

COMMEMORATING THE DEATH OF

Francis George Larcombe

Lance Corporal 2nd Battalion, the Devonshire Regt



Who died on 30th March 1917, aged 33



Dawlish World War One Project 1914-18 /2014-18
Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and
Dawlish Town Council
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 Francis George Larcombe who volunteered for action but died on 30th March 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 100th anniversary of his death we remember Francis George Larcombe who was killed in action while serving with the Devonshire Regiment in France.

Prayer

Almighty God, the Lord of all,
today we pause to remember with gratitude
the life and death of Francis George Larcombe
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 Francis George Larcombe

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 Francis George Larcombe
Lord, have mercy

Today we commit Francis George Larcombe 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 Francis George Larcombe
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.

Francis George LARCOMBE

Born Williton, Somerset 1884 Died France, 30th March 1917, aged 33

Francis George Larcombe was one of four children of John Clarke and Georgiana Mary Larcombe. John C Larcombe (1858-1909) was a Gamekeeper, born in Nettlecombe, Somerset, and Georgiana (nee Wood) (1859-1941) was a Certificated Schoolmistress born in Chepstow, Monmouthshire. They had married in 1881.

In 1891 John and Georgiana Larcombe were living at a cottage in Lowton, Pitminster, Somerset with two children, Annie C and **Francis G**.

In 1901 **Francis** was 17 and a cowherd on Slade Farm, Dulverton.

Francis George Larcombe married Ellen Susan Millman in 1909 at St Thomas the Martyr, Exeter. Ellen came from a large Exeter family living in St Thomas and was the daughter of Frederick J and Ellen M Millman.

Francis was Head Gamekeeper of the Luscombe Estate, Dawlish and in 1911 they were recorded as living at Beech Grove Lodge, Dawlish with their first child, Ellen. They had a second child, John in 1912. He later married Madeline Sumner in Frome, Somerset in 1940 and died in that district in 1990, aged 78. He was a highway engineer as recorded in the Probate record of 25 May 1954 from the Will of Francis George Larcombe.

Francis' mother Georgiana Larcombe was now a widow and living at Marsh Green, Rockbeare, with her son Henry John Larcombe and her daughter Laura Mary Larcombe. Georgiana died in 1941.

It is not known when **Francis** enlisted nor where, neither do Medal Rolls Index Cards give the date of his entry into France. It might be supposed that he joined when conscription took effect early in 1916, since the Death Grant paid to his widow was £1.17s.2d, a modest sum.

In March 1917 the Germans were falling back to the newer and deeply defended Hindenburg Line. General Haig gave orders for a general advance all along the line to start on March 17th. This was conducted with caution as the retreating Germans had left booby traps and hidden machine gun nests to delay the pursuing troops.

After a long period of trench warfare the open battlefield was a new experience. The 2nd Devons had another new experience encountering German cavalry, which was eventually driven back. On the 25th there was a night attack on the village of Lieramont which was defended by thick wire and infantry. Two days later cavalry patrols found Lieramont evacuated and the 2nd Devons moved up to occupy it. The enemy was beginning to stiffen resistance and an attack on Heudicourt on the 29th-30th March failed.

A fresh assault was ordered on the 30th and the 2nd Devons followed a barrage that lifted at 4.15pm to attack from the south. There was sharp fighting with rifle and machine-gun resistance, but by 6.45pm all objectives had been secured.

Francis George Larcombe is shown to have been killed in action on the 30th March.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: LARCOMBE, F G Lance Corporal
26094 30/03/1917

Age: 33 Devonshire Regiment, 2nd Bn.

Grave Ref: 1. Heudicourt Communal Cemetery, Somme, France

Son of Mrs. Larcombe, of Marsh Green, Exeter, and the late John Larcombe; husband of Ellen Susan Larcombe, of Beech Grove Lodge, Luscombe, Dawlish.