

COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF  
**Private James Henry Hill R.A.M.C.**



Who died on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1917, aged 26  
in the sinking of Hospital Ship “SALTA”



Dawlish World War One Project 1914-18 /2014-18  
Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and  
Dawlish Town Council  
[www.dawlishww1.org.uk](http://www.dawlishww1.org.uk)



## 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 James Henry Hill who volunteered for action but died on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1917.

After the First World War, it was decided in Dawlish 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. When we remember men listed on the War Memorials in St. Mary's Cofton or St. George's Holcombe, the service is held in the appropriate village church.

There will be opportunity to talk to the leader of the service afterwards when light refreshments will be served. You are invited to take a reproduction of St John's Gospel which was given to every service person during the First World War.

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

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 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death we remember **James Henry Hill** who died in nursing the wounded while 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 **James Henry Hill**  
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 James Henry Hill

**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 James Henry Hill

**Lord, have mercy**

Today we commit James Henry Hill 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 James Henry Hill  
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,  
and 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.**

## James Henry Hill

Born Dawlish, 1<sup>st</sup> April 1891  
Private 10014

Died April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1917, aged 26  
Royal Army Medical Corps

**James Henry Hill** was the great grandson of George and Elizabeth Hele/Hill. The surname was spelled Hele, but later census entries adopt the spelling Hill.

George was born ca 1819 in Ugbrooke, Devon and his wife in 1818 in St Thomas district. They appear in the 1841 census living in Alphington, and in 1851 they are at 11 Quay Lane, Holy Trinity, Exeter. There were four children including Thomas (1839-1893). Thomas Hill married Mary Ann Vile (1842- ) in St James, Shoreditch on 29 October 1860 and in the following year's census he describes himself as a "Ladies' shoe maker" and both he and his new wife are shown as being born in Exeter, Devon. Living with them at 6 Bath Place, Shoreditch St Leonard in 1861 was Henry Hill, then 16 and described as a "shoe maker".

Henry returned to Devon and married Elizabeth Coombes (1846- ) in 1870. Both Henry and Elizabeth were born in Dawlish.

In 1871 they are living at 41 St Paul's Street, East Stonehouse. Henry was a Private in the Royal Marines and they had two children, Henry John Hill and William T Hill.

Henry and Elizabeth Hill had a total of nine children all of which survived to the 1911 census, by which time they had been married 41 years. The children were born in Dawlish.

Henry John Hill 1867-1921? married Bessie Dawe (see below)

William T 1870- became an Ostler (1891)

Charles Henry 1873- married Amy Nixon and they had six children

Frederick J 1876- became a Telegraph Messenger, G.P.O.

Thomas 1878- moved to London, Shoreditch, (see above)

Albert J 1880- became a butcher's assistant (1901)

Lily 1882- became a laundress (1901)

Ethel 1885- " "

Arthur 1887-

Henry John Hill married Bessie Dawe (1860-1953) on 30 August 1890 in the parish Church, Dawlish. They lived at 7 Badlake Hill and Henry John was a house painter and Bessie a dressmaker. **James Henry Hill** was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1891 at Badlake Hill. An aunt, Clara

Blackmore, was present at the birth. There were four further children but only three in all survived to the 1911 census:

**James Henry, 1891-1917**, subject of this profile

Frances Edward (1894-1970) and

Russell (1897-1920), who was also to appear on Dawlish War Memorial.

**James Henry Hill** enlisted at Leicester in the Royal Army Medical Corps and he first served in H.S. on 31-10-14. The 'H.S.' may refer to Hospital Ship because a report in the Dawlish Gazette of 2 January 1915 shows that he contributed to an entertainment for men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Devons, based in the town.

“Others contributing were Pte Jim Hill, (Son of Mr H Hill, Dawlish, who belongs to the R.A.M.C. of the Regular Army, and is now attached to No 1 Base, 'Carisbrook Castle', hospital ship)”.

The ferrying of wounded men from France to Britain was carried out by marked Hospital Ships, a number of which ran between Le Havre and Southampton, from where men would be taken by train to other larger hospitals including Netley, overlooking Southampton Water.

Later in 1915, on the 19<sup>th</sup> June, **James Henry Hill** married Ethel Flora Grumbridge (1891- ) in the Parish Church, Dawlish. It is not known if there were children of this marriage.

In 1917 **Private James Henry Hill**, R.A.M.C. was serving aboard the Hospital Ship SALTA which struck a mine and sank off Le Havre.

In 1915 SS SALTA was requisitioned by the Admiralty as a hospital ship.

On April 10th, 1917, while in convoy with 3 other hospital ships in front of Le Havre, the pilot didn't follow the 'follow me' sign from HMS Diamond and pulled to port to let the other ships pass first. This proved fatal as she immediately struck a mine and sank in 9 minutes, 1/2 mile North of the Whistle Buoy. Despite the rescue effort of 2 destroyers, 4 trawlers and a pilot vessel, only 74 from the 250 on board were saved. P-26 in an attempt to help, also struck a mine and was broken in two pieces.