

Private 9541
James Arthur Blackmore
1st Battalion Scots Guards
1882 - 1915



Life in the Community

James was born in Swansea in 1882 and moved to Caerleon around 1888. The men of the family were involved with horses. His father, William was employed in grooming or horse transport and, when they were old enough, James and his brother William Henry joined him.

From the 1891 Census the family were living at Broadway Caerleon and James was a scholar and his father was a Coachman.

From the Census of 1901 the family were living in Newbury. James was a groom and his father was a Coachman.

Prior to 1911 the family had moved to Llanwern and James's parents and his younger brother Ernest were living at 1 Rockwell Terrace.

In 1911 James was working as a footman at Knightshayes Court in Tiverton, Devon. The owner of this Victorian country house Sir John Heathcott Amory was a Lace Manufacturer and politician. His son Ian Heathcoat Amory was a Staff Captain in the Royal Artillery during the First World War.

By January 1915 the family had moved to Milton Cottage, Llanwern.

Military Service

James was attested in Westminster on the 28th Aug 1914. He signed up for 3 years with the colours in the 3rd Battalion Scots Guards (Reserves) at Caterham on 30th August 1914.

The 1st Battalion Scots Guards had, by many standards, an unusual war. By mid-November it was back in Britain from India where it immediately mobilised. By 19th December it was at its war establishment of 30 officers and 972 soldiers.

James trained for 139 days at Winchester and then embarked at Southampton to join the 1st Battalion on 13th January 1915, at which time the Battalion was in the front line in Flanders where it quickly learnt to adapt to the monotonous, yet dangerous, routine of trench warfare holding the front line, being relieved, resting, providing working parties, relieving and holding the front line again. That routine was conducted against a backdrop of endemic sickness and violent death.

We know from the Regiment's war diary that on the 23rd January 1915 the battalion left Cambrian and went into the trenches at Cuinchy relieving the London Scottish. Trenches had not been completed the communication trench had been built and five trenches were full of water. Heavy rain all night.

On the 24th January 1915 the Germans shelled the position most of the day with their heavy guns most of the fire being delivered on Pont Fisce. It was impossible for working parties to be employed in improving the trenches.

On the 25th January 1915 at about 7am a German deserter came in and reported an attack imminent. The German attack commenced by the explosion of a mine in the trench held by No 4 Company under Captain Campbell. The first line of trenches were consequently rushed by the Germans. No 1 Company in the containment by the La Bashe Canel held its ground and No 2 Company under Lt Anderson held onto the keep and brick stack and repelled the German attack. The Scots Guards on our immediate right shared a similar fate but were able to maintain a stand at the brickfields. Reinforcements from the London Scottish, Black Watch, and Cameron Highlanders were sent in and a counter attack was made but it failed to dislodge the German from the trenches that they had taken. The Battalion remained in position during the night of 25th January.

Casualties on the day:

- Officers Killed 2
- Officers Wounded 4
- Officers missing 4
- Other Ranks Killed 20
- Other Ranks Wounded 54
- Other Ranks Missing 118

Campaign :- 1914-15.				(A) Where decoration was earned.
				(B) Present situation.
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Rate or grade (if any)
(A) BLACKMORE	<i>Scots Gds</i>	<i>Plt</i>	<i>9541</i>	MEDAL
(B) <i>James Arthur</i>				VICTORY <i>SG/104 B 112</i>
				BRITISH <i>dr dr</i>
				STAR <i>SG/104 19</i>
Action taken				<i>Dead</i>
THEATRE OF WAR.				<i>(1) France</i>
QUALIFYING DATE.				<i>14.1.15</i>
(6 34 46) W234—HP5399 500,000 4/19 HWV(P210) K008				(1 cont.)

James was reported "Missing presumed dead" on 25th January 1915. He had been on the Western Front for twelve days.

Medal Entitlement



Private 9541 James Arthur Blackmore's medal entitlement was the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

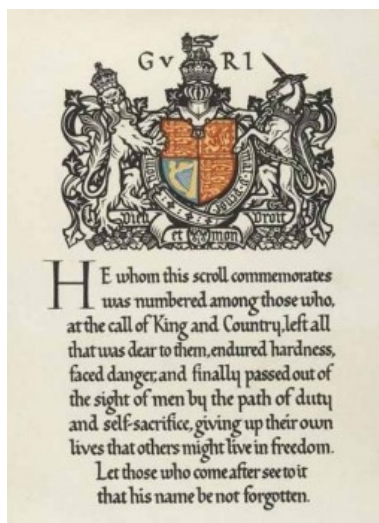
In the 1920's when the First World War medals were issued they were commonly referred to as "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred".

It coincided with a popular comic strip published by the Daily Mirror newspaper which first appeared on 12th May 1919. Pip was the dog, Squeak the penguin and Wilfred the young rabbit. For some reason the three names of the characters became associated with the three campaign medals being issued at that time to many thousands of returning servicemen, and they stuck.

The medals were issued in the 1920's to the fallen serviceman or woman's legatees if a Will existed. If no Will existed, they were issued to the next-of-kin in the order of precedence laid down in Army Order 256 of 1917.

This Scroll accompanied the medals of servicemen and women who fell in the War and carried the full Name, Rank and Number beneath the last line of the script.

The Army record of soldiers effects show that his father William, who was his legatee, received £5 4s 7d on the 17th February 1916 and a War Gratuity of £3 0s 0d on 22nd August 1919. This would have the equivalent purchasing power of £290 in 2017.



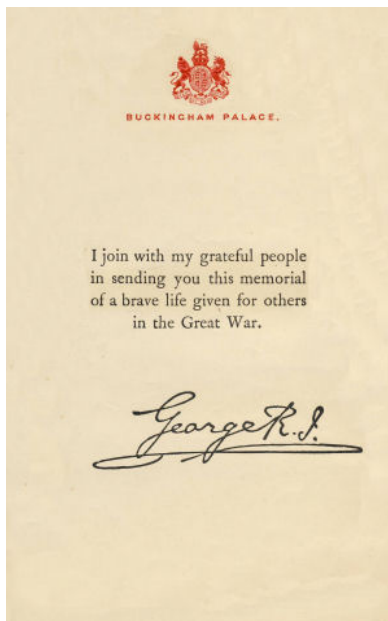
HE whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom. Let those who come after see to it that his name be not forgotten.

Commemoration of the Fallen



plaque becoming widely known as the “Dead Man's Penny”, the “Death Penny”, “Death Plaque” or “Widow's Penny”.

The Bronze Memorial Plaque was issued to the next of kin of servicemen or women who had fallen in the Great War. It just had the recipient's name cast in the box above the lion's head no rank was given as it was intended to show equality in their sacrifice. 1,355,000 plaques were issued, which used a total of 450 tonnes of bronze, 600 of these plaques were issued to women. Distribution started in November 1919 and they continued to be issued into the 1930s to commemorate people who died as a consequence of the war. The circular shape and coin-like appearance soon contributed to the nickname of this memorial



James has no known grave and is remembered on The Le Touret Memorial on Panel 3 Stone D This Memorial commemorates over 13,400 British soldiers who were killed in this sector of the Western Front from the beginning of October 1914 to the eve of the Battle of Loos in late September 1915 and who have no known grave.

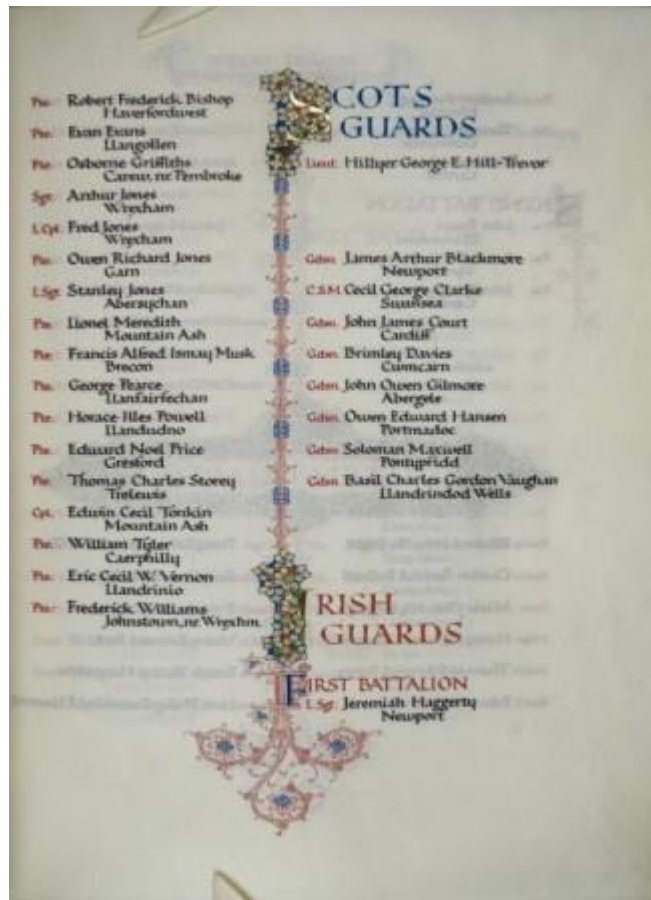
Le Touret Memorial is located at the east end of Le Touret Military Cemetery, on the south side of the Bethune-Armentieres main road. The memorial was designed by John Reginald Truelove, who had served as an officer with the London Regiment during the war, and unveiled by the British ambassador to France, Lord Tyrrell, on 22 March 1930.

Almost all of the men commemorated on the Memorial served with regular or territorial regiments from across the United Kingdom and were killed in actions that took place along a section of the front line that stretched from Estaires in the north to Grenay in the south. This part of the Western Front was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting of the first year of the war.

The Memorial takes the form of a loggia surrounding an open rectangular court. The names of those commemorated are listed on panels set into the walls of the court and the gallery, arranged by regiment, rank and alphabetically by surname within the rank.

James is also remembered in the graveyard of Langstone Parish Church on a commemorative stone alongside his father and two of his brothers.

James's name is in the Book of Remembrance held on the Peoples Collection Wales website.



The Newport cenotaph was unveiled by Lord Tredegar in June 1923, to commemorate the local people who died in active service in the First World War. It now also commemorates people who died in subsequent wars. There are no names on the memorial but James's name appears on the listing.