

## COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF

**William Joseph Marks**  
Gunner, Royal Field Artillery



Who was killed in action  
on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1917, aged 27



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 William Joseph Marks who volunteered for action but died on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 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 William Joseph Marks who died in action 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 William Joseph Marks  
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 William Joseph Marks

**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 William Joseph Marks

**Lord, have mercy**

Today we commit William Joseph Marks 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 William Joseph Marks  
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.**

## The life of William Joseph Marks 1890 - 1917

“Much sympathy will be felt with Mr Marks, foreman gardener at Luscombe Castle, on the death of his son, Gunner Marks, RGA. Deceased leaves a widow and one child.” (*Dawlish Gazette 25<sup>th</sup> August 1917*)

**William Joseph Marks** was born at 8.20 am on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 1890 to John and Eliza Marks in Clyst St Lawrence, where his father was a farm labourer.

John and Eliza Marks had five children, Sidney, Emily, **William (1890-1917)**, Rosina, and John Marks. Their father became a gardener/groom by 1901 and they lived at Strete Raleigh in 1911 where he was a “Gardener domestic”. John Marks took employment at Luscombe Castle, Dawlish, subsequently.

**William Joseph Marks** married Elizabeth Jane Pile in St Mary's Church, Rockbeare on 24 April 1912. She was the eldest of nine children of Philip and Mary Ann Pile. Philip Pile was a “labourer” at Otterton(1891), a “waggoner on farm” at Otterton(1901), and a “farmer” at Palmers' Farm, Rockbeare in 1911.

Elizabeth was eight years his senior when they married. A daughter, Ruby N M Marks, was born and registered in September 1912 in St Thomas. (Ruby N M Marks married Ernest H Hayman in Sept 1933.)

It is recorded that **William Joseph Marks** enlisted at Exeter, but no further detail is available of his service record.

He died on the third day of the third battle of Ypres, which lasted until November 1917 and also became known as the Battle of Passchendaele. He is buried in Vlamertinghe New Military Cemetery which is located 5 Kms west of Ypres (Ieper) town centre and to the south of the village of Vlamertinge (Vlamertinge is the modern spelling of Vlamertinghe).

The *Western Times* of 31 August, 1917 reported, under the MARSH GREEN heading, "Much sympathy is extended to Mrs W. Marks, whose

husband, Gunner William Marks., R.F.A., was killed in action on August 2nd. The deceased, who leaves a widow and one little girl, was greatly respected by all who knew him. He was competent and skilled in all kinds of agricultural work, and was also a sidesman of the church at Marsh Green. He had only been at the front about a month."

Elizabeth Jane Marks continued to live at Marsh Green, Rockbeare.

By the third day of the Third Battle of Ypres more than 5,000 Germans had been taken prisoner and the British forces pushed the Germans back almost a mile in places. America had entered the war on the allied side but Russian forces were in retreat.

### Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing bells for those who die as cattle?  
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.  
No mockeries now for them, no prayers or bells,  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,-  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells,  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?  
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.  
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen 1893-1918