



PRIVATE GEORGE SILVER
SERVICE NO. 31773
2ND BATTALION, WORCHESTERSHIRE REGIMENT
DIED 21ST MAY 1917 AGED 42

George, sometimes known as Samuel George, Silver was born in Odiham on 22 November 1874¹. He was the son of George, a labourer, and Mary Silver, a laundress, of King Street, Odiham ². In 1911, the household living in The Bury comprised George's mother Mary, by now a widow, George, aged 36, a gravedigger, and brothers Jesse, aged 27, a farm labourer, Sidney, aged 25, a farm labourer and Stanley, aged 13, who was still at school³.

It is uncertain when George enlisted, but his record shows that he did this at Basingstoke. He joined the 2nd Battalion, the Worcestershire Regiment, part of the 5th Brigade, 2nd Division, which was formed and mobilised at Aldershot on 4th August 1914. On 14th August, the Regiment landed at Boulogne. On 23 August 1914 the Battalion fought at the Battle of Mons and then the retreat from Mons followed by engagement in the Battle of The Marne, the Battle of the Aisne and the Battles of Ypres. 1915 saw them in Cuinchy, Festubert and the Battles of Loos, whilst from July 1916 they were engaged in the Battles of the Somme. In mid-April 1917 fighting had moved on to the Battles of Arras and actions on the Hindenburg Line. On 23 April 1917 after a night's heavy shelling by the Germans whom, it was falsely reported, had withdrawn. They were, in fact, still holding the Hindenburg Line opposite the Battalion. The first two weeks of May were mainly spent in training and on 14 May this training was put to the test. The Brigade received orders to go behind the German line to take a prisoner to check reports that the enemy was to retire to the Queant-Droccourt line. A small party of 25 men attempted this, but were spotted as they approached the 'hostile wire' and had to fight hard to make their way back. In the process they killed 14 Germans, Five men from the Battalion were severely wounded and others were reported missing. Between 15th and 19th May the Battalion marched on towards their next objective, the Hindenburg Line, practising

¹ London Road Board School Admissions & Withdrawals Register

² *ibid* and 1891 Census, Odiham, Ref RG 11/1249. Folio 20, PN33

³ 1911 census, Odiham – ref Class: RG14; Piece: 6245; Schedule Number: 166



attacks en route. The real thing was scheduled to commence on 20th May 1917. It was during the attacks on the 21st May that George was killed in action⁴.

George was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal⁵. He is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais. A War Gratuity of £5.10s.5d was awarded to his mother, Mary, on 27 June 1918⁶.

⁴ The source of all these details - Ancestry.com. *UK, WW1 War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914-1920*

⁵ British Army WW1 Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920 – Ancestry.co.uk

⁶ National Army Museum, Chelsea: Soldiers' Effects Records, 1901-1960