

Dinton Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War I



6420 PRIVATE

W. DOWDELL

WILTSHIRE REGIMENT

30TH NOVEMBER, 1914 AGE 29

Loving Thoughts

Shall Ever Linger

Round The Spot

Where Thou Art Laid

William Henry DOWDELL

William Henry Dowdell was born at Dinton in 1886 to parents George & Mary Jane Dowdell (nee White). His birth was registered in the December quarter, 1886 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

The 1891 Census recorded William H. Dowdell as a 4 year old living with his family at Dinton. His parents were listed as George Dowdell (Shepherd, aged 57) & Mary J. Dowdell (aged 40). William was the middle of three sons listed – Walter G. (aged 15), then William & Frank (aged 1).

The 1901 Census recorded William H. Dowdell as a 16 year old Ordinary Agricultural Labourer, living with his family at Wylve Road, Dinton. His parents were listed as George Dowdell (Army Pensioner, aged 72) & Mary Dowdell (aged 50). William was the middle of three sons listed – George (Carter on a Farm, aged 27), then William & Frank (aged 11).

William Henry Dowdell married Beatrice Annie Haskell at St Mary's Church, Wylve in 1908. Their marriage was registered in December quarter, 1908 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

The 1911 census recorded William Dowdell as a married, 25 year old Waggoner on a farm. He was listed with his wife Beatrice (aged 26), 1 year old daughter Lily and 8 month old son William. The family lived at Rectory Cottage, Rectory Lane, Barford St Martin, Salisbury, which was a 7 roomed dwelling.

William Dowdell enlisted with the 1st Battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment (Duke of Edinburgh's) at Salisbury. He was given the rank of Private & service number of 6420.

The 1st Battalion of Wiltshire Regiment were formed at Tidworth in August, 1914. On 14th August, 1914 the Battalion landed at Rouen.

Private William Dowdell died of wounds on 30th November, 1914, aged 29 years. Pte Dowdell is buried in Rue-Petillon Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix, France in section I. G. 23 and is acknowledged with a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

The 1st Battalion Wiltshire Regiment were involved in the Battle of Nonne Bosschen on 11th November, 1914.

War Diaries of 1st Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment:

Date – 11th November, 1914

Location – Belgium, Hooge

Entry – *(Wednesday) Enemy started to shell at about 6.20a.m. and continued on and off all day. Germans were said to be massing in front of our line but nothing came of it owing to our artillery fire. C & D Coys relieved by Gordons about midnight. Very wet night. A Coy supported 15th Bde. 1 wounded.*

Date – 12th November, 1914

Location – Belgium, Hooge

Entry – *(Thursday) A Coy stayed with 15th Brigade. Enemy shelled a good deal, during the day, but did not make an infantry attack. 4 wounded.*

Date – 13th November, 1914

Location – Belgium, Hooge

Entry – *(Friday) In trenches. Enemy shelled steadily, our guns replying. Germans brought up a gun in dead ground to within 100 yards of our trenches. Germans attacked in the afternoon, and S Lancs were forced back (they were on our immediate right) these trenches were re-taken at dusk. A Coy rejoined from 15th Bde. Gordons relieved firing line about 12 midnight. 3 killed, 6 wounded.*

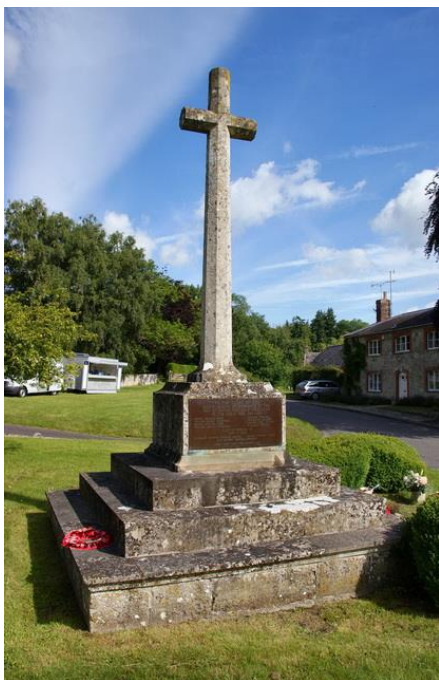
(Source: [The Wardrobe](#) – Home of Infantry Regiments of Berkshire and Wiltshire)

Private William Dowdell's Medal Index Card shows that he entered a Theatre of War on 14th August, 1914. He was entitled to entitled 1914 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal. Pte Dowdell was also eligible for the Mons Clasp which was awarded to soldiers who had served in France and Belgium between 5th August and 22nd November, 1914 AND who had been "under fire" during that time.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Pte William Dowdell as the son of George and Jane Dowdell of Dinton, Wiltshire; husband of Beatrice Annie Dowdell of 5 West Place, Endless St, Salisbury.

W. H. Dowdell is also remembered in the Diocese of Salisbury Casualties of WW1 Memorial Book 1914 – 1918.

William Henry Dowdell is also remembered on the Dinton War Memorial, which is located at the northern end of the Churchyard.



(Photos by Andrew Stacey)



They Died That We Might Live

Rue-Petillon Military Cemetery

The cemetery was begun in December, 1914, and used by fighting units until March, 1918. In April, 1918, it fell into enemy hands, although one further burial was added in September, 1918, after the German retreat. It consisted at the Armistice of twelve Battalion burial grounds, made by units which had occupied the Headquarters and Dressing Station at "Eaton Hall", adjoining the cemetery. It was enlarged later by the concentration of graves from other cemeteries and the battlefields over a wide area round Fleurbaix. There are now just over 1,500, 1914-18 war casualties commemorated in this site and of these, nearly half are unidentified. (CWGC)



(Photos used with kind permission from [Marijke Taffein](#))





(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



(Photo from CWGC)

