

William Henry STEVENS

Born Dawlish, Q2,1890
Private 10816

Died 25 September 1915, Flanders, aged 25
Devonshire Regiment, 8th (Service) Battalion

William Henry Stevens was the fourth of eight children of Henry (Harry) Stevens (b.Cullompton, 1858-1941) and Sarah Jane Harris (b Luton, Nr Chudleigh, 1857-1923). Harry was an agricultural labourer and they had married in Q4, 1874 in St Thomas District.

They lived at Gulliford Cottage in 1901 with the three oldest children being born in Mamhead, and five younger being born in Dawlish. They were Edith S (b Mamhead, 1879-), James (b Mamhead, 1882-), Annie L (b Mamhead, 1886-), **William Henry**, Charles R (b Dawlish, 1893-), Beatrice E (b Dawlish 1896-), Maude E (b Dawlish 1897-) and Beat E M (b 1900-).

By 1911 they were living at 2 Hill Head Cottages, Mamhead where Harry was a Horseman farmer and Sarah a laundress. One of the children had died by that time.

William Henry Stevens married Elizabeth Aggett (b. Drewsteignton, 1882 – 1915) in Q3 1908 in Exeter St Thomas. In 1911 they lived at 6 Swan Court, Old Town, Dawlish. He was a carter and she worked in a laundry and they had a lodger who may have been Elizabeth's younger brother. Elizabeth died earlier in 1915, and a death certificate will reveal the cause. It must have had a dreadful impact on **William** at the Front.

William enlisted in Exeter with the Devonshire Regiment as part of Kitchener's New Army. His service number is close to that of Ernest John Crideford (10811) and they may have joined at the same time, probably following a local recruiting drive.

The Western Times, Friday 29 October 1915

"Official news was received at Dawlish Monday that Privates B.Hooper, **W.Stevens**, and J.Dew had been killed in action.

Private W Stevens was a widower, his parents are living at Mamhead, near Dawlish, and previous to the war he was a labourer."

Killed in Action on the first day of the Battle of Loos. He was one of eight soldiers from Dawlish who died on that day.

The Dawlish Gazette

SATURDAY, October, 30th, 1915

DAWLISH MEN IN "BULLER'S OWN."

MORE DEATHS REPORTED

"Fears for the untimely fate of other local men of the 8th Devons who took part in the fighting of Sept. 25th have been only too sadly confirmed this week.

Monday, however, brought sad news in three cases, when official notifications were received of the deaths of Ptes. J Dew, A J Hooper, (known to his intimates as "Bert") and W H Stevens..... Pte Stevens hailed from Mamhead, but had worked in Dawlish for some time. He was a widower, his wife having died since he joined the army. The deepest sympathy is felt with the bereaved families in their sorrow."

Payments were made to his father, Harry, of £4.11.0d on his death and a War Gratuity of £3.10.0d in May 1919.

Dawlish World War One Project

He was awarded the Victory Medal, British Medal and the 15 Star.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: STEVENS, William Henry, Private, 10816, died 25/9/1915
Age 25, Devonshire Regiment, 8th (Service) Battalion, panels 35-37 Loos Memorial
Son of Harry and Sarah Jane Stevens of Hill Head, Mamhead, Kenton. Husband of the
late Elizabeth Stevens.

Dawlish War memorial inscription: STEVENS W.H. PTE. DEVON REGT.

He is recorded on the Devon Roll of Honour, but date and place of death missing. He does not
appear on Dawlish Boys' School Roll of Honour.

Devon Heritage site info:

10816 Private William Henry Stevens of the 8th Battalion, the Devonshire Regiment. Son
of Harry and Sarah Jane Stevens of Mamhead; husband of the late Elizabeth Stevens.
Born in Dawlish in 1891. Died 25 September 1915 aged 24.

Last known address: No 6 Swan Court, Old Town, Dawlish (1911)

References:

Free Birth Marriage Death records

refs via subscription sites:

Census records

Army Register of Soldiers' Effects

Army Medal Rolls Index

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