

## **Herts at War**

([www.hertsatwar.co.uk](http://www.hertsatwar.co.uk))

**Name:**

Archibald Bernard  
Orsman

**Rank:**

Private

**Service Number:**

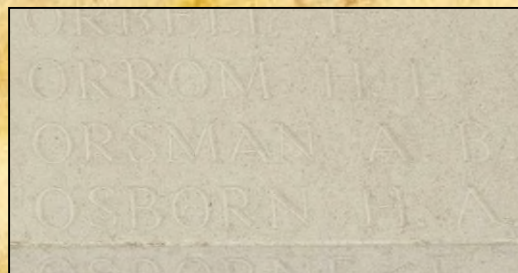
G/26406

**Date of Death:**

28<sup>th</sup> April 1917

**Age:**

21



**Regiment/Service:**

17<sup>th</sup> Battalion Middlesex Regiment

**Award:**

He was entitled to the British War and Victory medals and by 2002 they were in the possession of Mr M Daniels of Clifton, Beds as is a letter from the British Red Cross.

**Grave/Memorial Reference:**

Bay 7

**Cemetery/Memorial:**

Arras Memorial, France

**UK Cemetery/Memorial:**

Hitchin War Memorial, St Mary's Church, Hitchin  
St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)  
British Schools Museum, Hitchin

**Pre War:**

His home was at 9, Verulam Rd, Hitchin and he was the youngest son of Arthur and Eleanor Orsman of 9, Verulam Rd., Hitchin, Herts..

Before joining up he was employed by Mr H. Tickner at his boot repairer's business in the Churchyard, Hitchin. He was born in Hitchin, volunteered in April 1915.

**Wartime Service:**

Archibald was given the Regimental Number G/26406 and went to the Western Front in April 1916. He was initially reported missing at Oppy and later, in August 1918, presumed killed.

At the time of his death he was in 'D' Company of the 17th Battalion (1st Football) of the Regiment which was in the 6th Brigade of the 2nd Division of the XIII Corps of the 1st Army. The Battalion was engaged during the Battle of Arleux at Oppy Wood and on Oppy village in an attack which was a general failure. Oppy Wood was a mass of tree stumps and Oppy village was in ruins. A storm of shell went on for days and some men went temporarily insane from noise and sheer terror. The Battalion lost 11 officers and 451 men on that one day due to determined German counter-attacks.

The Battalion went "*over the top*" between 4.00am and 5.00am and held the village till 11.30am. They were then gradually pushed back to their start point. The wounded could not be brought back as the Germans overran their positions. The Battalion was relieved that night. It was said that shellfire probably accounted for most of the missing. He has no known grave, but is remembered on the Arras Memorial to the Missing in France.

**Additional Information:**

**Acknowledgments:**

Adrian Dunne  
David C Baines

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