref. RG14PN6247 RG78PN296 RD109 SD1 ED13 SN119

⁸ Obituary in the Hants & Berks Gazette, 3 July 1915

⁹ Ibid.



until his death on 12 June 1915¹⁰. Harry was awarded the 1914 Star, the British War Medal 1914-20 and the Victory Medal 1914-19 in May 1915.

We know from Harry's Commonwealth War Graves Commission certificate that he had married Bessie, who was living in Carey Street, Reading at the time of his death. No evidence has been found to identify Bessie, but it is possible that she was Devon born Bessie Smerdon, who was working as a kitchen maid in Belgravia in 1911. Harry and Bessie had 'one child, about two years old' at the time of his death¹¹.

Between 19th and 24th June, 'the battalion was 'at rest' on Y Beach, being persistently shelled by guns from across the Straits' (Regimental History, p.87), but on 26th June the Hampshires returned to trenches by Twelve Tree Copse (see Fig.2), ready for the next planned attack on 28th June. This time, more artillery support was on hand, but ammunition remained inadequate and the Turks had considerable fire power¹². Many were killed or wounded on this first day of the attack, the trenches being 'congested with dead and wounded' (Regimental History, p.88). The battle went on for six days, but Frank Butler was killed in action on the first day.

¹⁰ War Diary of The 2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment, 12 June 1915

¹¹ Obituary in the Hants & Berks Gazette, 3 July 1915

¹² The Regimental History of The Royal Hampshire Regiment, pp.87-88

