

COMMEMORATING THE DEATHS OF



William Robert Holloway

2nd Lieutenant 69th Company, Machine
Gun Corps

AND

**Charles Frederick
King**
2nd Lieutenant
Devonshire Regiment



Who died in Flanders on 20th September 1917



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 deaths of **William Robert Holloway** and **Charles Frederick King** who volunteered for action but died on 20th September 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. 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 their deaths we remember William Robert Holloway and Charles Frederick King who died in action in the battle of the Menin Road while in the service of their country.

Prayer

**Almighty God, the Lord of all,
today we pause to remember with gratitude
the lives and deaths of William Robert Holloway and Charles
Frederick King
knowing that they were, are, and always will be
known and loved by you.**

**We thank you for their willingness to fight for our country
even if necessary to the point of death.**

**And today we remember their families and friends
who grieved at their deaths
and whose lives were never the same.**

Amen.

We hear about the lives and deaths of William Robert Holloway and Charles Frederick King

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 Robert Holloway and Charles Frederick King

Lord, have mercy

Today we commit William Robert Holloway and Charles Frederick King to the love of God

We give thanks for their lives, and grieve at their deaths

May they rest in peace

and rise in glory.

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.**

**At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
we will remember them.**

We will remember them.

Candles 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 Robert Holloway and Charles
Frederick King
and in their 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.

South America to build the railway over the Andes from La Paz, Bolivia, to Arica on the Chilean coast. **William** was to join them.

The report in the Dawlish Gazette of 29th September 1917 says that **William Robert Holloway** "came home from South America to join the colours, after spending six years there with his brother, who is at present serving on the Western Front." That would be a reference to Albert Reginald Holloway. His father had meanwhile been engaged in constructing the Al Hindaya barrage across the Euphrates, south west of Bagdad, when he was interned by the Ottomans for the duration of the Great War. He died in a boating accident in Newfoundland in 1925, with his son Albert, and they are commemorated on their grave in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. Their monument also commemorates **WRH** and his mother, Lucy.

William Robert Holloway signed his attestation for Short Service (For the Duration of the War) and swore an Oath of Allegiance in Stoke-on-Trent on 12th May 1915 for service in the Motor Machine Gun Corps. He was not then married. The form shows that he was a Machinist and Electrician and living at 19 Cornford Grove, Balham, London SW. This address is that given in 1918 for Lucy Holloway and eight children, most probably where they had lived while W G Holloway was interned by the Turks.

William joined and was appointed (unpaid) Acting Bombardier on 2nd July 1915 and promoted to Corporal on 8th August and posted to the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). He disembarked at Le Havre on 6th February 1916.

William applied for a Temporary Commission on 6th August 1916 from the 19th Motor Machine Gun Battery, B.E.F, France. He had at that point reached the rank of Corporal with a regimental number 1158. His commanding officer gave a character reference for the 15 months in which he had been under his command and stated that "his moral character has been exemplary." Brigadier General Lecky personally

interviewed **WRH** and recommended him for training at the Artillery Training School.

On 29th August he was accepted for admission to Cadet School in England.

On 24th February 1917, **WRH** was granted a Temporary Commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the 19th Motor Machine Gun Corps.

Four days later, **William Robert Holloway** married Elsie Elizabeth Currey by licence at the Register Office, Aston, Birmingham on 28th February, 1917. He was 27 and she was 21 and they were living at 205 Bordesley Green. He was able to sign as a 2nd Lieutenant, M.G.C. (Electrical engineer); Elsie was a munition worker. Neither of the parents signed the register (her father, Thomas Gibbins Currey was born in Dawlish and the children were brought up there. He was already serving in France).

The Machine Gun Corps was established on 14 October 1914, with King George V as its Colonel-in-Chief. The best men from the Rifle Brigades were chosen and underwent additional training. The Corps' duties included accompanying the first wave of every assault and to remain to cover every retirement. This often meant being well ahead of the infantry. Knowing the effectiveness of machine guns, each post became the target of every enemy gun within range. Casualties were very high and the Corps was nicknamed "The Suicide Club".

On 20th September 1917 the phase of the third battle of Ypres known as the Battle of Menin Road commenced.

A telegram was sent from the War Office on 24th September 1917 to Mrs Holloway, Stockton Road, Dawlish, " Deeply regret to inform you 2/Lt W R Holloway M.G.C. was killed in action September twentieth. The Army Council express their sympathy."

On 9th February 1918 the *Dawlish Gazette* reported the receipt of a letter from the Captain, Commanding 69th Coy, MGC to say that "Your husband was killed in action leading his men over the parapet on 20th September. He was hit by a piece of shrapnel in the head and died almost immediately....Your husband was respected and like by all who knew him, both Officers and men, and we all feel his loss very much, and all unite in offering you our sincerest sympathy...."

In due course the effects of 2nd Lieut: W R Holloway were sent by registered post comprising 1 wrist watch with strap and guard, 1 identity disk and chain, 1 cigarette case and 1 photo.

Elsie Elizabeth Holloway was recognised as the next of kin and declared that a child, William Robert Holloway, had been born on 5th February 1918.

Elsie Elizabeth Holloway married again, to George H Baker in late 1920 (GRO ref Newton Abbot, 1920 Oct-Dec, vol 5b, page 290a). There were two further children of this marriage.

Commonwealth War Graves entry:

HOLLOWAY, WILLIAM ROBERT Second Lieutenant

20/09/1917 Age: 28 Machine Gun Corps (Infantry), 69th Coy.

Panel Ref: Panel 154 to 159 and 163A. [Tyne Cot Memorial](#), Flanders

Son of William George and Lucy Holloway; husband of Elsie Elizabeth Baker (formerly Holloway), of 7, King St., Dawlish, Devon.

Charles Frederick King

Born Dawlish, 28 October 1882 Died Flanders, 20 September 1917,
aged 34

2nd Lieutenant Devonshire Regiment (attached to 1st/9th Battalion,
King's Liverpool Regiment)

Charles Frederick King came from a family based in Gillingham, Dorset until his father became a school master in Dawlish. His grandparents, George and Elizabeth King, were born in Gillingham and George King (1830-) was a tailor. They had five children by the 1871 census, being James Frederick , Ellen J , William C , Lucy A and Kate Eliza .

James Frederick King became a pupil teacher after an education at Gillingham Grammar School.

He married Frances Mary Nicholls in 1881. Frances was the daughter of Joseph Nicholls of White Hall, Handsworth, Birmingham.

Charles Frederick King was baptised at St Gregory the Great, Dawlish on 10th December 1882.

The 1891 census shows the family at 3 Longlands, and James F King is an 'Elementary School teacher'. The family comprised: James Frederick King, 35, Frances, his wife, 28, **Charles Frederick, 8**, Winifred Mary, 6, Eileen Dorothy, 4, Muriel, 2, and Ethel M, 5 months.

In the 1901 census James F King described himself as schoolmaster & organist with three more children, Marjorie (1897-), Mervyn (1900-), Marion (1900-).

By 1911 James F King was a 'Head Schoolmaster of a Council School', most probably Dawlish Boys' School. His wife, Frances, was an assistant teacher.

James Frederick King initiated the Boys' School Roll of Honour which hung in the lobby of the School and was recorded in the *Dawlish Gazette* of December 19, 1914 as 'containing the names of those Old Boys of the school who have either given their lives for their country or

been wounded in battle. At present the number is eleven, five killed and six wounded.'

Charles Frederick King was educated at Dawlish Boys' School and is recorded on their Roll of Honour. After leaving school he joined the Royal Navy in 1900 as an Assistant Clerk (Paymaster's Branch) and was promoted to Clerk in July 1901, and to Assistant Paymaster in October 1903, a rank that he held until retirement in 1913.

On the outbreak of war he joined the Gloucestershire Regiment, 13th Battalion, in August 1914 in the rank of Captain, but resigned in 1916 when he enlisted with the Coldstream Guards as a Private, no 17806. He served with the British Expeditionary Force in France from March 1916 and was promoted in the field "for courage in the trenches". He was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant, Devonshire Regiment on 26 June 1917, and was then attached to the 6th (Territorial) Battalion the King's (Liverpool Regiment). In a letter that he wrote to his parents a few days before the Battle of the Menin Road he said, "I am honoured by having to lead over the first rush... I'm lucky, but it's a hard nut to crack."

He was killed in action on the Menin Road on 20th September 1917. The first news to reach his family reported him 'missing since 20th - 25th Sept' (*Dawlish Gazette* in Documents, q.v.). He was killed by machine-gun fire and death was instantaneous.

The Colonel wrote "He had not been with us long, but we all took to him at once, and I am certain he was a very fine soldier, and a great loss."

He is recorded on the Devon Roll of Honour, Dawlish Boys' School Roll of Honour, De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour.

Commonwealth War Graves entry:

KING, CHARLES FREDERICK Second Lieutenant

20/09/1917 Age: 34 Devonshire Regiment, attd. 1st/9th Bn. The

King's (Liverpool Regiment) Panel Ref: Panel 38 to 40. [Tyne Cot](#)

[Memorial](#), Flanders