



Private 235730

## **Trevor William James**

Gloucestershire Yeomanry  
Royal Gloucestershire Hussars  
1898 - 1917



### **Life in the Community**

On 25th April 1894 Trevor's parents William James and Eliza Ann Stead married at Penhow Church. At that time Eliza's father Samuel Stead lived at Penhow Castle and farmed the land with the help of his family.

Trevor was born in the February of 1898 and his birth was registered in Pontypool.

At the time of the Census in April 1901 he was aged 3 and lived at Roath Cathays Cardiff with his father, William, aged 37, a Grocer's Foreman; his mother, Eliza Ann, aged 33; and his sister, Evelyn Winifred, aged 1.

Although his grandfather had died in 1903 his grandmother continued to farm at Penhow Castle.

At the time of the Census in April 1911 he was a scholar 13 years of age and lived at 1 Amesbury Road Cardiff with his father William aged 47, a Dairyman, his mother Eliza Ann aged 43, his sister Evelyn Winifred aged 11 and his brother Aubrey Tom Ewart aged 9.

Upon leaving school Trevor moved to Penhow to assist his grandmother on the Castle Farm.

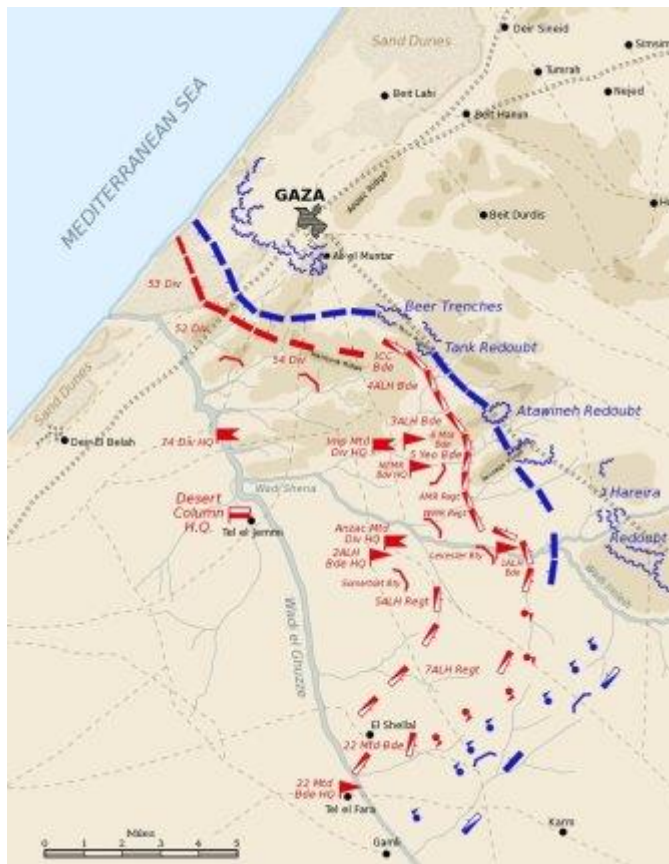
### **Military Service**

Initially, Trevor joined The Gloucestershire Yeomanry and had the service number 3184. By 1914 the regiment formed part of the 1st South Midland Mounted Brigade and was headquartered at Gloucester. A Squadron was also based in Gloucester, B Squadron in Stroud, C Squadron in Newport and D Squadron in Bristol.

At some stage the Yeomanry was renamed the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars and his service number was changed to 235730.

On 15 April 1915 the Hussars sailed to Egypt on board the SS Minneapolis as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force disembarking in Alexandria on 24 April, and making camp at Chatby Beach.

Gaza was part of the Ottoman Empire at that time and had been bombarded by French warships in April 1915. At the end of March 1917 it was attacked and surrounded by the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the First Battle of Gaza, but the attack was broken off when Turkish reinforcements appeared.



The Second Battle of Gaza, 17th-19th April 1917, was unsuccessful and left the Turkish army still in possession of the city.

The map shows the positions of forces at 2pm on the 19th of April, 1917 during the Second Battle of Gaza. British forces are shown in red and Turkish forces are shown in blue.

When the Battle commenced the 22nd Mounted Brigade (Anzac Mounted Division) in reserve moved to Tel el Fara on the Wadi Ghuzzee, 4 miles (6.4 km) south of Hiseia, to cover the right of the Imperial Mounted Division and guard engineers developing water wells in the area, the 1st Light Horse Brigade was ordered to make a dismounted attack towards Hareira on the extreme right of the battle line.

Before noon, the 1st Light Horse Brigade had advanced to occupy Baiket es Sana. In the afternoon, while the Ottoman counterattacked the Eastern Force and the Imperial Mounted Division, on their left a hostile force marched out from Hareira to counterattack the 1st Light Horse Brigade. The light horsemen were also attacked on their flank by a regiment of the Ottoman 3rd Cavalry Division from Tel esh Sheria. They advanced to the attack between the Wadis esh Sheria and Imleih. Fire from the 1st Light Horse Brigade's Hotchkiss and Vickers machine guns, with the support of the Leicester Battery, stopped the counterattack.

Although the 2nd Light Horse Brigade was to be prepared for a mounted attack, the 5th and 7th Light Horse Regiments (2nd Light Horse Brigade) held a wide stretch of front line south of the Wadi Imleih. Here they were attacked by a squadron of Ottoman cavalry, supported by another cavalry regiment and a force of Bedouin.

With their rifles on their backs the light horsemen were defenceless in mounted attack and they were forced back under cover of their machine gun detachments before eventually halting the Ottoman advance. Near dark, a threatened counterattack by infantry from Beersheba on the extreme right of the line failed to develop. The Anzac Mounted Division retired to water in the Wadi Ghuzzee at Heseia where they were shelled, causing some casualties.



A 1917 photo taken by Lieutenant Hubert Wolton M.C. from the front line in Gaza

Between 17th and 20th April the Egyptian Expeditionary Force lost 6,444 casualties. Of these the Imperial Camel Brigade had 345 casualties, the Imperial Mounted Division 547 casualties, and the Anzac Mounted Division 105 casualties. The 10th Light Horse Regiment, lost 14 officers and almost half the regiment's other ranks killed or wounded.

The Gaza war cemetery bears silent witness to the casualties which were much more severe than the British public was told at the time.





Trevor was In the Second Battle of Gaza and died of his wounds on 20th April 1917. He is buried and remembered at:– Gaza War Cemetery plot XX.D.12

Some of the earliest burials in Gaza War Cemetery were made by the troops that captured the city. About two-thirds of the fallen were brought into the cemetery from the battlefields after the Armistice. The remainder of burials were made by medical units during the occupation. Gaza War Cemetery contains 3217 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 781 of them unidentified, as well as 210 Second World War burials. There are also 30 post-war burials and 234 war graves of other nationalities.



Whilst we have taken photographs of the headstones of the fallen men when we visited the cemeteries where they are buried the Commonwealth War Graves Commission advised against visiting the Gaza cemetery.

The Third Battle of Gaza which begun on 27th October, ended with the capture of the ruined and deserted city on 7th November.

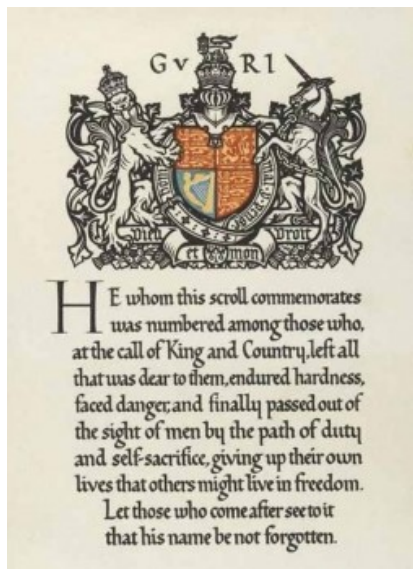
## Medal Entitlement



Private 235730 Trevor William James's medal entitlement was the British War Medal & the Victory Medal. This pair of medals were generally awarded to servicemen who joined the war after 1915 and were colloquially known as "Mutt and Jeff". Mutt and Jeff were comic strip characters - as were "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred" the nicknames for medals for servicemen who joined the war before 1916.

existed. If no Will  
the order of precedence laid down in Army Order 256 of 1917.

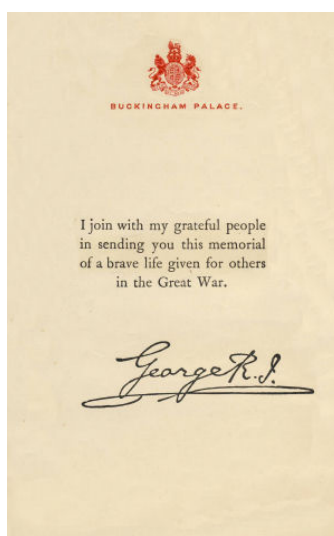
The medals were issued in the 1920's to the fallen serviceman or woman's legatees if a Will existed, they were issued to the next-of-kin in



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 mother Elizabeth Ann, who was his sole legatee, received £2 0s 0d on the 22nd August 1917, £0 10s 0d on the 4th September 1917, £5 19s 9d on the 5th October 1917 and a War Gratuity of £6 10s 0d on 23rd October 1920. This would have the equivalent purchasing power of £470 in 2017.

## Commemoration of the Fallen



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

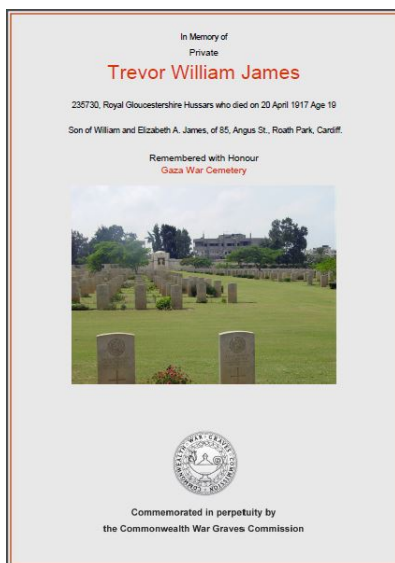


to the nickname of this memorial plaque becoming widely known as the “Dead Man's Penny”, the “Death Penny”, “Death Plaque” or “Widow's Penny”.



A wooden cross on the west wall of St Johns the Baptist Church Penhow from a First World War field grave carries a plaque to remember Trevor and is a reminder of the men who lost their lives in the First World War.

Trevor is also remembered on the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Memorial in Gloucester and the Magor War memorial.



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 Private 235730 Trevor William James's name appears on the listing.