

**In Memory of
Private HENRY WILLIAM HUNTER
17579, 2nd Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment
who died, age 28, on 21 September 1916
Son of Thomas and Sarah Ann Hunter,
of Little Coxwell, Faringdon, Berks.
Remembered with honour
Faringdon and Little Coxwell War Memorials and
VERMELLES BRITISH CEMETERY**



Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Vermelles is a village 10 km north-west of Lens. Vermelles was in German hands from the middle of October 1914 to the beginning of December 1914, when it was recaptured by the French.

The cemetery was begun in August 1915 (though a few graves are slightly earlier), and during the Battle of Loos, when the Chateau was used as a dressing station, Plot I was completed. It was laid out and fenced by the Pioneers of the 1st Gloucesters, and known for a long time as "Gloucester Graveyard". The remaining Plots were made by the Divisions (from the Dismounted Cavalry Division onwards) holding the line 1.6 km East of the cemetery until April 1917, and they incorporated a few isolated French graves of October 1914. From April 1917, to the Armistice, the cemetery was closed; but after the Armistice graves were brought in (to Plots II, IV and VI) from the battlefields to the East.

There are now over 2134 First World War casualties commemorated in this cemetery. Of these, 198 are unidentified and special memorials are erected to

six soldiers from the United Kingdom, known to be buried among them. This cemetery also contains the graves of 11 casualties of other nationalities.

This cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

War Diary

Thursday 21st September 1916 France, In Brigade Support: At 9am battalion proceeded to front line trenches and relieved the 2nd Rifle Brigade in the Left Sub-section. Right flank Battalion 1st Royal Irish Rifles. Left flank battalion 2nd Manchester Regt, 14th Bde 32nd Division. 2 O.R. killed and 3 O.R. wounded. 2 O.R. to hospital. Draft of 4 O.R. joined Battalion.

Henry William Hunter

Harry Hunter is another lad who was born, schooled, lived and worked in Little Coxwell. Initially named as William Henry, he was born on the 25th November 1887; he was subsequently called Harry, consequently he was known as Henry William.

Harry's father died when Harry was ten years old. Harry's mother, Sarah, then worked at home as a dressmaker to support herself and the children. By 1901, aged 13, Harry was working as a plough boy on a farm at Little Coxwell. Later Harry moved to Goring where he worked as a cowman.

In September 1916 the Faringdon Advertiser reported that Mrs Hunter had received intimation that her son was killed in action on September 21st. In the letter of sympathy, the Chaplain of the regiment wrote that Pte. Hunter was killed instantaneously.

They held a very nice funeral service on the following day, and erected a cross at the head of the grave. Harry's grave is at Vermelles British Cemetery, France; his headstone bears the inscription: rest in peace.

Ann Preston. Faringdon Folly November 2018