

## **Herts at War**

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**Name:** Arthur William Minnis  
**Rank:** Private  
**Service Number:** 30901  
**Date of Death:** 30<sup>th</sup> December 1918  
**Age:**  
**Regiment/Service:** 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment  
**Award:** British War and the Victory medals  
**Grave/Memorial Reference:**  
**Cemetery/Memorial:** Chatby Memorial, Egypt .(Chatby is a district on the eastern side of the city of Alexandria, near Aboukir.)  
Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church, Hitchin  
**UK Cemetery/Memorial:** St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)  
British Schools Museum, Hitchin



### **Pre War:**

Born in Hitchin 1890 to parents William and Mary Minnis. The 1911 census has the family living at 41 Bancroft Hitchin and Arthur is listed as a farm Labourer. He was married and his home address was 8, Providence Row, St. Andrew's Place, Hitchin.

### **Wartime Service:**

Before joining the army he had been employed by Wallace's Dairy in Hitchin. He was born in Hitchin and was resident there when he enlisted in Bedford on the 12th July 1916 and went to France in October 1916. He was allocated the Regimental Number 30901 and posted to the 5th Battalion of the Bedfords. He fought at Arras and on the Somme and was invalided home.

On the 19th November 1917 he was drafted to Egypt and was transported on the liner 'Aragon' of 9588 tons built in 1905 that had been taken over by the British Government from the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and was bringing reinforcements to the army in Palestine. The ship was full to capacity, having 2,500 troops on board plus 200 in the crew.

The ship arrived at Alexandria on the 30th December 1917 and was permitted to enter the harbour, but was later ordered outside without any protection. It was promptly torpedoed by the German submarine UC34 with the loss of 610 men including 19 crew and the ship's Captain, Captain Bateman.

He has no known grave, but is remembered on the Chatby Memorial to the Missing in Egypt.

### **Additional Information:**

### **Acknowledgments:**

Adrian Dunne  
David C Baines

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