

Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)

Name: William (Bill) Butts

Rank: Private

Service Number: 2504

Date of Death: 19th November 1914

Age:

Regiment/Service: Hertfordshire Regiment

Award: Mons Star, British War and Victory medals.

Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 54 and 56.

Cemetery/Memorial: Ypres Memorial, Menin Gate.

UK Cemetery/Memorial: Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church. Panel B
St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)
Hitchin Territorial Memorial
Holy Saviour Church War Memorial, Radcliffe Rd., Hitchin

Pre War:

He was born in Houghton in Hampshire, lived in Hitchin and worked at Russell's Tanyard for eleven years. Bill's home was at 6, Verulam Road, Hitchin and he had a brother.

Wartime Service:

He had served for four years in 'E' (sic) Company of the Hertfordshire Territorials, enlisting in Hertford and given the Regimental Number 2504. It is more likely that he was in 'G' Company serving the Hitchin area where he lived rather than 'E' Company who generally came from the Letchworth area. The War Memorial at the Drill Hall, Bedford Rd, Hitchin states that he had been a member of No. 4 Company in the 1st Battalion of the Regiment. He had volunteered in August 1914 and went to France in November 1914 and was killed by a shell a fortnight later in action during his first engagement at Ypres. He was the first Territorial from Hitchin to be killed in the war. It was said that "He had a genial disposition and was popular at work and eagerly accepted the opportunity of coming to close grips with the enemy".

The Herts were a Territorial Force unit under Lieut Colonel the Viscount Hampden. They left Bury St. Edmunds on the 5th November 1914 and went to Southampton, Le Havre and arrived at St. Omer on the 9th November. They joined the 4th Guards Brigade and thereafter called themselves the 'Herts Guards'. They marched through Ypres and sustained their first casualties before stopping on the Menin road. They then took over trenches at Nonne Bosschen near Ypres. They were not involved in any major incidents at this time but did suffer casualties from shell-fire and sniping.

He has no known grave and is remembered on Panels 54 and 56 of the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Belgium.

Additional Information:

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

www.hitchinatwar.org.uk

