

Connected to Codford



Lest we Forget

World War I



5367 PRIVATE

G. SPAREY

WILTSHIRE REGIMENT

25TH OCTOBER, 1914 AGE 34

George SPAREY

George Sparey was born on 10th July, 1880 at Codford St. Mary, Wiltshire to parents Charles & Clara Ann Sparey. His birth was registered in the September quarter, 1880 in the district of Warminster. George Sparey was baptised in Codford St. Peter on 29th August, 1880.

A death was registered in March quarter, 1887 for a Charles Sparey, aged 43, in the district of Warminster.

The 1891 Census recorded George Sparey as a 10 year old scholar, living with his family at Sherrington, Wiltshire. His mother was listed as Clara A. Sparey (Widow, aged 45, born Somerset). George was one of four children listed on this Census, all born at Codford St. Mary – William H. (Agricultural Labourer, aged 14) then George, Louisa (Scholar, aged 6) & Herbert J. (Scholar, aged 4).

The 1901 Census recorded Clara A. Sparey (Dress Maker, aged 55) & her youngest son, Herbert J. Sparey (Apprentice Harness Maker, aged 14) living together at No. 3 Yew Tree Terrace, Sherrington, Wiltshire in a 4 roomed dwelling.

The 1911 Census recorded George Sparey as a 29 year old Private in 1st Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment stationed in South Africa at the time of the Census. Meanwhile, George Sparey's mother & brother were still living at Sherrington, Codford St. Mary - Clara Ann Sparey (Dress Maker, aged 65) & her youngest son, Herbert John Sparey (Harness Maker, aged 24) in a 4 roomed dwelling.

George Sparey enlisted at Warminster with the Wiltshire Regiment. He was given the rank of Private & a service number of 5367. At the time of enlisting his place of residence was listed as Codford according to UK Soldiers Died in Great War – this could however have meant Sherrington as the address was usually written "Sherrington, Codford, Wilts" at that time.

According to details on his Medal Index Card, Private George Sparey first entered a Theatre of War on 14th August, 1914.

Private George Sparey was killed in action on 25th October, 1914. He was attached to 1st Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment at the time of his death.

Private George Sparey is remembered on Le Touret Memorial, France – Panel 34, as he has no known grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private George Sparey, aged 34, 5367, 1st Bn., Wiltshire Regiment, as the son of Clara Ann Sparey, of 78 High St., Codford, Wilts., and the late Charles Sparey.

1st Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment

In August 1914 the 1st Battalion were based at Tidworth and the 2nd Battalion at Gibraltar. The 4th (Territorial) Battalion were at their Annual Camp at Sling Plantation, on Salisbury Plain. On mobilization the 1st Battalion left for France on the 13 August, taking part in the battle of Mons 10 days later and followed by the retreat from Mons. The 'retreat' was a fighting withdrawal with a number of significant actions fought along that route. The battalion remained intact and ended the retreat on the outskirts of Paris. Once the line stabilized the battalion took part in the First Battle of Ypres, and Neuve Chapelle by which time they had lost 26 officers and 1000 men, the equivalent of a whole battalion. This was followed by trench duty at Hooge and then Kemmel where they remained for the remainder of the year.

War Diary of 1st Battalion

25th October, 1914

Location – France (Neuve Chapelle)

(Sunday) Ordered to move Battn HQ further back to W of village. Had D Coy still in reserve. Trenches shelled pretty well all day, also HQ a certain amount. Regt on our left had party driven out of their trenches. Village reduced to

ruins and roads cut up by heavy shells, difficult to get supplies up. Moved HQ up to village again after dark. Relieved A & B Coys in the trenches as far as possible by B & D Coys also withdrew what remained of the MG Section. Only three men left, guns alright. Capt Davis severely wounded. 37 men killed and 42 wounded. Lieut Ward - Tetley sent up to command A Coy vice Davis wounded.

(Information on 1st Battalion & War Diary from [The Wardrobe](#) – Home of the Infantry Regiments of Berkshire & Wiltshire)

Private George Sparey was entitled to 1914 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. According to his Medal Index Card he was also entitled to the Clasp. The Clasp was awarded with the 1914 Star which was sewn onto the ribbon, bearing the date '5th AUG. - 22nd NOV. 1914' which indicated that the recipient had served under enemy fire during that period.



1914 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal

George Sparey is not remembered on either Roll of Honour lists for Codford St. Mary or Codford St. Peter, Wiltshire.

G. Sparey is remembered in Casualties of WW1 from the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial book for the parish of Sherrington, Wiltshire

George Sparey is also remembered on the Sherrington Roll of Honour Plaque located in Church of St. Cosmo & St. Damian, Sherrington, Wiltshire.



Sherrington Roll of Honour Plaque (Photo by Michael Day)

Le Touret Memorial, France

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 Le Touret Memorial

The Le Touret 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. 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. 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, including the battles of La Bassée (10 October – 2 November 1914), Neuve Chapelle (10 – 12 March 1915), Aubers Ridge (9 – 10 May 1915), and Festubert (15 – 25 May 1915). Soldiers serving with Indian and Canadian units who were killed in this sector in 1914 and '15 whose remains were never identified are commemorated on the Neuve Chapelle and Vimy memorials, while those who fell during the northern pincer attack at the Battle of Aubers Ridge are commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial.

The British Expeditionary Force in French Flanders, 1914 - 1915

In October 1914, II Corps of the British Expeditionary Force moved north from Picardy and took up positions in French Flanders where they were immediately engaged in the series of attacks and counter attacks that would become known as the 'race to the sea'. Over the course of the next year most of the British activity in this sector focused on attempting to dislodge the German forces from their advantageous position on the Aubers Ridge and capture the city of Lille, a major industrial and transport centre which the Germans had occupied early in the war. The ridge is a slight incline in an otherwise extremely flat landscape from which the Germans were able to observe and bombard the British lines. Following the British capture of the village of Neuve Chapelle in March 1915, the Germans greatly strengthened their defences along the ridge, reinforcing their positions with thick barbed wire entanglements, concrete blockhouses and machine gun emplacements. These extra defences frustrated British attempts to break through enemy lines and led to very heavy casualties at the battles of Aubers Ridge and Festubert in May 1915.

(Information from CWGC)



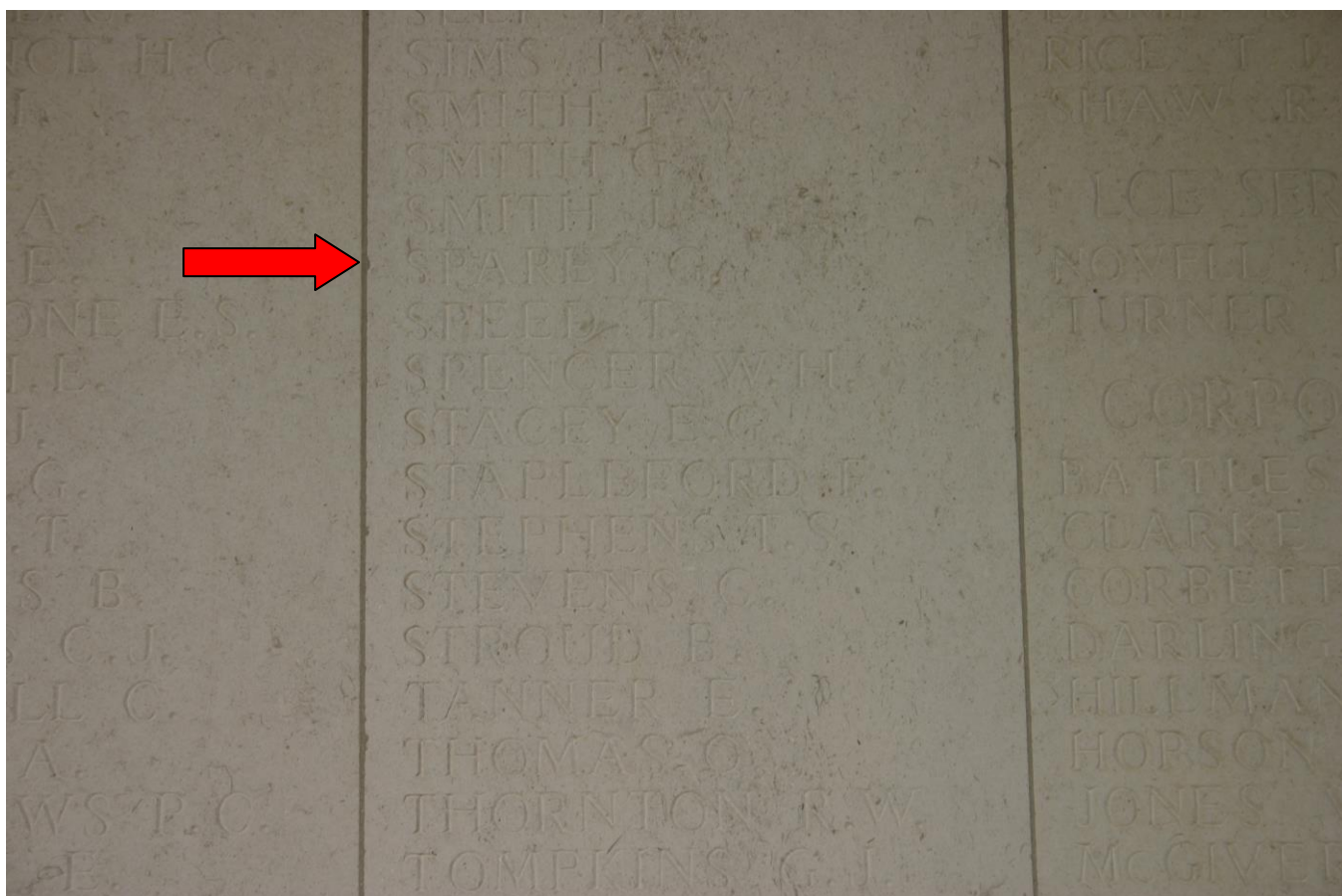
The Le Touret Cemetery & Memorial *(Photos courtesy of David Milborrow)*



Le Touret Memorial (Photos courtesy of David Milborrow)

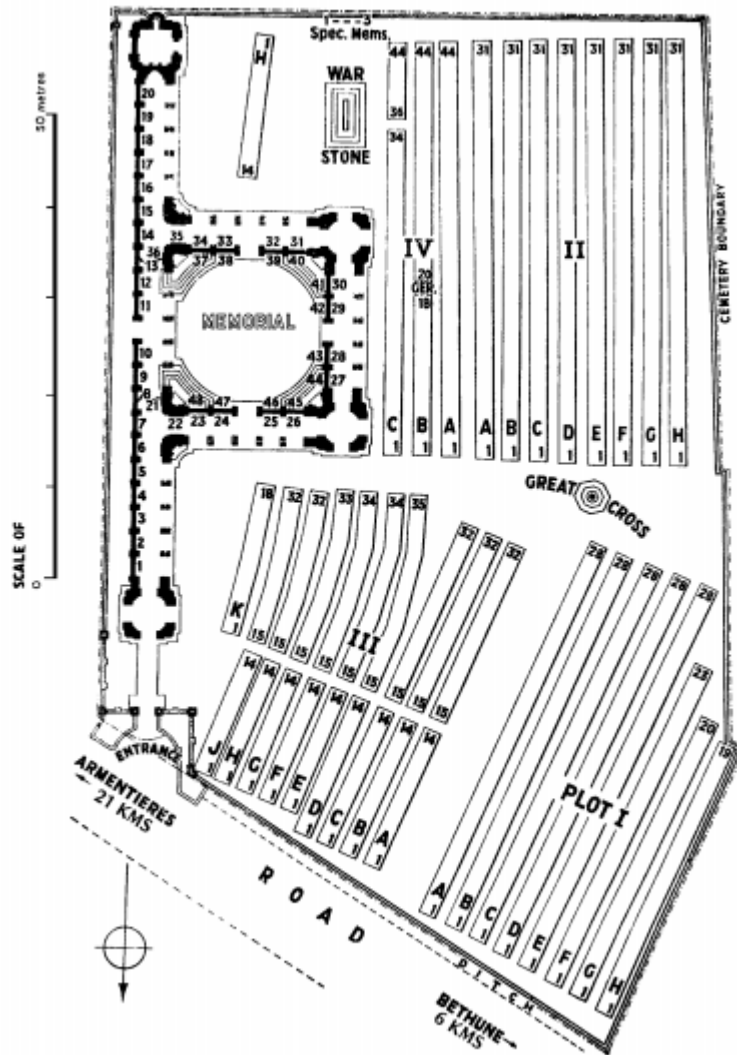


Photo of Private G. Sparey's name on Panel 34 on Le Touret Memorial, France.



Panel 34 – Le Touret Memorial

(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



PLAN, SHOWING THE NUMBERS AND LAYOUT OF PANELS

