

George Henry Pilgrim

Private
Household Cavalry and Cavalry of the Line
9th (Queens Royal) Lancers
Service no. 10355



Date of birth	Date KIA	Age
June 6 th 1888	27 March 1918	29

Background: George Henry Pilgrim

George was the eldest of 9 children of Langford Moor-born labourer Thomas (Tom) Richard Pilgrim (1860 – 1939) and Emily née Elston Pilgrim (1868 - 1924). In 1911 Tom was a roadman for the district council. However, when his son, William, married in St John Baptist in 1913, Tom was down as ‘shepherd’ on the register.

The 1901 Census for Langford records:

Thomas Pilgrim	40 yrs	Horseman on Farm	b. Langford Moor
Emily	33yrs		b. North Wheatley
George H	12yrs	b. Langford Moor	
William	11yrs		b. North Wheatley
Edith	5yrs		b. Brough
Olive	1yr		b. Brough

Further children born and baptised in Winthorpe are: Robert Edward (1902) Elsie Maud (1904-1994) Alice Ivy (1908-1965) and Kathleen (1910-1978).

In 1911 George has left home and was a Gardener/Domestic at Tatton Park on the Tatton Hall Estate, Knutsford, Cheshire, & sharing 3 rooms in ‘The Stables’ with the four other gardeners. His address on enlistment, however, was Dorset.

He was a member of Brough Choir for ‘many years.’ – See extract from May 1918 South Collingham Parish Newsletter on p 3.

Ancestry.co.uk shows that George’s brother, William, and his wife Lucy née Haughton, emigrated to Canada in 1913 – one of many villagers who made the break with England. William also enlisted in the war & survived. He died in Oakville, Ontario 1953.

Military History: Private George Pilgrim

George enlisted in Dorchester on May 15th, 1915. The Regiment's Nominal Roll shows he was in hospital on 11th Nov 1916 (no reason given) and re-joined the unit on 30th Dec 1916¹.

The 9th Lancers

Were mobilised to France in August 1914 as part of the 2nd Cavalry Division which became the 1st Cavalry Division in September 1914. They remained on the Western Front throughout the War. Although a horse mounted regiment, they often fought as infantry. Involvement in major operations from 1915 when George was involved included:

1915

Winter Operations 1914-15

The Battles of Ypres 1915 ("Second Ypres")

1916

The Battle of Flers-Courcelette (a phase of the Battles of the Somme 1916)

1917

The First Battle of the Scarpe (9 - 12 April, a phase of the Arras Offensive)

The Tank Attack (20 - 21 November, a phase of the Cambrai Operations)

The capture of Broulon Wood (24 - 26 November, a phase of the Cambrai Operations)

The German counterattacks (30 November - 3 December, a phase of the Cambrai Operations)

1918

The Battle of St Quentin (21 -23 March, a phase of the of the First Battles of the Somme in which the Division was engaged until 1 April)

On 24 March 1918 each brigade and the machine gun squadron provided a regiment to be constituted as a "Dismounted Division". These units returned to 1st Cavalry Division two days later.

The Battle of Bapaume (24 - 25 March, a phase of the of the First Battles of the Somme)

The Battle of Rosières (26 - 27 March, a phase of the of the First Battles of the Somme)

On the day and in the area that George Pilgrim died on 27th March 1918 ... *"A confused series of vicious actions followed involving six British Divisions who were attacked from the front, flank and rear by eleven German Divisions. Ordered 'to hold the line at all costs',*

¹ Via email to HP from the Curator, 9/12th lancers Museum, Derby 5th Feb 2018

bitter fighting saw trapped British units driven to attempt difficult retirements through German-held positions but Rosières temporarily, held firm”.

Many had to escape back through German lines.

However, George Pilgrim is recorded as being killed near to Morlancourt. The scene of an allied counter-offensive on the next day.

JL

George Pilgrim is Remembered on:

- 🕒 **Pozieres Memorial, Somme Panel 4 B (implying body never recovered)**
- 🕒 **Balderton - St. Giles Church War Memorial as G H PILGRIM Tpr. Lancers**
- 🕒 **South Collingham - St John's Church - Parishioners War Memorial as G H PILGRIM Private 9th (Queens Royal) Lancers**
- 🕒 **South Collingham - St John's Church - Roll of Honour War Memorial as George Henry PILGRIM**
- 🕒 **Canterbury Cathedral 9th Queens Royal Lancers War Memorial and Roll of Honour**

Sources:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/rollofhonour/People/Details/21057>

<http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/1586813/PILGRIM,%20GEORGE%20HENRY>

UK Soldiers died in the Great War, 1914-1919 www.ancsetry.co.uk

The Long, Long Trail <http://www.1914-1918.net/1cavdiv.htm> *Rosières.*

<http://www.cwgc.org/spring1918/content.asp?menuid=34&submenuid=35&id=71&menuname=Rosi%E8res&menu=subsub>

Operation Michael http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Michael

<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/famous-9th-lancers-regiment>

Pages 1-3 researched by Jeremy Lodge 2014

Additional Information: George H. Pilgrim

Added from Trevor Frecknall's 'Collingham in the Great War':

'The fact that George (or Harry as he was universally known) is remembered on the war memorials inside the churches in Langford, Balderton, South

Collingham and Minterne Magna in Dorset demonstrates how he had always been willing to travel in search of work – just like his father, Tom, a labourer. Henry, as he preferred to be known, took to gardening and had branched out as far as Tatton Park, near Knutsford, Cheshire, by the time of the 1911 census – and was in Dorset by the time he enlisted in The Great War.’ - TF²

has come to hand that Harry Pilgrim was killed on an early date of the present great German offensive. For many years he was a most enthusiastic member of Brough Church Choir and of Mr. Cecil Woolley's Bible Class. He was very popular with his associates and his death will be greatly deplored by all who knew him. R I.P.

Above: Rev Maxwell's tribute to George Pilgrim in his May 2018 newsletter c/o Collingham District Local History Society archives Ref: EC/B/50. Cecil Woolley founded the church and school at Brough.

Right: *George Pilgrim's name on the Minterne Magna War Memorial in St Andrew's Church, Minterne Magna, Dorset.*

This suggests George Pilgrim's employment upon enlistment was perhaps at the splendid Minterne House, home of the Churchills in the 1600s and 1700s and later owned by the Digbys. The 10th Baron Digby (1846-1920) was in residence during the war. Lord Henry Digby still owns the house today. The church is less than a mile from Minterne House and Gardens.



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² Trevor Frecknall p 111

The 9th Lancers in action March 27th 1918

The following is a scanned extract from the regimental history written by Major E W Sheppard in 1936 kindly forwarded by Angela Tarnowski, Curator of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers Museum. It describes the attack from paragraph 2 onwards in which George Pilgrim (in 'C' Squadron) was killed:



Above: The account shows that George Pilgrim was one of 7 men killed in fighting that day.

Sources in additional information:

- Insignia and regimental history extract kindly supplied by Angela Tarnowski of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers Museum, Derby
- Milterne House.org (website)
- Collingham and District Local History Society (South Collingham Parish Newsletter)
- T Frecknall 'Collingham and District in the Great War.'

Visit:

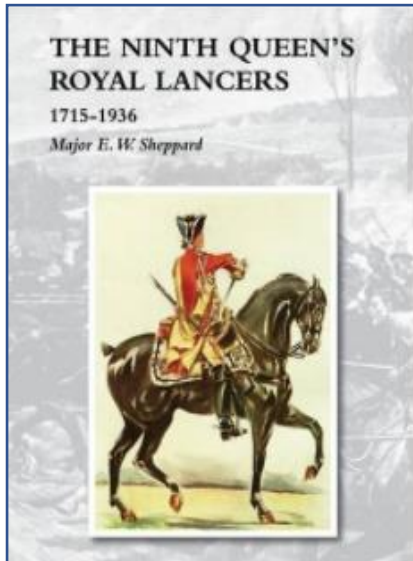
9th/12th Royal Lancers Museum, Derby: <https://www.9th12thlancersmuseum.org/>

Address:

9th/12th Royal Lancers Museum
Derby Museum & Art Gallery,
The Strand,
Derby,
DE1 1BS

Tel: 01332 642231

Books:



The Ninth Queen Royal Lancers 1715-1936 by Major E W Sheppard has been reprinted (2015) by Naval Military Press ISBN 10: 1845749782 / ISBN 13: 9781845749781 £28.00



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