

## COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF HENRY ALFRED HOGARTH BREN



Who died on 9th September 1916  
in the Battle for Ginchy  
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 Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren who volunteered for action but died on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1916.

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 at 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 Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren who died in the Battle for Ginchy 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 Henry Bren  
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 Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren

**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 Henry Bren

**Lord, have mercy**

Today we commit Henry Bren 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 not grow 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 Henry Bren  
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.**

**Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren** came from a family of churchmen and missionaries. His grandfather, Rev'd Robert Bren (1823-1885) was born in Reading. He married Sarah Jordan Brown and they went to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where he worked as a missionary from 1849 to 1858. Their children, Robert, Sarah J and Henry Alfred were born there.

Henry Alfred Bren was born in Kopay, Jaffna, Ceylon in 1855. He was curate of St John's Church, Reading in 1881, before moving abroad where he married Georgiana Elizabeth (nee Cole) (1861-1938) on 30 October 1885 in Nasik, Bombay, India. She had been born in Notting Hill, London.

Their first child, Robert Bren (1889-1957) was born in Bombay (now Mumbai) and soon afterwards they returned to Britain where Elsie Muriel Georgiana Bren (1890-1972) was born in Reading, Berkshire. Rev'd H A Bren and family left Reading and moved to Leeds where **Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren** was born on 21 February 1892.

Rev'd Henry Alfred Bren was appointed Principal of St Paul's Church of England Training College, Swindon Road, Cheltenham and is settled there with his family by the 1901 census.

His eldest son, Robert, followed him into the church and the younger son, **Henry A H Bren** appears to have been resident at the College in 1911. He matriculated from Oriel College, Oxford in November 1911. At the time of the 1911 census his mother and siblings, Robert and Elsie M G Bren, are shown at 'Nasik', Holcombe, and that remained their family home until Georgiana Elizabeth Bren's death on 6 January 1938. Note that the house bore the name of the district where the parents married in 1885.

On the outbreak of War **Henry Alfred Hogarth Bren** joined the Public School's Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment and he was a Private in that regiment when he applied for Appointment to a Commission in the Special Reserve of Officers, stating a preference for the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Leinster Regiment (Special Reserve).

He was awarded a Temporary Commission on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914. His medical record shows him as being tall for the times at 6' 01/2". It appears that he served initially in Ireland for he was admitted to the

Military Hospital, Curragh, in October 1915 for 'Nasal obstruction and tonsils', and was declared 'fit for general duties' on 27 January 1916. He was then attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Leinster Regiment and embarked for France on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1916, but was suffering from Hay Fever by 31<sup>st</sup> July and admitted to the 7<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital, Boulogne for two weeks, rejoining his unit on 20<sup>th</sup> August. The 7<sup>th</sup> Leinsters were part of the 47<sup>th</sup> Brigade which launched an attack on Guillemont on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1916. This was successful, taking the Germans by surprise, and Guillemont village was captured.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> September the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion took part in the assault on Ginchy to the north of Guillemont. As the attackers moved forward they were mown down by machine-gun fire from a trench that was thought to have been abandoned. The next day the battalion was withdrawn from the front, having been reduced to 15 officers and 289 other ranks from a total of around 1,000. Ginchy was captured but at the cost to the 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division of 4,300 casualties at Guillemont and Ginchy.

In a telegram from the War Office to his father on September 16<sup>th</sup> Henry was reported as 'missing'. In a further telegram on October 4 he was reported as 'Killed in action.' He is listed on the giant Somme memorial at Thiepval, Picardie: Pier and Face 16c His memorial from his family is the brass plaque in St George's Church, Holcombe.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
HENRY ALFRED HOGARTH BREN  
LIEUT LEINSTER REGIMENT  
EXHIBITIONER OF ORIEL COLLEGE OXFORD  
WHO FELL AT THE STORMING OF GUILLEMONT AND  
GINCHY 9 SEPTEMBER 1916 AGED 24  
With Christ which is far better

Revd H A Bren moved to Holcombe to retire. He is shown as resident at Holcombe in the 1919 and 1923 Kelly's Directories for Dawlish, living at 'Nasik', Fordens Lane (the first house on the left in Fordens Lane from the Teignmouth Road). He died on 3 January 1930.