

IN MEMORY OF ALBERT MARLOW

DIED IN ACTION 31 JULY 1916

Lived at 12 Cooperative Terrace, now Ivy Lane

PLAQUE No. 7

Albert was the second son of Sarah and Henry Marlow (a plate layer for the Great Western Railway), one of six siblings in total. His entire family were born in Harbury, and, according to the 1901 census, lived in 12 Co-Operative Terrace. Albert was fourteen at this time, and working as a Labourer.

By the 1911 census he was in Mill Street, possibly house number 27, apparently with his employer Joseph Ingram. He went on from the general term of 'labourer' to work as a plate layer, and a 'packer' (a painter) just like his father. He is recorded as among the employees of the GWR killed in the war, so must have entered their employment sometime after 1911. He was among many hundreds of railway employees who served in the war, laying the thousands of miles of track needed to deliver men and munitions to the front.

Albert enlisted in London, joining the corps of the Royal Engineers. These served a range of purposes in the First World War, forming the first flying division of the British armed forces and working as tunnelling companies (nicknamed 'the moles') who dug tunnels under enemy lines. They designed and built fortifications, using their technical ability to respond to chemical and underground warfare. Their role went beyond the front lines, as they maintained railways, waterways, bridges and transport, telephones and wireless equipment. They swelled in numbers, becoming vital to the smooth running of the war machine.

Recruits were required to be at least 5' 4" when they enlisted, and no older than 30 years old. Once enlisted they were to serve for six years.

Albert served as sapper in the 110th Railway Company.

The newspaper obituary marking his death notes how he had been in the army for 18 months, and was liked by everyone who knew him. It describes him as having a very bright and cheerful disposition.

His death did not happen on blood-soaked fields, nor in the collapsing tunnels that choked other members of the engineers. Rather, he died away from the frontlines. Bathing while off-duty, he became entangled in waterweeds and drowned. Despite the efforts of his comrades and the regimental doctor, he could not be saved. He died on 31 July 1916, aged 20.

He is remembered in the Demancourt communal cemetery, a peaceful field with bright grass, lined by trees.



Harbury World War 1 Memorial Trail

Remembering the men of Harbury parish who fell during the first world war in service of their country.

