

Private 18371 James Kettle

10th (Service) Battalion., Cheshire Regiment
Died 17 February 1917 Age 29

In April 2020 I was contacted by my good friend Chris Knight, formerly of Liverpool, who has been living near Dunedin, New Zealand, since the 1990s. He had in his possession a First World War memorial plaque which he wanted to find more about, with the aim of repatriating it with Private Kettle's family. It came into Chris' possession back in the 1980s, discovered when he was renovating a house he had purchased in Quarry Lane, Kelsall, Cheshire. He tried to find the true owner at the time, but was unsuccessful. Since that time it has sat on display in his living-room and recent ANZAC Day commemorations prompted him to try once more to return it to the family.

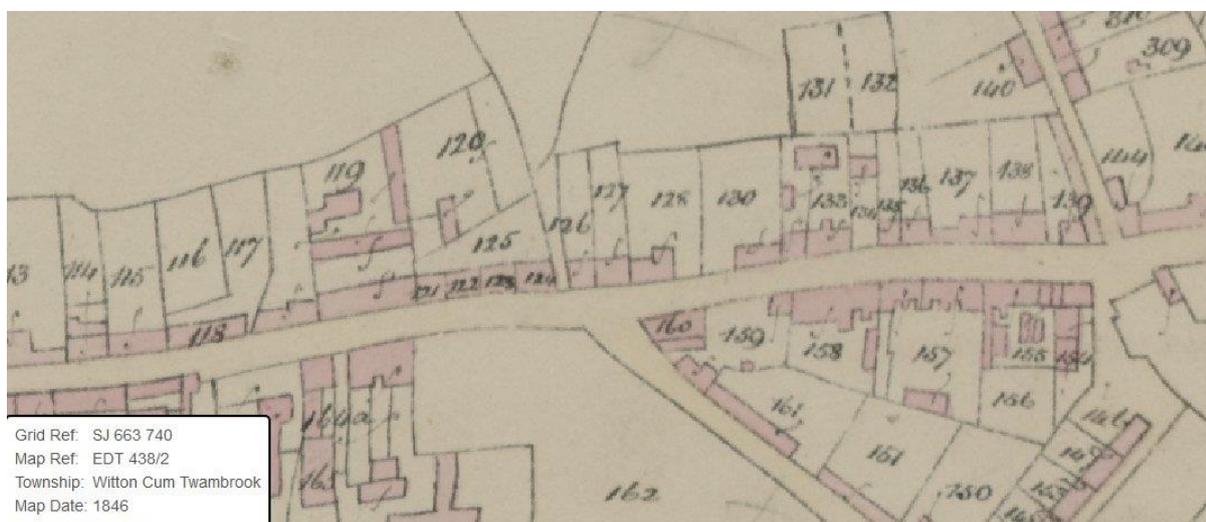


There are a few James Kettle's on the Commonwealth War Graves lists, but after careful elimination, Private 18371 Kettle seemed the most likely candidate. Especially as he was from Northwich (Kelsall was part of Northwich Rural District).



Rose Cottage, Quarry Lane, Kelsall

James was born in 1888, the son of Joseph Kettle and his wife Priscilla of 35 Station Road, Northwich. Station Road was the continuation of Witton Road, still today the main thoroughfare and heart of the town. The men in the house – Joseph, James and his older brother Thomas, worked as bricklayers/builders. Joseph had worked with his own father Thomas in the trade, as did his uncles and cousins, at a time when the yard was based further along the road in Witton Street, a couple of doors down from the George & Dragon public house. (Thomas' presence in Witton can be traced back to his parents William and Sarah, when he was baptised in 1791). In fact, the bricklayer's yard plot is clearly recorded on the Tithe Map of 1846 (no.130 in the centre);



Grid Ref: SJ 663 740
 Map Ref: EDT 438/2
 Township: Witton Cum Twambrook
 Map Date: 1846

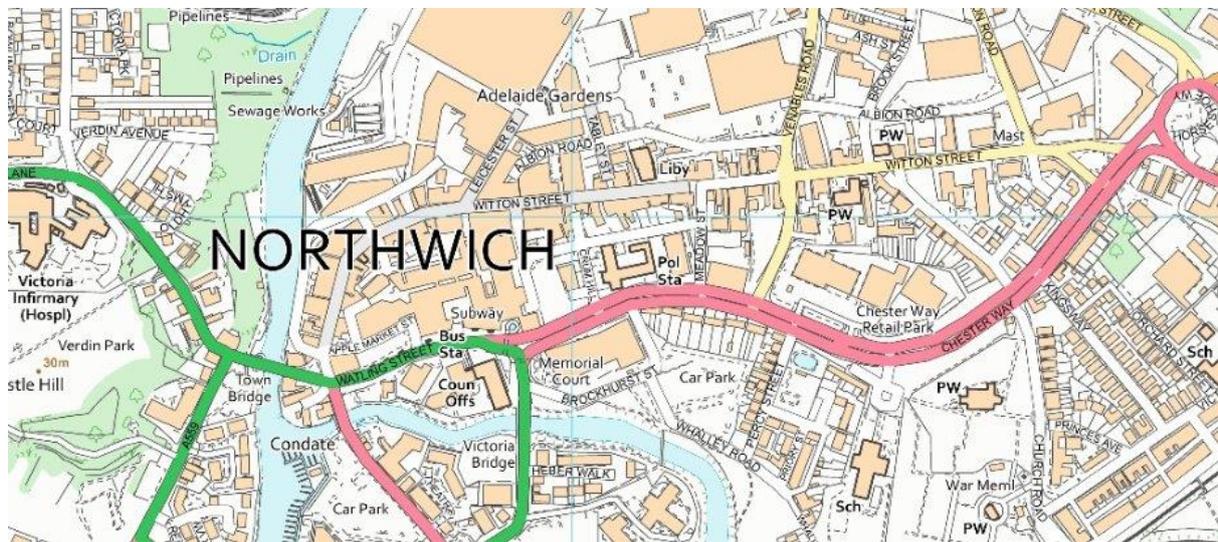
Township	Parish	Plot	Landowner(s)	Occupier(s)	Plot Name	Land Use	Acres	Roods	Perches
Witton Cum Twambrook	Great Budworth	130	Richard Vernon (Lessee)	and Others, Thomas Kettle	Cottages & Gardens	Building and Garden	0	0	34



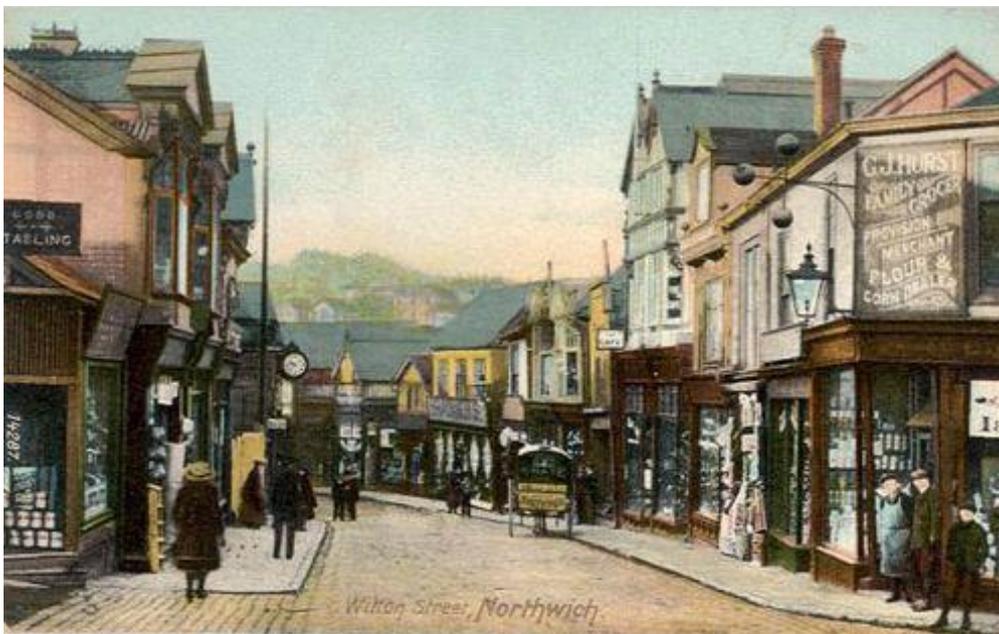
Witton Street by the 1880s
 Later, the Kettle family moved to Station Road on the right



Modern overlay lap of the 1840 Tithe



**The Station Road house is now demolished,
the by-pass roundabout now on the site (top right)**



**Witton Street
c.1900**



Above: Witton Street

Left: The George & Dragon public house next to the brickyard

Below: The site of the brickyard (right) with the George & Dragon pub beyond.





**St. Helen's Church, Witton cum Twambrooks, Northwich
The Kettle's family church**



When the war came, James signed up for the 10th Cheshire Regiment. His war record no longer exists, so his exact date of attestation cannot be determined. However, before he left, he married Elizabeth Bebbington of Weaverham in Spring 1915. Their daughter, Elsie Priscilla Kettle, was born on 31 March 1916 in Cuddington. (Elizabeth was close to her younger sister Eliza. There is a possibility she was living there at the time and had gone there for her confinement).

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Number of Schedules **4**
(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of this Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE last birthday and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE		PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards		BIRTHPLACE of every person	NATIONALITY of every person	IMPAIRMENT
			Write "Single", "Married", "Widowed", or "Divorced" as the case may be.	State for each Married Woman entered in this Schedule, the number of Children born alive to her since her marriage (Children 5 years and under 15 years to be entered in separate columns, children 15 years and over in one column.)	Personal Occupation	Industry or Service in which worker is employed			
1. Frank Kettle	Head	40	Married	5	General Labourer	20	Cheshire Weaver	Cheshire Northwich	
2. Elizabeth Kettle	Wife	65	Married	5			Warrington		
3. James Kettle	Son	25	Single		General Labourer	21	Cheshire Weaver		
4. Elsie Kettle	Son	23	Single				Warrington		
5. Elsie Priscilla Kettle	Daughter	23	Single				Warrington		
6. Elizabeth Bebbington	Wife	41	Single				Warrington		
7. Henry Bebbington	Visitor	42	Single				Warrington		

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge of the dwelling)

Signature: *Frank Kettle*
 Postal Address: *25, St. John's Rd., Northwich*

10th (Service) Battalion, Cheshire Regiment

The 10th (Service) Battalion, Cheshire Regiment was raised in Chester on 10 September 1914, as part of Kitchener's Third New Army and joined 75th Brigade, 25th Division. They trained at Codford St Mary and spent the winter in billets in Bournemouth. They moved to Aldershot for final training in May 1915 and proceeded to France on 26 September, the division concentrated in the area of Nieppe. On the 26 October, they transferred to 7th Brigade, but still with 25th Division. James Kettle's medal card reveals he was awarded the 1915 Star arriving in France on 24 December 1915, so he may have been part of a second wave of volunteers.

Their first action was in defence of the German attack on Vimy Ridge in May 1916. They then moved to The Somme and joined the Battle just after the main attack, with 75th Brigade making a costly attack near Thiepval on the 3 July. The Division was in action at The Battle of Bazentin, The Battle of Pozieres and The Battle of the Ancre Heights. In 1917 they were in action at The Battle of Messines attacking between the Wulverghem-Messines and Wulverghem-Wytschaete roads. In the Third battle of Ypres were in action during The Battle of Pilkem. In 1918 they were in action on The Somme, in the Battles of the Lys suffering heavy losses. On the 21 June 1918 the battalion was reduced to cadre strength with many troops transferring to the 9th Cheshires. The cadre crossed to England and returned to Aldershot, moving to North Walsham where in July they were absorbed by 15th South Wales Borderers.

James Kettle, however, would not return to England. What follows is a detailed account of the 7th Infantry Brigade's raid on Factory Farm on 17 February 1917, an action which included a detachment from the 10th Cheshires.

[This account was researched and written by Chris Baker and appears on his website The Long, Long Trail (www.longlongtrail.co.uk):

THE LONG, LONG TRAIL

RESEARCHING SOLDIERS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-1919

www.longlongtrail.co.uk

7th Infantry Brigade's raid on Factory Farm

17 February 1917

Chris Baker

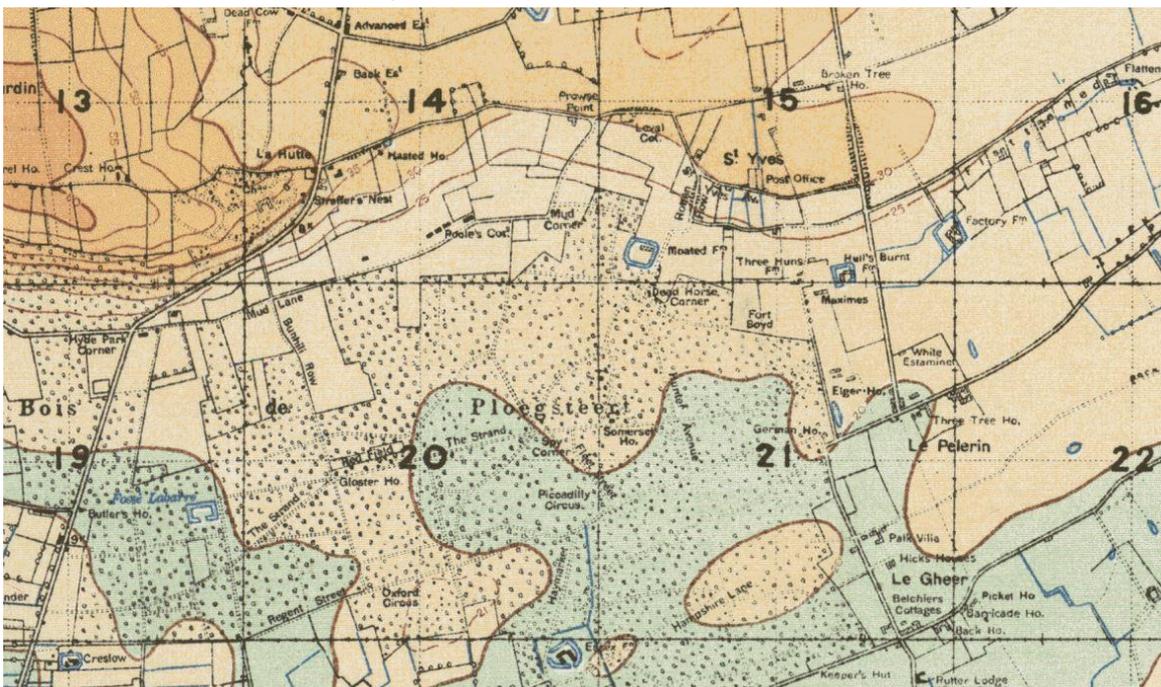


The location of the raid is marked on this present-day map with a red X. It lies NE of Ploegsteert Wood and in the enclave of the Belgian province of Hainaut.

The general staff of the headquarters of 25th Division ordered 7th Infantry Brigade to carry out a raid on enemy trenches to obtain identification of enemy units in the trenches; to kill German troops; and to

destroy trench mortars known to be within the defined area. Brigade selected two of its battalions to participate. No mention is made in the war diaries that a detachment of 10th Field Company of the Royal Engineers would also take part.

Location: Factory Farm

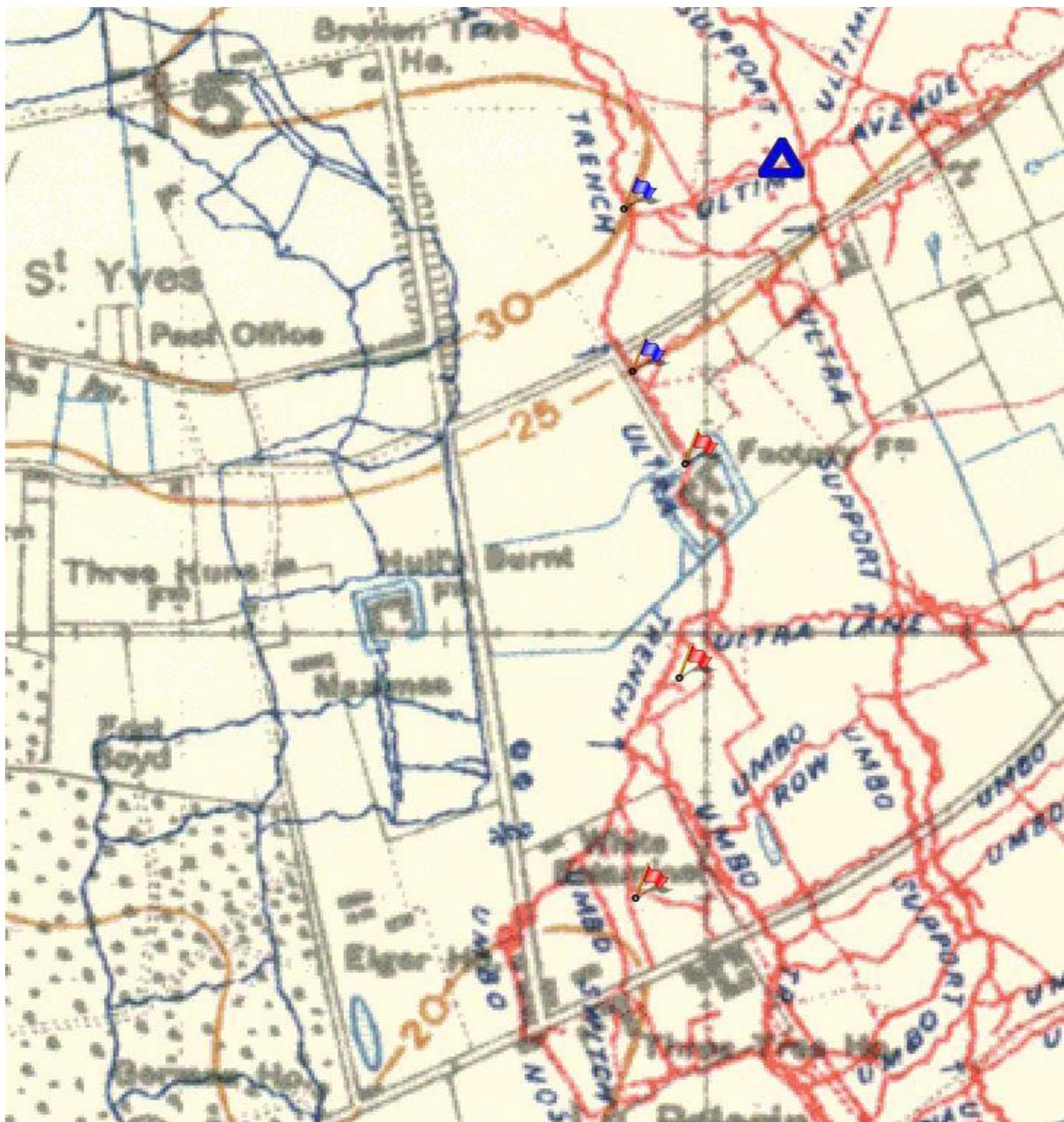


Factory Farm can be seen in the top right hand corner of this topographical map.

Detailed orders

Two officers and 120 other ranks of the *1st Wiltshire Regiment* would be on the right and would attack the German line between U.21.b.85.80 to Factory Farm (inclusive) and the triangle U.21.b.85.83 – U.22.a.00.92 – U.15.d.95.00. The southern party would form a block in *Umbo Trench* and immediately south of the point of entry at U.21.b.85.80 and would work up the three sides of the triangle. The northern party would form a block in *Ultra Lane* at about U.16.c.05.05 and would work up the front line to Factory Farm.

Three officers and 180 other ranks of the *10th (Service) Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment* would be on the right and would attack the German line between U.15.d.9.5 and U.15.d.88.81. It would penetrate to *Ultimo Support*. The first wave would penetrate the enemy's front line and hold it, while forming blocks in communication trenches at U.15.d.88.50 and U.15.d.83.86. The second waves would pass through with the object of destroying or bringing back German trench mortars *Gilbert* and *Christopher* located at U.16.c.3.7 and U.16.c.18.87, along with machine guns.



The German trenches are shown in red in this map. The added blue flags mark the extremities of the Cheshire Regiment's area of attack, and the blue triangle is the supposed location of trench mortar

Christopher. The added red flags mark the extremities of the Wiltshire Regiments raid, with a flag in the middle highlighting the triangle. The southernmost red flag is in a rather odd location as it is not on the German front line: it is possible that the grid map reference was written incorrectly and should be more like U.21.b.50.80. The “snout” of German trenches with Umbo Trench at the bottom of this image had also known in 1914-15 as the “Duck’s Bill” after the German “Entenschnabel”.

All troops would withdraw and be clear of the enemy’s trenches 30 minutes after the time of entry.

The raid would be supported by numbers 77.80, 112, 113, 160 and 173 Brigades of the Royal Field Artillery. The division’s Heavy and Medium Trench Mortar Batteries would assist. IX Corps Heavy Artillery also arranged for the fire of eight 6-inch howitzers and six 60-pounder guns. The artillery of 36th (Ulster) Division on the left of 25th Division would also fire on their front.

Countdown to the raid

The ground of the Ploegsteert area had been frozen hard throughout a very cold winter.

8 February 1917

Howitzers and heavy trench mortars fire to register on the enemy’s defences in the neighbourhood of Factory Farm. **One officer and 65 men of A, C and D Companies of 10/Cheshire were withdrawn and moved to Regina Camp, preparatory to carrying out training for the raid.** [This is a much smaller party than defined in orders and I have been unable to determine the cause of discrepancy. The reported number comes from the battalion’s war diary and may be an error]. C Company of 1/Wiltshire is withdrawn and moves to be billeted at The Piggeries, preparatory to carrying out training for the raid.

8 February 1917

Howitzers, 18-pounder field guns and heavy trench mortars bombard enemy first and second lines between 11am and noon.

10 February 1917

Rest of 10/Cheshire is relieved in the front line and moves rearward to brigade support position near Touquet Berthe. Rest of 1/Wiltshire is relieved in the front line and moves rearward to Regina Camp. C Company moves to Pont de Nieppe. It begins to practice the raid on ground near Regina Camp which has been marked with flags to resemble the layout of the enemy’s defences.

Imperial War Museum photograph Q5092. British troops taking up timber for a trench support through a communication trench at Ploegsteert, March 1917.



11 February 1917

Preliminary raid orders are issued within 10/Cheshire. 2-inch trench mortar batteries begin to fire on the German barbed wire at planned points of entry.

14 February 1917

10/Cheshire, less the raiding party, returns to the front line and relieves 3/Worcestershire. 1/Wiltshire, less C Company, returns to the front line and relieves 8/Loyal North Lancashire. The 25th Divisional Commander Royal Artillery issues his detailed orders to the brigades.

15 February 1917

A conference is held at brigade headquarters to finalise details.

14 Sappers and NCOs of 106th Field Company of the Royal Engineers began training for the raid. Artillery begins to fire on enemy barbed wire defences. Gaps are observed. There is little German retaliation. The situation is generally reported quiet.

During the night, Germans go out to repair the gaps in the barbed wire. This is observed and a decision taken to prolong the artillery bombardment to ensure there will be adequate gaps for the raid.

16 February 1917

The weather is warming up and a thaw begins after a recent severe period of frost.

Artillery continues to fire on enemy barbed wire defences.

A German trench raid is carried out near Monmouth House, elsewhere on 25th Division's front.

The raid

The raid began at zero hour, set for 10.40am on 17 February 1917.

Observers saw five red Very lights being fired by the Germans at Factory Farm between 10.43am and 10.51am and a white ones at 10.48am and 10.51am. They would appear to be "SOS" calls for artillery support. At 11.21am a green light was fired.

The raid progressed well and all objectives were seized except for a portion of Factory Farm "where stout resistance was offered". North of the farm, the raiding party reached the second German line; south of it the position U.22.a.10.95. Very few Germans were encountered except at the farm. Dugouts were bombed (divisional HQ reports it as eight of them); dumps of grenades and other trench material were destroyed. The 1/Wiltshire reported that they believed about 20 Germans were killed in their area, but no identification was obtained nor enemy prisoners captured. **Ten enemy prisoners were taken by the Cheshire Regiment but eight were reportedly killed by German machine gun fire on the journey to British lines;** two who survived were of *5th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment*. No mention is made of any destruction of the enemy trench mortars.

The 1/Wiltshire initially reported the loss of four men killed; one died of wounds; 26 were wounded; and one man was missing. They reported that the majority of these casualties were caused by enemy machine gun fire during the return to British trenches.

106th Field Company reported the loss of one killed, five missing and one wounded.

Patrols sent out by 10/Cheshire that night brought in 15 of the wounded and dead.

The divisional artillery fired a total of 5245 rounds in support of the raid, not including the preliminary bombardments on previous days. The heavy and medium trench mortars fired an additional 167 rounds. Enemy artillery retaliation was relatively light – but trench mortar *Christopher* was still firing after the raid and had clearly not been affected by it. There is no mention in any report of *Gilbert*.



Imperial War Museum photograph Q4648. Soldiers of the Lancashire Fusiliers in a front line trench: this is said to be in January 1917 and near Ploegstreet and opposite Messines, so close to the Factory Farm line. If so, it is possible that this is the 11th (Service) Battalion which was under command of 74th Infantry Brigade of 25th Division. The men are cleaning a Lewis Gun. On the left of the photographs can be seen the gas alarm horn and wind vane. Several rows of sandbags form the top left-hand edge of the trench.

Casualties of the raid

Killed in action and died of wounds

**The men marked thus are buried in Berks Cemetery Extension in the grave given in parentheses (plot – row – grave number). All others have no known grave and are commemorated at the Ploegsteert Memorial unless otherwise specified.

1st Wiltshire Regiment

The list of the men of the battalion killed in action appeared in *The Times* on 17 March 1917.

- Pte 26681 Arthur Burch (Portland)** (I.O.20)
- Cpl 33146 Sidney Foster (Nuneaton)** (I.O.19)
- Pte 19045 Sidney Martin (Salisbury)** (I.O.21)
- Sgt 8292 John Matthews (Swindon)** (I.O.18)

- Pte 7626 Frank Gould died of wounds and is buried at Nieppe Communal Cemetery (II.A.4). Pte Gould was aged 31 and the son of Henry and Priscilla Gould of South Mill, Amesbury.

10th Cheshire Regiment

The lists of the men of the battalion killed in action appeared in *The Times* on 17 and 19 March 1917.

- Pte 49437 Ernest Bell. Aged 32. **(I.O.7)
- Pte 10238 Clifford Bignall. Aged 23, the son of Joseph and Annie Bignall of Crewe. **(I.O.8)
- Pte 50041 John Broadhead. **(I.O.16)
- L/Cpl 53055 Peter Capper.
- Pte 49471 James Davies. Aged 33, son of William and Sarah Ellen Davies of Birkenhead and husband of Josephine Davies of 3 Hurst Street, Old Swan, Liverpool.
- Pte 36774 Harry Dean. **(I.O.11)
- Cpl 14770 Arthur Gerrard. **(I.O.6)
- L/Cpl 10152 George Hayes. **(I.O.3)
- Cpl 9958 Charles Jones. Was actually reported as wounded in action in “Times” of 19 March 1917.
- Pte 15004 Henry Jones. Aged 21, son of Daniel Doodson.
- Pte 36152 John Kelly. Aged 25, son of Thomas and Catherine Kelly of 8, Church Street, Sandbach. **(I.O.26)
- Pte 24209 Albert Kettle. Aged 29, son of Charles Henry and Alice Kettle of 52, Station Road, Lostock Gralam, Northwich. **(I.O.27)
- **Pte 18371 James Kettle. Aged 29, son of Joseph Kettle of 35 Station Road, Northwich and husband of Elizabeth Dodd (formerly Kettle) of 4 Chapel Lane, Moulton, Northwich.**
- Pte 32952 Thomas Lardner.
- Pte 26681 John Lowndes. **(I.O.10)
- Pte 25200 John McGarry.
- Pte 36741 William Morrey. Aged 25, son of Samson and Frances Morrey of Worleston, Nantwich and husband of Margaret Morrey of Manor Cottage, Minshull Vernon. **(I.O.25)
- Pte 36824 Walter Newton. Aged 20, son of Charles and Lena Newton of 44 Ashton Road, Newton, Hyde.
- L/Cpl 44377 George Nichols. **(I.O.5)
- Pte 44259 Henry Oldham.
- Sgt 14008 Willie Povey. Aged 27, son of George Povey of 51, Primrose Lane, Glossop, Derbyshire, and the late Catherine Povey.
- Pte 33423 Harold Reeves. Aged 20, son of Edwin Reeves of Road Side, Christleton. **(I.O.27)
- Pte 22492 Walter Richardson Aged 20, son of Mary Elizabeth Richardson of 174, Whealland Lane, Seacombe, Wallasey. **(I.O.28)
- Pte 31566 William Riley. Lived St. Helens in Lancashire **(I.O.12)
- Sgt 8998 Arthur Scragg.
- Pte 36237 Harry Slater. Age 25, husband of Florence Slater of 176 Cheetham Hill Road, Dukinfield. **(I.O.9)
- Pte 11617 George Smith. **(I.O.13)
- Sgt 16217 James Stanton. **(I.O.15)
- Sgt 18468 Frank Wainwright.
- Pte W/544 Charles Wilkins.
- Second Lieutenant John Carlton Manning died of wounds and is buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension (III.B.54). He was listed as having died of wounds in the “Times” on 5

March 1917. Manning was the son of Samuel and Alice Manning and husband of H. A. Haynes (formerly Manning) of Britton's Cottage, St. Michael, Barbados, British West Indies.



From "*Dulwich College Record*":

Born 4th November, 1891. On leaving Dulwich he went up to Caius College, Cambridge, and in 1911 took a Class II, in Part II, of the Law Tripos. Afterwards he was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple and returned to Barbados, where he practised and established a name for himself at the Bar. In October, 1915, he came to England and after passing through the Inns of Court Officers Training Corps at Berkhamsted was gazetted to the Special Reserve of the Cheshire Regiment in September, 1916. Three months later he proceeded to France, being attached to the 10th Service Battalion of his regiment. He was shot by a sniper on 17th February, 1917, and died of his wounds the same day, being buried at Bailleul. He leaves a widow and one child.

Royal Engineers (traced to belong to 106th Field Company)

Listed in *The Times* on 16 March 1917

- Spr 32935 Richard Smith (Newbury)** (I.O.4)

Missing and later officially presumed dead

These men were later presumed dead and are commemorated at the Ploegsteert Memorial.

1st Wiltshire Regiment

Casualty list printed in *The Times* 2 April 1917

- Pte 26183 Walter Watson (Bradenstoke)

10th Cheshire Regiment

Casualty list printed in *The Times* 20 April 1917 unless stated

- Pte 11049 Harry Barlow. Aged 21, the son of Edward and Sarah Ellen Barlow, of 40, Hyde Street, Stockport.
- Pte 49431 Harry Barlow. Aged 32, the son of Joseph and Jane Barlow of 15 Derby Street, Birkenhead.
- Pte 10746 Edward Burke.
- L/Cpl 434 Charles Cliffe.
- Pte 24817 Thomas Dagger. Listed as missing *The Times* 30 April 1917. and "now reported killed" 13 February 1918.
- Pte 34520 John Freeman. Son of Mrs. Annie Shaw of 41, Lancashire Hill, Stockport. A German record of 6 June 1917 lists him as dead. This was confirmed in *The Times* 1 March 1918.
- Pte 44253 Lewis Hall. Aged 36, son of James Hall of Halifax and husband of Edith Hall of 24 Clark Avenue, Carr House Road, Doncaster.
- Pte 35698 Harry Helsby. Aged 28, son of William and Mary Jane Helsby of Seven Houses, Frodsham Bridge.

- L/Cpl 13115 Thornton Hickson. A German record of 23 April 1917 lists him as dead and of C Company. This was confirmed in *The Times* 1 December 1917.
- Pte 11137 Joseph Holland. C Company. Aged 25, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Holland of 8 Paradise Street, Northwich.
- Pte 39996 Percy Houghton. de Ruvigny's roll of honour states "2nd s. of the late William George Houghton, Local Preacher, by his wife, Mary ; b. Rock Ferry, co. Chester, 26 Nov. 1887 : educ. St. Luke's School there ; was a Sack Merchant ; enlisted in the Cheshire Regt. 8 June, 1916 ; served with the Expeditionary Force in France from 7 Oct. following ; was reported missing after the fighting on 17 Feb. 1917, and is now assumed to have been killed in action on or about that date. He m. at St. Peter's Church, Liverpool, 28 Feb 1908, Ellen (76, Inglemere Road, Rock Ferry), dau. of (-), and had three children : William George, b. 22 Dec. 1908 ; Percy, b. 20 July, 1911, and Margaret Lilian, b. 7 July, 1914."
- Pte 35717 Thomas Hughes.
- Pte 36169 George Jones. Aged 29, son of George and Sarah Jones of 43 Victor Street, Chester and husband of Agnes E. Jones of 2 New Street, Chester. *The Times* of 12 July 1917 lists him "Previously Reported Missing, Now Reported Killed"
- Pte W/316 James Leadbeater. Aged 22, son of William and Emily Leadbeater of 2, Lock Road, Eastham Ferry.
- Pte 13238 Stephen Lloyd. Reported as wounded and missing by *The Times* 12 June 1917.
- Pte 15518 John Loughlin.
- Pte 35435 Harold Lowcock.
- Pte 10801 James Smith. Husband of Elizabeth Bennett Smith.
- Pte 44284 Thomas Southern. "Times" of 22 January 1918 lists him "Previously Missing, Now Reported Died As Prisoner of War In German Hands"
- Pte 35282 James Spilsbury. Aged 26, son of Henry and Annie Spilsbury of The Halfway House, Mobberley.
- Pte 44158 John Tilsley. Aged 35, husband of Catherine Tilsley of Poole Hall Lane, Reaseheath, Nantwich.

Royal Engineers (all traced to belong to 106th Field Company)

Casualty list printed in *The Times* 2 April 1917

- Spr 134443 Frederick Bale (Minehead). Was listed in a German "Totenliste" dated 23 April 1917. He was the husband of Ruby Bale of 16 Middle Street, Minehead.
- 2/Cpl 95485 Fred Collins (Camden Town). A skilled painter originally from Birmingham, enlisted in London in April 1915. He landed in France with the company on 26 September 1915. He was married to Eva of 7 Gloucester Road, Regent's Park. His presumed death was mentioned in a War Office list of 12 January 1918.
- Spr 62333 Arthur Manley (Ivybridge). Enlisted in Plymouth in January 1915 and was with the company throughout the rest of his life. A skilled tailor, his presumed death was also mentioned in the War Office list of 12 January 1918. He was unmarried and was the only son of Tom and Mary Manley of 42 Fore Street, Ivybridge.
- Spr 58065 Matthew Miller (Kirkcaldy). An iron turner, enlisted at the age of 19 in Edinburgh in November 1914 and was with the company throughout the rest of his life. He was unmarried and the son of Sarah Miller of 32 Union Street, Kirkcaldy. She had last seen in him during a spell of home leave in early January 1917.
- Spr 58904 James Phillips (Wigan) was the son of Peter and Mary Phillips of 4 Newman Avenue, Springfield Road, Wigan. Before enlisting he had worked as a drawer at the Giant's Hill Colliery. Phillips had recently earned the Military Medal for bravery when aged 22 in 1916: it was announced in the *London Gazette* on 21 December 1916.

The *Dundee People's Journal* (this edition dated 8 March 1919) ran a column titled "Our inquiry bureau" after the war, hopeful that repatriated prisoners of war could report on men who were still missing. Matthew Miller's mother made an enquiry. One wonders whether she ever gained any further information: it must surely be doubtful.

Mr and Mrs Meek, 8 Graham Pl., Dundee.
MILLER.—Sapper Matthew K. Miller, No. 58065, also his pal, Sapper James Phillips, 106th Field Company, R.E.; both were last seen together in the second line of German trenches at Ploegsteert Wood on 17th February 1917. Can any returned prisoner of the 11th Cheshire Regiment give information to Mrs Walter Miller, 32 Union St., Sinclairtown, Kirkcaldy?
MORRISON.—Pte. Albert Morrison, No. 40192.



Photograph of Matthew Miller from the "Bond of Sacrifice" also in Imperial War Museum collection HU125668



James Phillips MM. Photograph from the "Bond of Sacrifice" also in Imperial War Museum collection HU116935

Wounded

1st Wiltshire Regiment

The list of wounded of 1/Wiltshire appeared in *The Times* on 17 March 1917.

Ryder, 33208 T. (West Ham, E.); Simmonds, 200816 L.-Cpl. S. A. (Walworth, S.E.); Tharme, 6743 G. P. (Langley Hill).
WILTS R.—Bushnell, 31587 T. A. (Portsmouth); Carter, 9168 H. (Odstock); Collier, 22204 R. (Swindon); Collins, 17703 W. (Hammersmith, W.); Cornish, 6427 A. C. (Plaistow, E.); Cruse, 24540 W. H. (Devizes, Enlt.); Ferris, 10373 J. (Chippenham); Goldring, 29759 E. C. (Hackney, N.E.); Harding, 26676 R. (Swanage); Hare, 20576 L.-Cpl. F. (Leyton, N.E.); Hawkins, 26387 T. (Winterbourne); Jordan, 11063 Cpl. E. J. (Swindon); Kiddle, 22744 W. C. (Salisbury); Miller, 12093 J. J. J. (Westbury); Nock, 18719 L.-Cpl. H. N. (Bradford-on-Avon); Parsons, 25784 L.-Cpl. R. D. (Chippenham); Riley, 33176 S. W. (Barking); Rivers, 21170 A. R. (Swindon); Rogers, 18578 W. (Trowbridge); Rouse, 19285 W. J. (Bishopston); Simpson, 19595 J. (Canning Town, E.); Snell, 29903 A. R. (Southsea); Strong, 9191 L.-Cpl. G. (Rushall); Tilley, 29910 W. (Curry Rivel); Welsh, 26693 C. E. (Swanage); Wheeler, 12084 A. H. (Westbury); Wilson, 9893 A. (Rodbourne Cheney); Wooten, 23725 E. A. (Salisbury).
YORK AND LANCs R.—Turner, 11833 W. (Sheffield).

The list includes two men wounded on 16 February: Miller and Strong. The rest are casualties of the raid.

10th Cheshire Regiment

The list of wounded of 1/Cheshire also appeared in *The Times* on 17 March 1917.

(Sunderland); Thompson, 11289 W. (Leeds).
CHESHIRE R.—Abrams, 49424 S. (Rock Ferry); Addison, 33204
H. W. (Bolton); Allcock, 35334 W. (Davenham); Atkinson, 8813
Act. Sgt. J. (Northwich); Bennett, 36484 J. (Tattenhall); Ben-
von, 24102 F. (Northwich); Birch, 36936 H. (Stalybridge);
Bradbury, 14278 W. (Glossop); Brandes, 9445 C. C. (Liverpool);
Bray, 57926 E. A. (Bradford-on-Avon); Bryer, 16044 G. (Stock-
port); Candiland, 52435 E. (Birkenhead); Clapp, 57929 F. S.
(Exeter); Davies, 45492 W. (Birkenhead); Dutton, 13124 L.-
Sgt. W. (Northwich); Eastwood, 14585 A. (Christchurch); Eaton,
49855 E. L. (Manchester); Egerton, 26366 T. (Middlewich);
Ellis, 36124 W. (Ashton-under-Lyne); Evans, 36852 J. V. (Den-
bigh); Fairhurst, 9506 G. (Sandbach); Fish, 25413 J. (Bury);
Godbold, 25586 E. (Whitby); Goodwin, 31587 H. (Pendleton);
Hedgecock, 35986 T. R. (Runcorn); Hewitt, 25136 Act. Sgt. P.
(Middlewich); Jepson, 50499 W. (Stockport); Jones, 24038
L.-Cpl. W. (Stockport); Knox, 14607 L.-Sgt. C. A. (Macclesfield);
Hamer, 35487 L. D. (Stalybridge); Ledger, 12537 W. (Egremont);
Ledsham, 26866 J. S. (Ellesmere Port); Lloyd, 17884 S. (Saltney);
Meredith, 52405 S. (Middleton); McKenzie, 24542 A. (Seacombe);
Nuttall, 45341 S. (Stockport); Pladdys, 25821 C. J. (West Hartle-
pool); Redfern, 11968 H. (Dukinfield); Roberts, 36306 C.
(Tranmere); Robertson, 52446 T. (Carrington Moss); Rooke,
11324 W. E. (Neston); Rowland, 36963 A. (Stockport); Savage,
35081 J. (Frodsham); Schofield, 13398 Act. Cpl. V. (Stockport);
Smellie, 32147 A. (Preston); Smith, 35311 J. P. (Bilston); Smith,
36581 C. R. (Egremont); Taylor, 11364 W. G. (Liverpool);
Taylor, 36107 F. (Over); White, 50466 F. (Hook); Whitney,
25763 J. (Runcorn); Wilcoxon, 44169 C. (Willaston); William-
son, 32825 T. (Romiley); Wood, 52450 S. (Marple); Woodall,
15209 Act. Cpl. C. (Altrincham); Worrall, 44043 S. W. (Frodsham).
R. WELSH FUS.—Haydock, 31805 R. (Blackburn).

The two wounded officers appeared in *The Times* casualty list on 26 February 1917: Second Lieutenants Joseph Leslie Watkin Bles and Second Lieutenant William Norman Nicholls, who had led the detachment of C Company. Both survived the war.

The enemy unit that faced the raid

The two prisoners were reportedly of the *Königlich Bayerisches Reserve-Infanterie-Regiment 5*, a unit raised in Ludwigshafen, Landau and Neustadt. It came under command of 5 Reserve-Infanterie-Brigade of 4. *Königlich Bayerische Division*.

Other notes

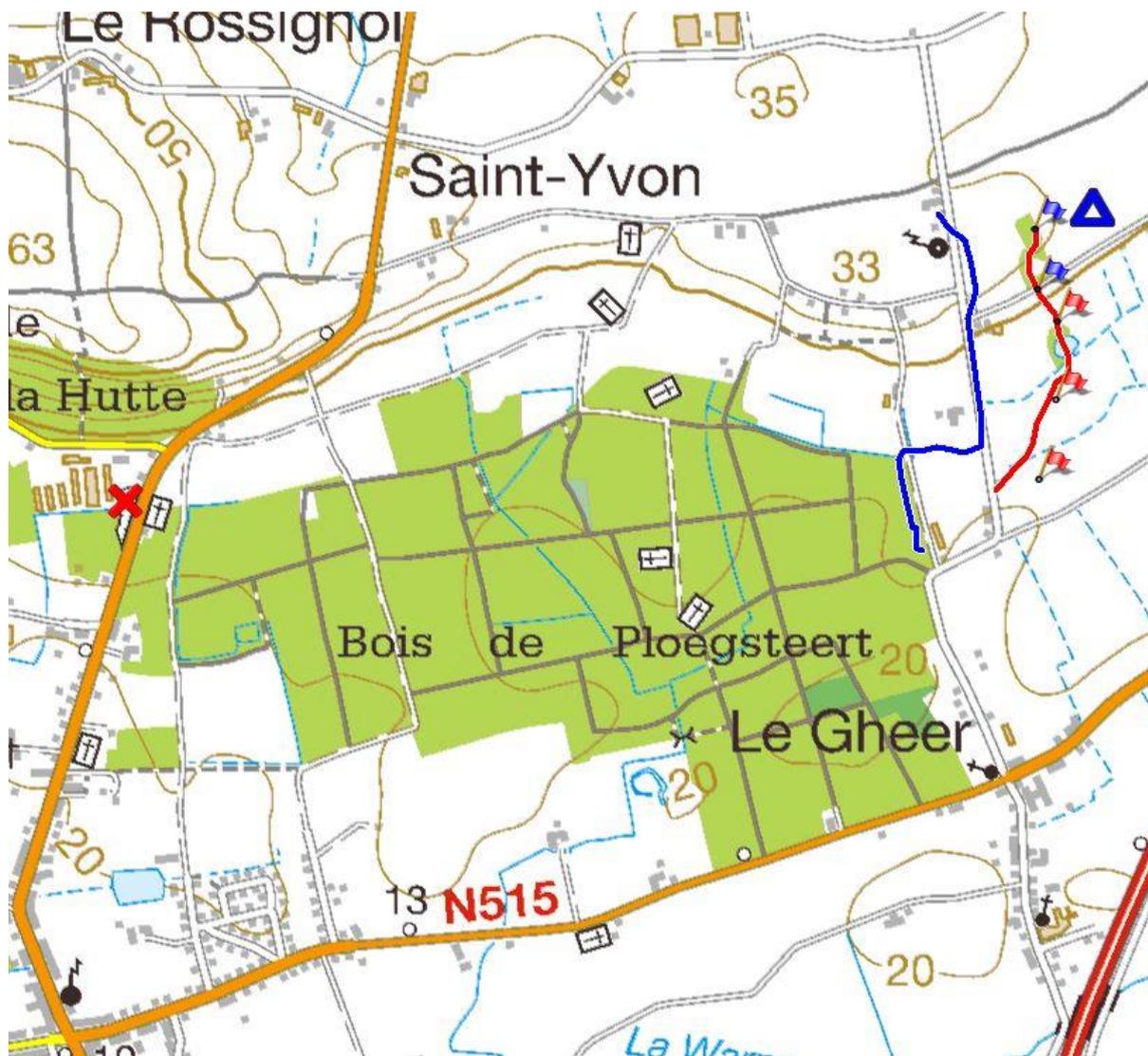
The chosen date for the raid was of significance to the Cheshire Regiment, which annually celebrated it as “Meane Day” in memory of an action fought by its predecessor the 22nd Regiment of Foot in the Sind province of India in 1843.

The Cheshires raiding party was commanded by Captain Ivan Appleton, supported by Second Lieutenants Harvey Rowe (A Company), William Nicholls (C Company) and John Manning (D Company).

Ivan Stuart Appleton had been commissioned from the ranks of the 15th Hussars in June 1916. He survived the war and retired from the Tank Corps in 1933.

Harvey Rowe Wilfred Warwick Rowe, still only 21, died of wounds on 20 August 1917. The son of Lydia Ada Rowe of Putney, London, and the late Charles Courtney Rowe, he is buried in Reninghelst New Military Cemetery. He had been commissioned from the ranks of the London Rifle Brigade in July 1916. Rowe was awarded the Military Cross for his part in the raid: *“For conspicuous gallantry during a raid on the enemy’s trenches. He was the first to enter the trench, and himself accounted for five of the enemy. He then organised the clearing of the trench with marked coolness and ability, with the result that heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy.”*

Visiting the area today



The two opposing front lines overlaid onto a present day map along with the flags and markers shown above. On the left of the image, the red X marks the location of the Ploegsteert Memorial and Berks Cemetery Extension.

A tour of the Ploegsteert area often features in trips to see the sites of the unofficial truce of Christmas 1914 and (hopefully) those following my tours of the area of the 1918 Battle of the Lys (described in *“The Battle of the Lys : North : Objective Ypres”* published by Pen & Sword Battleground Europe in 2018). Factory Farm would also feature in any good tour following the Battle of Messines in 1917 as it was blown up by two of the enormous underground mines exploded on 7

June 1917. It is of considerable interest that the mine tunnels had already been dug by the time that this raid took place.

Of the raid area there is now little to see by way of any remaining trenches, bunkers or other traces of the battlefield although there are remains of the craters that resulted from the June 1917 explosions. Even so, it makes for an interesting visit.



Thanks to Google Maps we are standing – evidently on a gloomy day – at the junction of Rue St. Yvon (left) and Rue Riche (right). The brigade's front line trench ran alongside the Rue St. Yvon. The trees that can be seen down Rue Riche surround Ultimo Crater, the northernmost of the two exploded at Factory Farm in June 1917. The farm itself lay on the right hand side of the road. The field ahead of us was the no man's land crossed by the 10th Cheshires raiding party and where most of their casualties were incurred on the way back.



We have now moved further down Rue Riche – how the weather has changed! We are now standing on the position of the German front line that was raided on 17 February 1919. On this spot it was called Ultra Trench: on our left it became Ultimo Trench. The trees on the left are those around Ultimo Crater. Across the field on the right, the grassed lip of the crater at Factory Farm can be seen just before the trees. The farm itself was never rebuilt. It had been the northernmost extremity of the Wiltshires part of the raid.



Now back on the Rue St. Yvon but a little further south. We are on the Wiltshires front line. The trees on the right are at Factory Farm; those in the middle at Ultimo Crater. The raiding party crossed this no man's land on their way to do death and destruction in the enemy trenches.

Sources used in compiling this article

- The National Archives unit war diaries collection WO95
- The National Archives army service records collection WO363
- British Newspaper Archive
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers
- Imperial War Museum photographic archive
- International Committee of the Red Cross POW archive
- London Gazette

Chris Baker, 5th August 2019

www.longlongtrail.co.uk/7th-infantry-brigades-raid-on-factory-farm-17-february-1917/

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COMMEMORATION

PLOEGSTEERT MEMORIAL



Location Information

The Ploegsteert Memorial stands in Berks Cemetery Extension, which is located 12.5 Kms south of Ieper town centre, on the N365 leading from Ieper to Mesen (Messines), Ploegsteert and on to Armentieres. From Ieper town centre the Rijselsestraat runs from the market square, through the Lille Gate (Rijselpoort) and directly over the crossroads with the Ieper ring road. The road name then changes to the Rijselseweg (N336). 3.5 Kms along the N336 lies a fork junction with the N365. The N365, which forms the right hand fork, leads to the town of Mesen. The Cemetery lies 3 Kms beyond Mesen on the right hand side of the N365, and opposite Hyde Park Corner Royal Berks Cemetery.

History

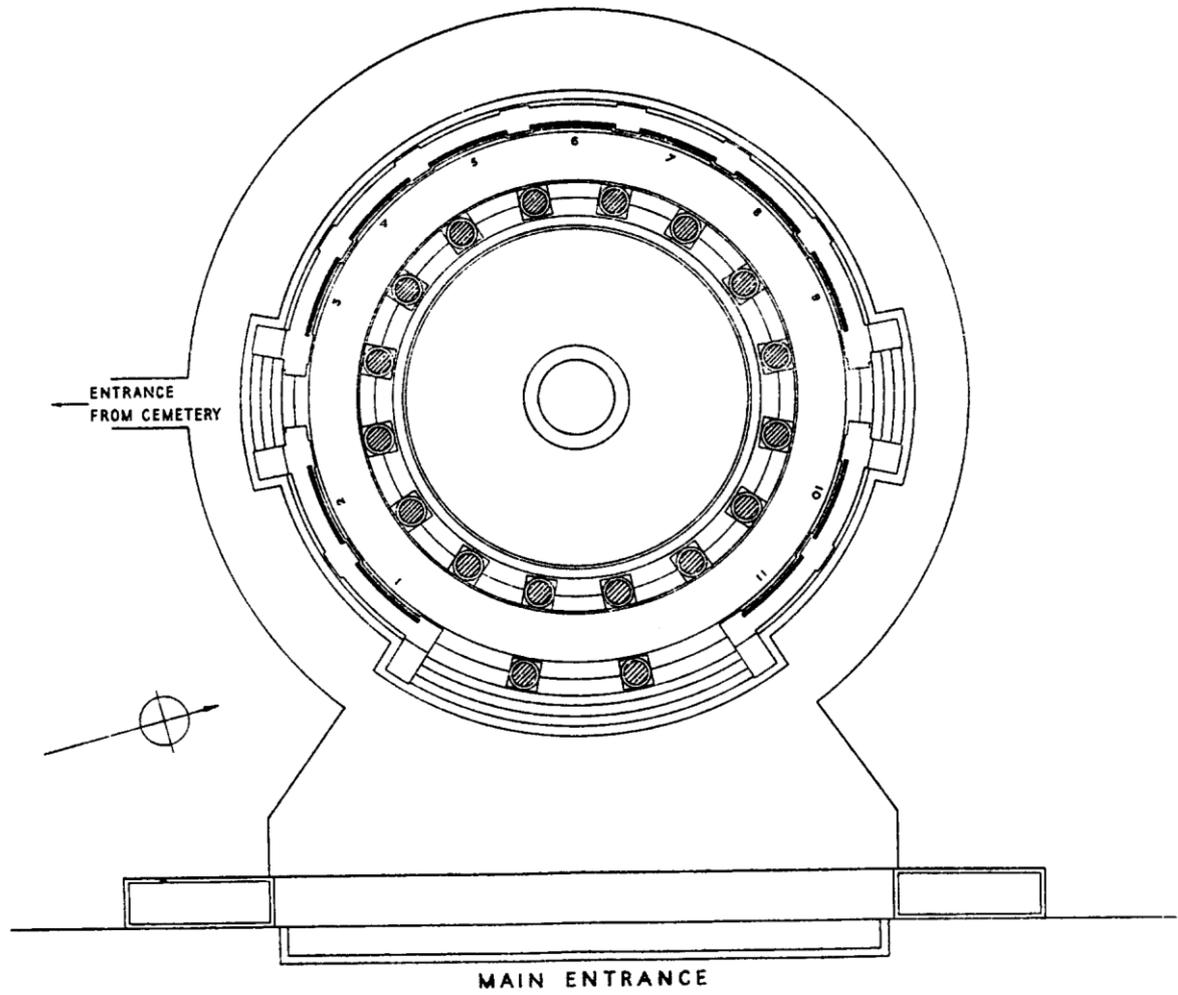
The Memorial commemorates more than 11,000 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in this sector during the First World War and have no known grave. The memorial serves the area from the line Caestre-Dranoutre-Warneton to the north, to Haverskerque-Estaires-Fournes to the south, including the towns of Hazebrouck, Merville, Bailleul and Armentieres, the Forest of Nieppe, and Ploegsteert Wood. The original intention had been to erect the memorial in Lille. Most of those commemorated by the memorial did not die in major offensives, such as those which took place around Ypres to the north, or Loos to the south. Most were killed in the course of the day-to-day trench warfare which characterised this part of the line, or in small scale set engagements, usually carried out in support of the major attacks taking place elsewhere. It does not include the names of officers and men of Canadian or Indian regiments (they are found on the Memorials at Ypres, Vimy and Neuve-Chapelle) and those lost at the Battle of Aubers Ridge, 9 May 1915, who were involved in the Southern Pincer (the 1st, 2nd, Meerut and 47th Divisions - they are commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial).



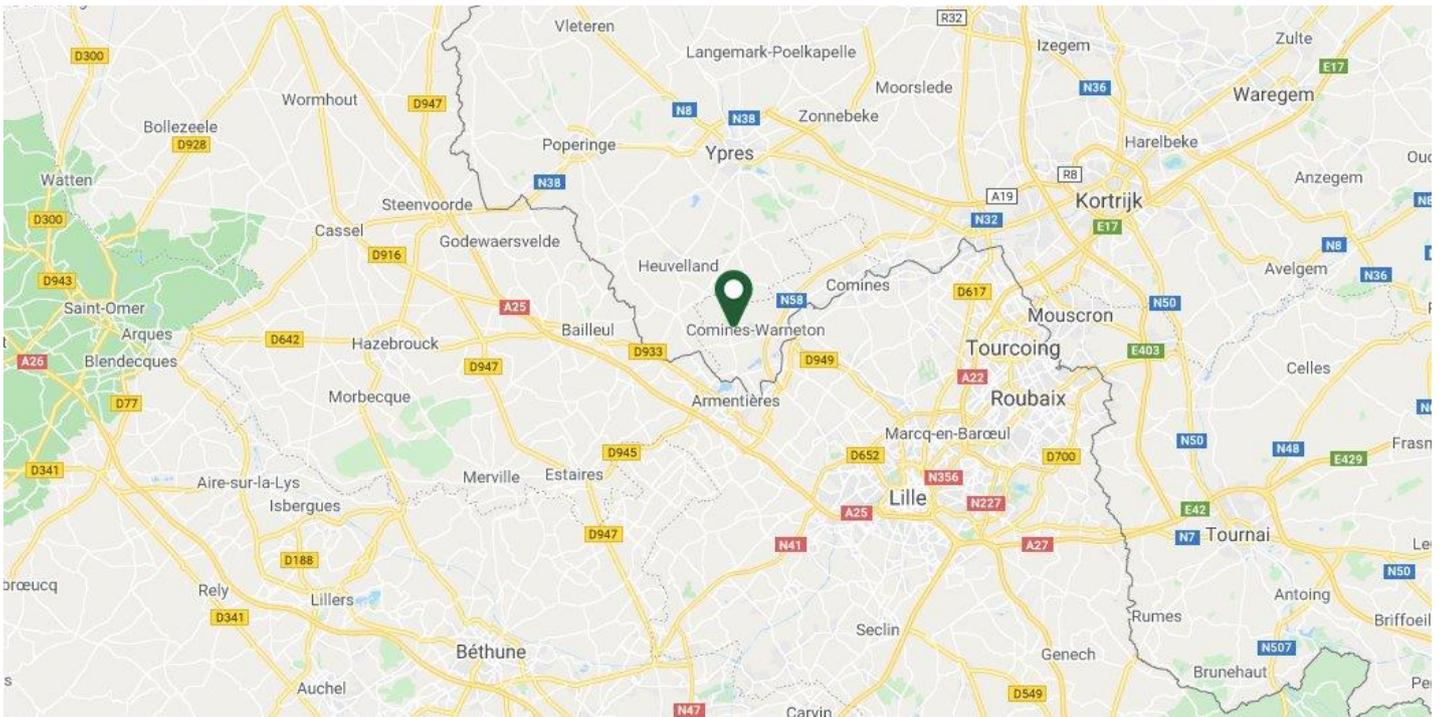
BERKS CEMETERY EXTENSION, in which the memorial stands, was begun in June 1916 and used continuously until September 1917. At the Armistice, the extension comprised Plot I only, but Plots II and III were added in 1930 when graves were brought in from Rosenberg Chateau Military Cemetery and Extension, about 1 Km to the north-west, when it was established that these sites could not be acquired in perpetuity. Rosenberg Chateau Military Cemetery was used by fighting units from November 1914 to August 1916. The extension was begun in May 1916 and used until March 1918. Together, the Rosenberg Chateau cemetery and extension were sometimes referred to as 'Red Lodge'. Berks Cemetery Extension now contains 876 First World War burials.

HYDE PARK CORNER (ROYAL BERKS) CEMETERY is separated from Berks Cemetery Extension by a road. It was begun in April 1915 by the 1st/4th Royal Berkshire Regiment and was used at intervals until November 1917. Hyde Park Corner was a road junction to the north of Ploegsteert Wood. Hill 63 was to the north-west and nearby were the 'Catacombs', deep shelters capable of holding two battalions, which were used from November 1916 onwards. The cemetery contains 83 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and four German war graves. The cemetery, cemetery extension and memorial were designed by Harold Chalton Bradshaw, with sculpture by Gilbert Ledward. The memorial was unveiled by the Duke of Brabant on 7 June 1931.





PLOEGSTEERT MEMORIAL
 THE NUMBERS AND LAYOUT OF THE PANELS



20

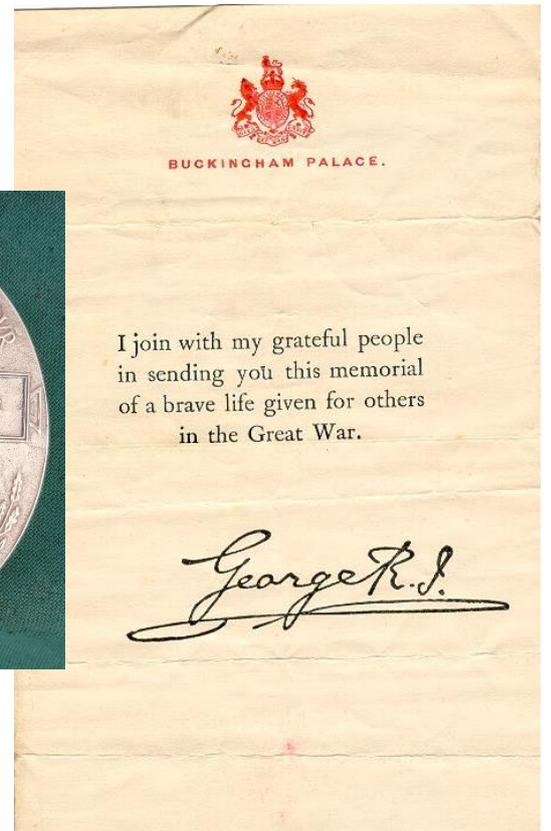
Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
KETTLE	Chees R.	Plw	18371
<i>Janus</i>			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	<i>B</i> 8/2/01-8	2358	<i>New A. 17.2.17</i>
BRITISH	do	do	
15 STAR	<i>T2/3B1</i>	943	
Theatre of War first served in	<i>1 France</i>		
Date of entry therein	<i>24.12.15</i>		

K. 1380.



Above: Medal Card
 Below: Service Medals (1915 Star, Victory Medal, and British Medal)

Memorial Plaque and Scrolls



(To be completed in duplicate.)

THE CHESHIRE REGIMENT OR CORPS.

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and British War Medal granted under Army Orders 301 & 266. of 1918. 2358

Regt. No.	Rank	NAME	Unit previously served with. Regt. No. and Rank to name on entry into theatre of war	Theatres of war in which served								Chape awarded (to be left blank)	Remarks	
				From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To			
18364	Pte.	FLANAGAN Joseph	Ches.R.Pte.18364. 1 Ches.R.											Infantry Base Depot.
18365	Pte.	LAUNDER James Rawlinson.	Ches.R.Pte.18365. 2 Ches.R.											Infantry Base Depot.
18369	Pte. (A/Cpl.)	JARRITT John Benjamin.	8 Ches.R.Pte.18369. Died. to Commn. in M.G.Corps. 7.4.17.											Infantry Base Depot.
18371	Pte.	KETTLE James.	Ches.R.Pte.18371. 10 Ches.R.											Infantry Base Depot.

I certify that according to the Official Records the individuals named in this ROLL are entitled to the Medal or Medals as detailed above.

Place _____ Date 23 OCT 1920

For Officer I / O No-2 Infantry Records, Shrewsbury. *William H. ...* Signature and rank of Officer certifying.

Regt. No.	Rank	Name	Regt. No.	Rank	Name	CREDITS			CHARGES			Date of Authority	To what Authority	Amount	Date of Payment	Regt. No.	Rank
						£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.						
457191	2/3000	Jones Thomas	9 th Btn	18	16	Shrewsbury	2	9	6				10/12	10/12	457196	2/3000	
457192	4/1000	Kettle James	10 th Btn	17	2	Shrewsbury	2	7	2				1-6	1-6	457197	4/1000	
457193	2/2200	Hemsworth William	7 th Btn	19	9	Shrewsbury	9	19	4				20-4	20-4	457198	2/2200	
457194	2/3100	Langton Vaughan	20 th Btn	12	17	Shrewsbury	12	17	4				19-5	19-5	457199	2/3100	
457195	2/1100	Leeds David Barn	6 th Btn	3	3	Shrewsbury	3	3	4				31-5	31-5	457200	2/1100	

WAR GRATUITY boxes and handwritten notes are present in the original image.

Above: James Kettle recorded on the medal rolls for the Cheshire Regiment

Left: Pension settlement for Elizabeth, James' young widow. (£2.7s 2d. per week).

War Memorials



As well as the Cheshire Regiment memorial in Chester Town Hall, James Kettle is recorded on three memorials; Northwich (where he grew up and worked), Weaverham (his wife's home), and Cuddington (where his daughter was born).



Weaverham War Memorial



Weaverham War Memorial

In Memory of

Private

James Kettle

18371, 10th Bn., Cheshire Regiment who died on 17 February 1917 Age 29

Son of the late Joseph Kettle of 35, Station Rd., Northwich; husband of Elizabeth Dodd (formerly Kettle), of 4, Chapel Lane, Moulton, Northwich.

Remembered with Honour

Ploegsteert Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

POSTSCRIPT

A matter of weeks after the death of James Kettle was reported, his widow Elizabeth married again. Her new husband was a young soldier, Ernest Dodd. In civilian life he was an engine greaser from Haslingden near Middlewich. He was just nineteen, and Elizabeth twenty-three, with a year-old infant.

On 9 May 1916, Ernest had attested at Chester for the 3rd Battalion, Cheshire Regiment. Although this was a training unit based in the UK, Private Dodd received his papers to report to Chester for training at the end of July 1917, after which he was posted to the 8th battalion, despatched to Devonport and shipped out to Bombay and Kirkee in India on 4 December later that year. He stayed there a year, before being posted to Salonika, leaving Bombay 29 November 1918, and arriving on 15 December. On 26 February 1919 he was returned to the UK, to hospital in Glasgow, suffering from Influenza, most likely the 'Spanish Flu'. It would not be until 10 August 1919 before he was discharged from service at Prees Heath in Shropshire.

His war record still exists, and nowhere does it record his marriage of Spring 1917, nor changes to his next of kin (his father), nor changes to his address on discharge (still his parent's home, by then 28 Booths Lane Middlewich, facing the Trent & Mersey Canal). It is possible that either his parents knew nothing of the marriage, or they had refused permission, as he was technically still a minor under the age of twenty-one.



After a period in the 1920s, when they are recorded as living in 4 Chapel Lane, Moulton, Northwich, Ernest and Elizabeth Dodd are recorded on the 1939 census living in Avondale, 58 Weston Road, Runcorn, where Ernest was working as a chemical substation assistant in a local factory. Ernest died on 17 June 1978 aged eighty.

James' daughter, Elsie Priscilla, married John Driver, a tannery worker, in 1937 and were living in 27 Fairholme Road, Northwich in 1939, with their infant daughter Joan born on 4 April that same year. John died in September 1987 aged seventy-nine. Elsie lived a long life and passed away on 25 May 2007 aged ninety-one.



Research continues in the attempt to find any family link with Rose Cottage in Quarry Lane, Kelsall in the mid-1980s. Exhaustive enquiries so far have drawn a blank, but a great deal more is now known about James Kettle and it is still hoped to make contact with the present family to finally return his memorial plaque where it belongs.

Researched and written

by

Mike Royden

Thanks to Chris Knight of Dunedin, New Zealand

Account of the 7th Infantry Brigade's raid on Factory Farm

by Chris Baker of The Long, Long Trail

www.roydenhistory.co.uk

husband of Elizabeth Dodd (formerly Kettle), of