

# Connected to Imber



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



22697 PRIVATE

**E. MARSH**

WILTSHIRE REGIMENT

22ND AUGUST, 1916

*○ Rest In The Lord*

## Ernest MARSH

Ernest Marsh was born at Imber, Wiltshire in 1895 to parents Edward & Fanny Marsh (nee Gibbs). His birth was registered in the December quarter, 1895 in the district of Warminster. Edward Marsh had married Fanny Gibbs in 1878 in Warminster Registrar Office.

The 1901 Census recorded Ernest Marsh as a 5 year old, at school, living with his family at No. 4 East Street, Imber, Wiltshire. His parents were recorded as Edward Marsh (Farmer's \_\_\_\_, aged 46, born Imber) & Fanny Marsh (aged 48, born Imber). Ernest was one of six children listed on this Census, all born at Imber – Harry (Under carter(?) on a Farm, aged 22), William (Plough Boy on a Farm, aged 16), Kate E. (At School, aged 9), Florance (At School, aged 7), then Ernest & Lilly (aged 3).

The 1911 Census recorded "Earnest" Marsh as a 15 year old General Labourer on Farm, living with his family at 4 Eastview, Imber, Codford St. Mary in a 5 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Edward Marsh (Farm Labourer, aged 54) & Fanny Marsh (aged 58). Fanny & Edward Marsh had been married for 33 years, having had a total of 12 children, 3 having since died. Only 3 of the children were listed on this Census – William (Farm Labourer, aged 26), then Ernest & Lily (At School, aged 13).

Ernest Marsh enlisted at Warminster with Wiltshire Regiment. He was given the rank of Private & a service number of 22697. His place of residence at the time of enlisting was Codford, Wiltshire.

Private Ernest Marsh was killed in action on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1916. He was attached to 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment at the time of his death.

Private Ernest Marsh was buried in Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery, Belgium - Plot L. 46. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Ernest Marsh, 22697, 6<sup>th</sup> Bn., Wiltshire Regiment, as the son of Mr and Mrs E. Marsh, of 4, Imber, Devizes, Wilts.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment**

**1914** - The 5th (Service) Battalion was raised at Assaye Barracks in Tidworth, August 1914. The numbers raised were too large so the 6th (Service) battalion was also raised from the 5th Battalion overspill of manpower.

**1915** - The 6th (Service) Battalion embarked for France in July 1915 as part of the 19th Division. They initially were introduced to trench warfare in the Laventie and Festubert area with their first attack taking place at Loos in September. After this battle they returned to the trenches in the Neuve Chapelle area where they ended the year of 1915.

**1916** - At the start of the year the 6th (Service) battalion were in the Neuve Chapelle area where they were engaged in trench warfare until April. After a period of strenuous training the battalion moved to Albert, on the River Somme in preparation for the forthcoming offensive. A week after the start of the Battle of the Somme they took part in the capture of La Boiselle, moving into Mametz Wood shortly after. At the end of August they were relieved in order to re-organize having suffered 380 casualties in two months. The rest of the year was spent in the line in the Kemmel sector, and on the River Ancre. Here they ended the year.

#### War Diary for 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion

*21<sup>st</sup> August, 1916 & 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1916*

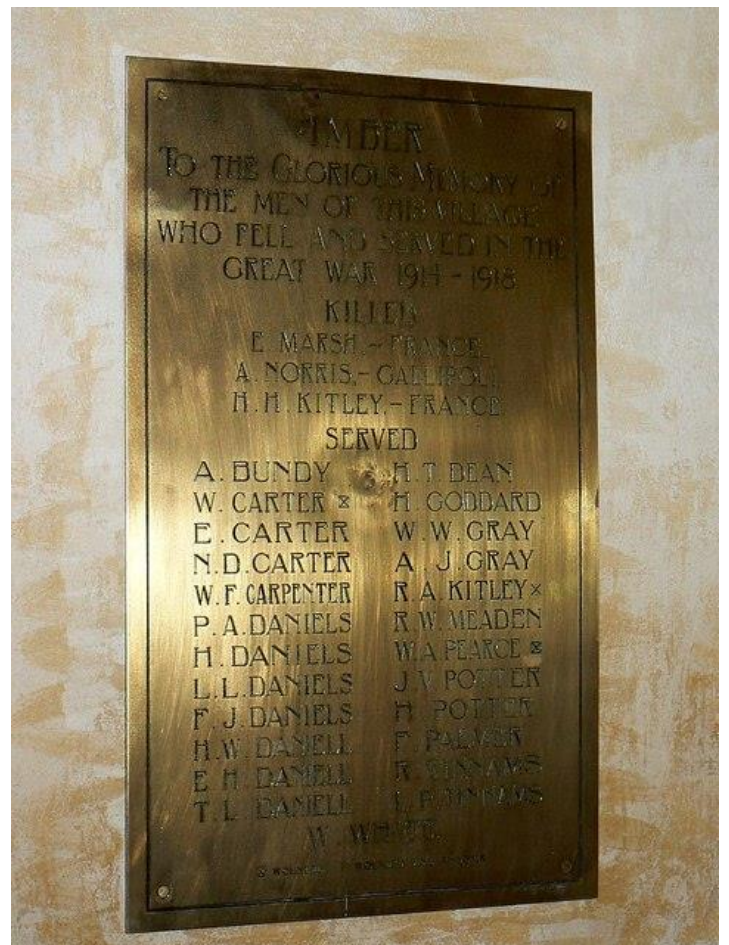
*Location – France, Nr Kemmel*

*Entry – Same as for 20.8.1916*

*20<sup>th</sup> August, 1916*

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Memorial Plaque inside St. Giles' Church, Imber

(Photo by Brian Robert Marshall)

## **Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery, Belgium**

Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery is located 8 Kms south of Ieper on a road leading from the Kemmelseweg (N331), connecting Ieper to Kemmel.

Kemmel Chateau was north-east of Kemmel village and the cemetery was established on the north side of the chateau grounds in December 1914. It continued to be used by divisions fighting on the southern sectors of the Belgian front until March 1918, when after fierce fighting involving both Commonwealth and French forces, the village and cemetery fell into German hands in late April. The cemetery was retaken later in the year, but in the interval it was badly shelled and the old chateau destroyed.

There are now 1,135 Commonwealth burials of the First World War in the cemetery and 21 from the Second World War (which all date from the Allied withdrawal ahead of the German advance of May 1940).

*(Information & photos from CWGC)*

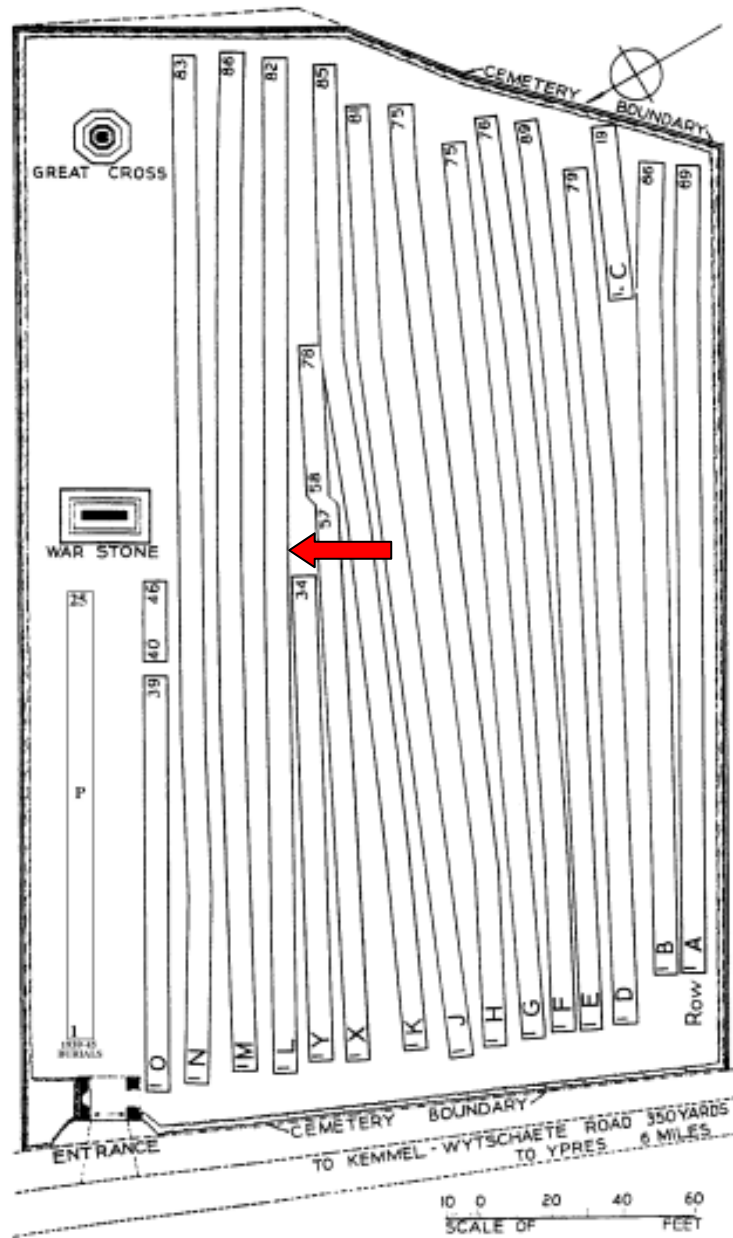


**Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery**



Photo of Pte Ernest Marsh's CWGC headstone in Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery, Belgium.





KEMMEL CHATEAU MILITARY CEMETERY.