

# Connected to Sutton Mandeville



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



9139 PRIVATE

**G. BRACHER**

COLDSTREAM GUARDS

12th NOVEMBER, 1914 AGE 21

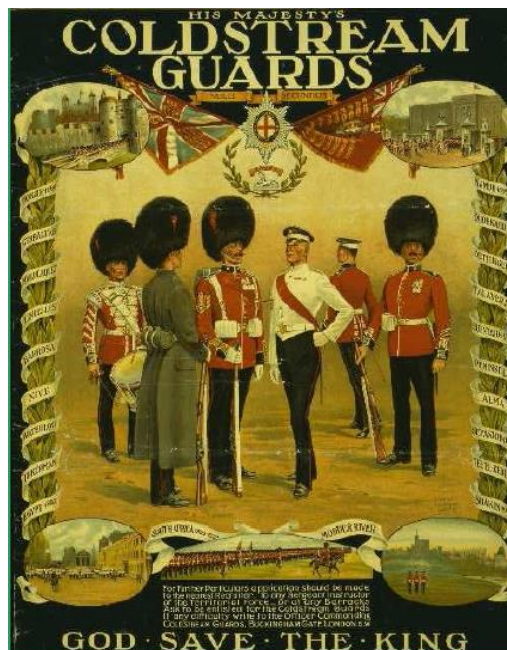
## George BRACHER

George Bracher was born at Sutton Mandeville, Wiltshire in 1893 to parents Matthias & Louisa Bracher (nee Baker). His parents had married in the district of Romsey, Hampshire in 1892. George's birth was registered in the district of Tisbury, Wiltshire in the September quarter of 1893.

The 1901 Census recorded George Bracher as a 7 year old living with his family in a 4 roomed dwelling at Moor Hill, Fovant. His parents were listed as Matthias Bracher (Manager Dairy Farm, aged 34, born Fovant) & Louisa Bracher (aged 34, born Devon, Axminster). Also listed was George's younger sister – Ada (aged 4).

The 1911 Census recorded George Bracher as a 17 year old Worker on a Farm, living with his family in a 6 roomed dwelling at Sutton Road, Fovant. His parents were listed as Matthias Bracher (Farmer – Own Account, aged 44) & Louisa Bracher (aged 44). Also listed was George's younger sister – Ada (aged 13). George's parents had been married for 18 years & only had 2 children.

George Bracher enlisted with the British Army at Salisbury & was living at Fovant at the time he enlisted. Records show that he was last attached to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Coldstream Guards with the rank of Private & a service number of 9139.



*WW1 recruitment poster for Coldstream Guards*

Private George Bracher was killed in action on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1914, aged 21 years.

Private George Bracher is buried in Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Belgium – Grave No. IV. J. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

## 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards:

The Second Battalion embarked for France on 12th August 1914, landing at Le Havre. All three battalions of the Coldstream were taken for active service. Upon landing in France they all moved to the Belgian frontier. During this march the entire Regiment found itself all together at Oisy, the first time that the entire Regiment had been on active service together since March 1688. On 23rd August the 2nd Division moved forward into Belgium. On the same day the British were forced to withdraw from Mons, due to the withdrawal of the French on their flanks. The retreat ended on the 5th of September, by which time the British had marched 170 miles in thirteen days reaching an area south of the River Marne east of Paris.

The Army had proved itself superior to the Germans both in discipline and fighting ability. Its morale was intact and it was still a force to be reckoned with despite the casualties it had taken.

The Regiment had played its part in full. The end of the Retreat marked the end of the initial German offensive. They had failed to destroy the British and French armies opposing them and they had failed to take Paris.

On 28th September 1914 Lance Corporal F Dobson of the Second Battalion won the VC by going out under close range fire and bringing in two men who had been wounded while on patrol.

A month after the crossing of the Aisne, the three Coldstream Battalions moved to the Flanders battlefield. The Second Battalion, as part of the 4th Guards Brigade, fought in the First Battle of Ypres enduring determined German assaults and terrible weather turning the infamous "Salient" into a quagmire. *(Information from [Tribute to Second Battalion Coldstream Guards](#)).*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private George Bracher, 9139 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Coldstream Guards as being the son of Matthias and Louisa Bracher of Gerrard's Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire.

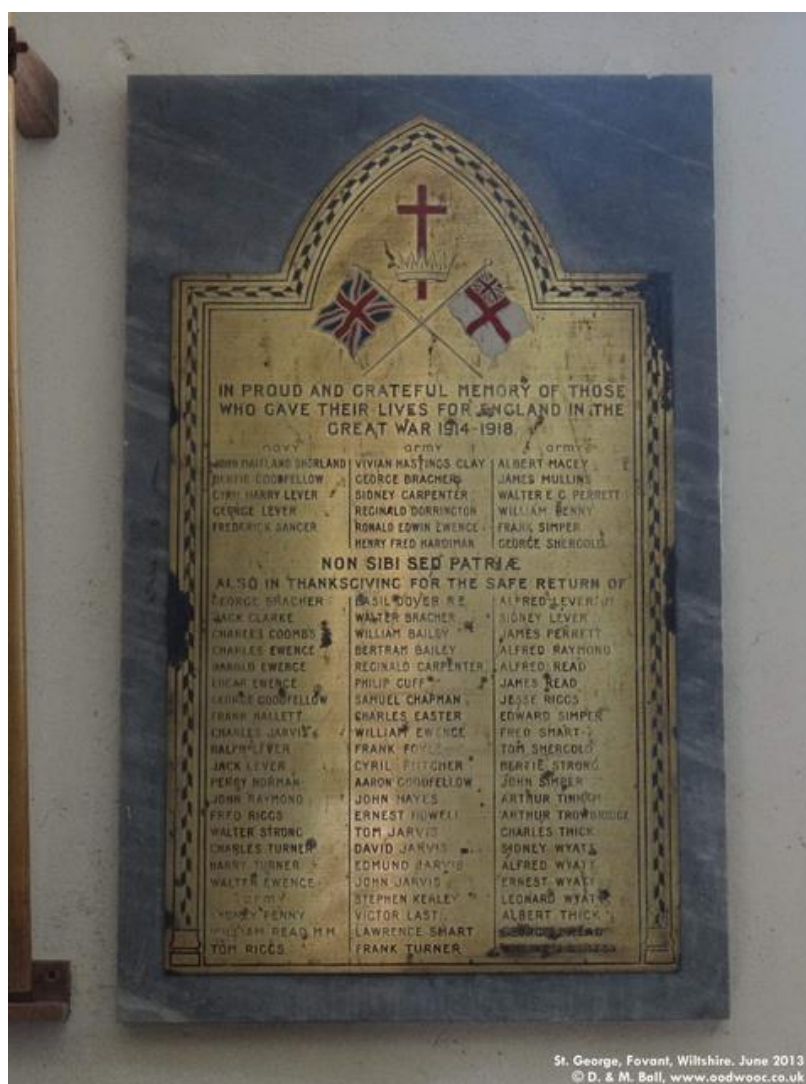
Private George Bracher was entitled to the 1914/15 Star, British War & Victory Medals. His Medal Index Card does not show a date that he had entered a Theatre of War. Pte George Bracher was also eligible for the Mons Clasp which was awarded to soldiers who had served in France and Belgium between 5<sup>th</sup> August and 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1914 AND who had been "under fire" during that time. His Medal Index Card also shows that he had entered a Theatre of War on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1914.

George Bracher is listed on the World War 1 Memorial outside Fovant Village Hall, Wiltshire.



*(Photo from [Fovant History](#))*

George Bracher is also listed on the World War 1 Memorial inside St. George Church, Fovant, Wiltshire.



**WW1 Plaque inside St George's Church, Fovant**

*(Photo by D & M Ball)*

## Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Belgium

Sanctuary Wood Cemetery is located 5 Kms east of Ieper town centre, on the Canadalaan, a road leading from the Meenseweg (N8), connecting Ieper to Menen.

### Historical Information

Sanctuary Wood is one of the larger woods in the commune of Zillebeke. It was named in November 1914, when it was used to screen troops behind the front line. It was the scene of fighting in September 1915 and was the centre of the Battle of Mount Sorrel (2-13 June 1916) involving the 1st and 3rd Canadian Divisions.

There were three Commonwealth cemeteries at Sanctuary Wood before June 1916, all made in May-August 1915. The first two were on the western end of the wood, the third in a clearing further east. All were practically obliterated in the Battle of Mount Sorrel, but traces of the second were found and it became the nucleus of the present Sanctuary Wood Cemetery.



At the Armistice, the cemetery contained 137 graves. From 1927 to 1932, Plots II-V were added and the cemetery extended as far as 'Maple Avenue', when graves were brought in from the surrounding battlefields. They came mainly from the communes immediately surrounding Ypres, but a few were taken from Nieuport (on the coast) and 24 smaller cemeteries.

Most of these burials were from the 1914 Battles of Ypres and the Allied offensive of the autumn of 1917.

There are now 1,989 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 1,353 of the burials are unidentified. Many graves, in all five plots, are identified in groups but not individually.



*(Photo from CWGC)*

