

COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF
SIDNEY CHARLES LUCAS



Who died on 30th August 1916
while serving with the
1st Battalion of the
Devonshire Regiment
on the Somme.



Dawlish World War One Project 1914-18 / 2014-18
Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and
Dawlish Town Council



Welcome to this Act of Commemoration.

Dawlish Town Council and Churches Together in Dawlish and District are commemorating the death in the service of the nation of every Dawlish person who was killed as a result of enemy action during the First World War.

Today we remember the death of Sidney Charles Lucas who volunteered for action and died on the 30th August 1916.

After the First World War, it was decided that a single town War Memorial would be erected close to the parish church, and no church would have its own War Memorial. In keeping with this decision, these Acts of Commemoration take place in the town centre churches without regard to the denomination of the person they commemorate and they are led by a minister or pastor of the host church. The same Order of Service is used at each service.

There will be opportunity to talk to the leader of the service afterwards when light refreshments will be served.

Please join in the words which are in **heavy type**.

You are invited to take a reproduction of St John's Gospel which was given to every service person during the First World War.

Churches Together in Dawlish & District
28 High Street,
Dawlish, EX7 9HP

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Introduction

We have gathered today as part of our commemoration of those Dawlish people who were caught up in the courageous but tragic events of the First World War.

We remember those who were killed in action,
those who were maimed and those whose minds were disfigured
by conflict.
the bereaved and the lost and those who lived in darkness,
the families which were shattered,
and all who held in silence the unspeakable memories of warfare.

In particular today on the 100th anniversary of his death we remember Sidney Charles Lucas who was killed in action in the service of his country.

Prayer

Almighty God, the Lord of all,
today we pause to remember with gratitude
the life and death of Sidney Charles Lucas
knowing that he was, is and always will be
known and loved by you.

We thank you for his willingness to fight for our country
even if necessary to the point of death.

And today we remember his family and friends
who grieved at his death
and whose lives were never the same.

Amen.

We hear about the life and death of Sidney Charles Lucas.

Reading Romans 8:31-39

What, then, shall we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord

please stand

A prayer of Commemoration

We remember before God Sidney Charles Lucas

Lord, have mercy

Today we commit Sidney Charles Lucas to the love of God

We give thanks for his life, and grieve at his death

May he rest in peace

and rise In glory.

He shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

age shall not weary him, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

we will remember him.

We will remember him.

A candle may be lit or a bouquet may be placed before the pieta.

A time of silence

We remain standing

The Commitment to all those who died in the service of the nation.

Lord God, Father of all,
in thankfulness for Sidney Charles Lucas
and in his memory
we pledge ourselves
to bring comfort to the sad, the lonely and the distressed;
to bring relief to all who are in need
and to serve you and to work for peace.
Keep us ever mindful of the struggles
and achievements of former generations
and so make us grateful
now and in the days to come.
Amen

O Lord, our maker and our strength,
from whose love in Christ we can never be parted
either by death or life:
Look in mercy on those for whom we pray this day,
and grant us your protection and peace,
that we may be saved in body and soul,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

As we ask for deliverance from the forces of destruction
and for peace in our time and In our lives
we pray together:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
for thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
AMEN.**

The Blessing

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the Queen,
the Commonwealth and all the world
peace and concord:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.

Amen.

Sidney Charles Lucas was the youngest child of William Henry Lucas (1852-1933) and Emily Brown (1857-1895). They had six children, all born in Dawlish; Henry James (Harry)(1879-1947), Emily Daisy (1881-1960), Maud Louisa (1884-1909), William (1886-), Edith Beatrice (1889-1960) and **Sidney Charles (1892-1916)**. Their father was variously shown as an agricultural labourer and a domestic gardener. Their mother died in 1895 at the age of 38, when **Sidney** was three years old.

In 1901 William Henry Lucas was living at No 13 Chapel Street with all of his children. The older daughters were shown as "laundress", Harry was a "general labourer" and William a "shop porter". Edith and Sidney were at school.

It is not known when **Sidney** enlisted at Exeter with the First Devons. This was one of the permanent battalions of the Devonshire Regiment that left its posting in Jersey, the Channel Islands and was sent to France on 21st August 1914. On arrival they were reinforced by around 500 reservists from Exeter. The "Medal Rolls Index" card shows that **Sidney** arrived in France on 20 September 1914, and so may have been among those reservists. On 31st July 1915 they moved to the Somme.

When the offensive began on 1st July 1916 the Devons were at Arras but returned to the Somme, to consolidate the line around Longueval. Shellfire and German counter-attacks cost them 265 casualties. In September they made two very successful advances near Guillemont at a cost of 376 casualties. (keepmilitarymuseum.org)

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack on the Somme front was a failure.

In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day.

Lance Corporal Sidney Charles Lucas was killed in action on the 30th August, 1916.

The Send-Off

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard,
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Not there if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers.

Shall they return to beatings of great bells
In wild train-loads?
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,
May creep back, to still village wells
Up half-known roads.

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

was awarded the Military Cross for 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty' in 1918 and was killed in action a week before the Armistice. News of his death reached his parents as the bells in Shrewsbury rang to announce the Armistice on 11 November 1918.