



SOUTH WILTSHIRE CORONER'S INQUESTS

OFFICER'S FATAL MOONLIGHT RIDE

The Coroner for Mid Wilts, Mr Sylvester, held an inquest yesterday on the body of SECOND LIEUTENANT JOSEPH KIRK, of the 10th Manchester Regiment, stationed at Codford Camp, near Warminster, whose death occurred as the result of a motor-bicycle collision.

Second Lieutenant Taylor, with whom Kirk came into collision, said that with a brother officer they went out on Wednesday night for a moonlight ride. Lieutenant Kirk was not an experienced rider and the witness went back some distance to rejoin him, when suddenly his machine darted forward and there was a collision. Lieutenant Kirk's skull was fractured and his upper jaw was smashed.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death." Two of Lieutenant Kirk's brothers were killed in the Dardanelles.

(*The Times*, Saturday 12th February, 1916)

Joseph Lingard Kirk

Joseph was the younger of the two Kirk brothers, his brother Thomas was killed on the 4th of June 1915, aged 25, also whilst serving with the 1/10th Battalion. Their parents, George and Jane, originated from Chapel-en-le-Frith but had emigrated to Seattle in America, where both boys were born. By 1901, they had returned to Britain and were living at 19 Arkburn Road in the Heaton Lane area of Stockport.

At the time of the Great War, Joseph was working as a salesman for the Northern Manufacturing Co and was living at the family home in Heaton Moor. On the 7th August 1914, just three days after war was declared, Joseph joined the 6th Battalion of the Manchester Regiment. Joseph's service number was 2106 and his brother's was 2107 showing they both joined up together.

By the middle of the following month they were aboard a ship bound for Egypt where they spent the next seven months.

Towards the end of April, both brothers received commissions as 2nd Lieutenants and were transferred to the 1/10th Battalion. On the 6th of May, the Battalion left the safety of Egypt to go into action at Gallipoli.

Joseph is known to have been wounded on the 7th of August. This was a day later officially designated as the Battle of the Vineyard. As far as can be established, the Battalion was in support on that day and did not take part in the actual attack. The Turks counter-attacked heavily and Joseph was probably wounded by shellfire.

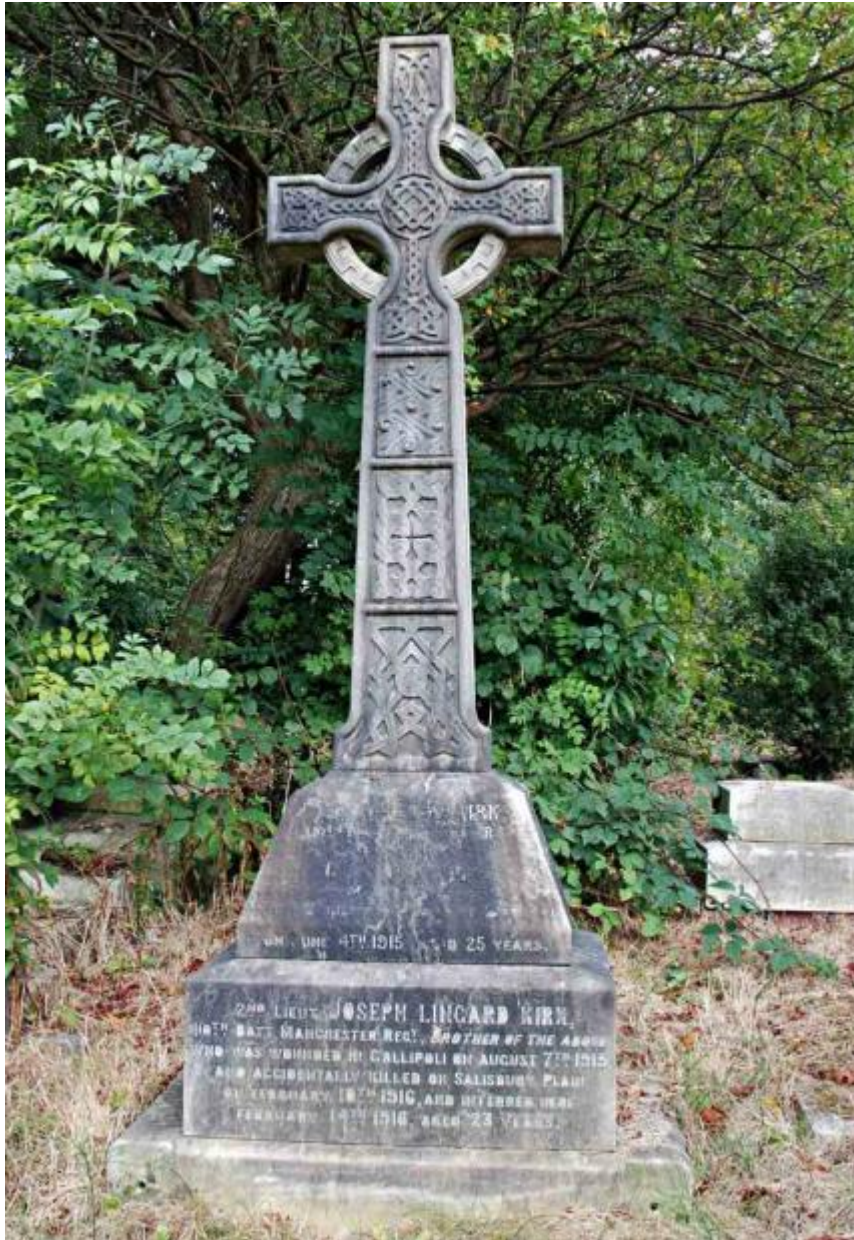
The next day he was admitted to a field hospital on the cliffs overlooking the original landing beach. A week later he is known to have been at another field hospital - 24th Casualty Clearing Station at Mudros on the nearby Greek Island of Lemnos. From there he was taken to a Red Cross hospital at Cairo. At some point, his condition was suitably stabilised for the long trip and was put aboard the Hospital Ship "Syria" at Port Said for the return to Southampton. Once back in Britain he was admitted to Codford Military Hospital.

He made good progress and was discharged from hospital on the 3rd of October at which point he was given two months sick leave, before returning to camp near Codford. On the 9th of February, he and two friends went out for a motor cycle run. Joseph and one of his friends collided and both were badly injured. Joseph never regained consciousness and died the next day. His body was brought back to Stockport where he was buried on the 14th of February, following a service at St Paul's Church in Heaton Moor.

(With thanks to [Phil Kinsey](#) for the information above)



2ND Lieut. JOSEPH LINGARD KIRK. 1/10th Batt. Manchester Regt. BROTHER OF THE ABOVE who was wounded in Gallipoli on August 7th 1915 and accidently killed on Salisbury Plain on February 10th 1916, and interred here February 14th 1916, aged 23 years.



Headstone of Second Lieutenant Joseph Lingard Kirk & his only brother Second Lieutenant Thomas (Tom) Kirk, both of 1/10 th Battalion, Manchester Regiment, at Stockport (Willow Grove) Cemetery B. 275. (Photos courtesy of Phil Kinsey)

* Second Lieutenant Tom Kirk is also remembered on the Helles Memorial (Panel 158 to 170)

Table of those persons named in the above text

SURNAME	GIVEN NAMES	TITLE	OCCUPATION	NOTES
Sylvester		Mr	Coroner for Mid Wilts	Named as Coroner in the inquest into death of Second Lt Joseph Kirk – 1916 at Codford
Kirk	Joseph	Second Lt		Second Lt Joseph Kirk of Manchester Regiment killed in motor-bicycle accident at Codford 1916
Taylor		Second Lt		Involved in a motor bicycle accident with Second Lt Joseph Kirk at Codford in 1916 resulting in death of Kirk.
Kirk	Thomas (Tom)	Second Lt		Older brother of Joseph Kirk. Also served with 1/10 th Bn, Manchester Regt. Killed 4 th June 1915
Kirk	George Seville			Father of Thomas & Joseph Kirk – both killed during WW1
Kirk	Jane Jones			Mother of Thomas & Joseph Kirk – both killed during WW1