

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Private Mark William Hall

13th Battalion Devonshire Regiment (39547) & Labour Corps (144796)

Mark William Hall was born in Cheltenham in 1898 to William and Celia Hall. At the outbreak of war he was living at the family home at 2 Stairfield Walk in Leckhampton with his parents and four younger siblings. He was employed as a pastry cook, probably by J E Townsend - Baker & Confectioner in Shurdington.

Wishing to serve, he attested on 6 June 1916; however as his fitness was graded as C II he was posted to the 13th (Works) Battalion, the Devonshire Regiment on 14 September. Remaining at home, this unit was soon absorbed by the newly formed Labour Corps and he was transferred on 28 April 1917 and placed under Southern Command Labour Centre (SCLC) and

assigned to C Company at Porton Camp near Salisbury. Porton Camp had been established as an experimental ground for the Special Companies - Royal Engineers for the purpose of testing gas weaponry.

Private Mark William Hall died suddenly on 31 July 1917, aged just 19 years. Some reports claimed he had been hospitalised, however records confirm that he died on the recreation ground. Whether his general health or the specialised work at Porton Down had any culpability in his sudden and untimely death is not known. He is buried in Cheltenham Cemetery and commemorated on the south panel of the Cheltenham War Memorial.