

Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)



Name: Arthur Percival Langford
Rank: Company Sergeant Major
Service Number: 651
Date of Death: 3rd August 1916
Age: 40

Regiment/Service: No.4 Company 1st Battalion
Hertfordshire Regiment

Award:

Grave/Memorial Reference: II. A. 14.

Cemetery/Memorial: BROWN'S ROAD MILITARY CEMETERY, FESTUBERT, FRANCE

Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church, Hitchin

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

Pre War:

Son of William Eve Langford and Frances Elizabeth Langford, His parents lived at 69, Tilehouse Street, Hitchin. of 34, Bedford Rd., Hitchin, Herts. Another record states that his mother lived at 34, Bedford Road, Hitchin. He was born in Hitchin and his home was there. Before the war he had served as a fireman in the Hitchin Fire Brigade. Reservist with 1st Volunteer Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. 1911 Census has Arthur listed as a Stationers Manager. He was unmarried.

Wartime Service:

He joined the Cyclists Section of the Hertfordshire Volunteer Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment in 1898, but this was disbanded after the South African War. He continued in 'G' (Hitchin) Company of the Bedfords and later this became the Hertfordshire Regiment. He was mobilised by August 1914 with the Regimental Number 651C and went to France early in November 1914 with No. 4 Company of the Hertfordshire Regiment. He was rejected for fighting duties due to a sight defect but was permitted to stay with the Battalion assisting the medical parties and took part in the 1st Battle of Ypres. This continued and in May 1915 he was helping at one of the Dressing Stations and said that the arrangements for getting the wounded away were excellent and that, after having their wounds dressed, they were off to a General Hospital by motor car within ten minutes. He said that the wounded were cheerful and asked for a drink and a cigarette.

The Hertfordshires became known as the 'Herts Guards' as they fought with distinction in the Guards Division for a considerable period, but at the time of Arthur's death they were part of the 118th Brigade of the 39th Division. He was made Company Serjeant Major of 'G' (Hitchin) and 'E' (Royston) Companies. He was killed in action and his Commanding Officer wrote to his brother that he had been killed by shellfire and had been buried in a British cemetery that same evening. The Hertfordshires were not involved in any major engagement at the date of his death.

On the 5th August 1917 a bronze tablet 18" x 8" was dedicated in St. Mary's Church, Hitchin near the south door "*To the Glory of God and to the memory of Arthur Percival Langford C.S.M. 1st Herts Regiment who was killed in action near Festubert in France on the 3rd August 1916 aged 40. This tablet was erected by the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of No. 4 Company. He was 2nd son of William Eve Langford of Hitchin and a sidesman of this Church*"

Additional Information:

His service record exists

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne, David C Baines, www.hitchinatwar.org.uk