

Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)

Name: Bertram Barker
Rank: Private
Service Number: 14807
Date of Death: 27th July 1916
Age: 30
Regiment/Service: 1st Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment



Award:

Grave/Memorial Reference: Pier and Face 2C

Cemetery/Memorial: Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France.

UK Cemetery/Memorial: Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church. Panel A
St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)

Pre War:

He was born in Hitchin. He was the son of George and Charlotte Barker of 19, Cannon's Gardens, Hitchin and brother to Harry and Ernest Barker of 19 Canon Gardens Hitchin. In the 1911 Census Bertram is listed as a Gardener - Rose.. Bertram lived and enlisted in Hitchin. He was in the army by the 19th September 1914.

Wartime Service:

His Regimental Number was 14807 in the 1st Battalion of the Bedfords .

On the 26th July 1916 at 9.00pm orders were received to attack Longueval at dawn. Four miles had to be covered to the assembly position in the pitch dark with gas shells falling thickly. The assembly position was also being heavily shelled. The Bedfords moved to take the 2nd and 3rd objectives and found the trenches full of men from the Norfolks. The shellfire was extremely heavy and shelter almost impossible to find. Trench mortars, guns, ammunition and men were buried in the mass of exploding shells and debris. The remnants of two companies returned to the old German second line. There were several cases of men going temporarily mad. Longueval was reduced from a village to a smoking ruin in a few hours. The leapfrog system of advance with the Norfolks had created appalling congestion so that the follow-up troops were unable to find cover.

He has no known grave, but is remembered on Pier and Face 2C of the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing in France.

Additional Information:

He was killed in action in France on the same day as Private B.D. Day.

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

www.hitchinatwar.org.uk

