

Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)

Name: John George (Jack) Cornwell

Rank: Private

Service Number: 6930

Date of Death: 29th June 1916

Age: 22

Regiment/Service: 11th Battalion Royal Fusiliers

Award: British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Grave/Memorial Reference: II. A. 21

Cemetery/Memorial: DIVE COPSE BRITISH CEMETERY, SAILLY-LE-SEC, SOMME, FRANCE.

UK Cemetery/Memorial:

Hitchin War Memorial, St Marys Church. Panel C
St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)
Hitchin Boys Grammar School Memorial.
Silsoe Memorial (Jack Cornwell).

Pre War:

Son of William John and L. Cornwell, of Silsoe, Ampthill, Beds. He was born on the 3rd January 1894 and his home was at Wrest Park, Silsoe in Bedfordshire. He attended the Hitchin Grammar School from 1908-1910. It was said that he had an open face, a cheerful smile and was of a loveable disposition when at school. He received a prize for public spirit by the overwhelming votes of his fellow-scholars and the presentation was greeted with ringing cheers. He left school to become a clerk in an engineering office.

Wartime Service:

John joined the Royal Engineers early in the war and was later transferred to the Royal Sussex Regiment, possibly after he obtained his commission. He died in France, after eight months at the front, whilst serving in the 13th Battalion about ten miles from Bethune. 'Officers died' states that his death occurred on the 29th May 1916 and if this is correct it would coincide with the bombardment of the British lines between La Basse Canal and Arras on the 28th May 1916. He was probably admitted to No. 33 Casualty Clearing Station in Bethune.

He is remembered in Plot 3, Row K, Grave 18 in Bethune Town Cemetery in France.

He left a brother and his mother. A 'Jack Cornwell Ward' was instituted in the Star and Garter Home and subscriptions to aid it were raised from the school, but in fact this relates to the boy V.C., Jack Cornwell who was mortally wounded on the 31st May 1916 in the Battle of Jutland and immortalised as "*The boy who stood on the burning deck*".

Additional Information:

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

www.hitchinatwar.org.uk

