

## **Herts at War**

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**Name:** Jack French

**Rank:** Private

**Service Number:** 14378

**Date of Death:** 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1917

**Age:** 20

**Regiment/Service:** 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment

**Award:** 1914/15 Star, British War and Victory medals

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** D. 11.

**Cemetery/Memorial:** CHILI TRENCH CEMETERY, GAVRELLE, FRANCE

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



### **Pre War:**

His home was with his parents, Mr and Mrs Harry French of 12, Telegraph Place, Hitchin and he was unmarried.

Before joining the army he had worked for the Hitchin Urban District Council. He was born in Hitchin and enlisted there as a volunteer in September 1914.

### **Wartime Service:**

Jack was in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion with the Regimental Number 14378. This Battalion was part of the 112<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 37<sup>th</sup> Division in the XVII Corps of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. He was sent to France in August 1915 and fought at Loos and on the Somme where he was wounded on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916. He was invalided home to hospital and after three-months treatment returned to his unit in France in October 1916. He was killed in action at Arras during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of the Scarpe when he was in charge of a bombing section and a shell exploded in a trench. Serjeant Lawrence of the same platoon wrote "*He was killed whilst advancing to push the cruel Hun from his position*".

The Battalion was engaged in violent trench warfare east of the Gavrelle to Roeux Road east of Arras. Casualties were heavy. The Battalion was in support of the 63<sup>rd</sup> (Royal Naval) Division.

He was buried in Row D, Grave 11 in the Chili Trench Cemetery in France.

### **Additional Information:**

He saw the wounds inflicted on his brother Henry in November 1916.

### **Acknowledgments:**

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

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