

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Serjeant Miles John Sterry DCM, MM and Bar (G21501)
7th Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment

Miles John Sterry was born in early 1885 at Edge Hills near Cinderford. He was the son of coal miner John Sterry and his wife Elizabeth. He was christened at Holy Trinity Church, Drybrook on 29 March 1885. By 1891 the family had moved into Cinderford town and lived at Abbey Street, and later Heywood Road. After leaving school he was first employed in one of the local collieries.

On Christmas Day 1909 he married Ethel Mary Moore at the Baptist Chapel, Cinderford. The married couple moved to Gloucester, where he was employed as a commercial traveller for a tailoring business in Park Road, taking up residence at 20 Sebert Street. They were to have three children.

Miles attested to the Gloucestershire Regiment on 11 December 1915 as Private 5813. He was, by today's standards, a small man, being 5'3½" tall and weighing 120 pounds. He was not posted to a battalion (4th Reserve) until 31 July 1916 and was

re-numbered 37408. After training he was despatched to the front, landing at Le Havre on 4 December 1916. In France he received postings to 13th and 14th Battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment. His record shows that he was given 10 days leave in January 1918.

On his return he was posted to the 12th Entrenching Battalion in the rank of Serjeant. Then on 1 April 1918 he was attached to 7th Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment and reverted in rank. He was promoted paid acting Corporal, in the West Kents, on 24 June 1918. On 6 August 1918 he was officially transferred to the 7th Battalion Royal West Kents, 53rd Brigade, 18th (Eastern) Division, and allotted the number G21501.

From then until his death in late October 1918 his military career 'blossomed'. He was promoted unpaid Lance Serjeant on 19 August; awarded the Military Medal on 7 September; awarded a Bar to

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his Military Medal on 9 October, and promoted Serjeant the next day by Battalion Orders. For actions on 23 October and subsequently he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. The award was Gazetted on 2 December 1919. The citation reads:- *"During the operations on 23rd October, 1918, east of Le Cateau, he displayed conspicuous gallantry in the attack, and handled his platoon with marked leadership. His coolness under heavy machine-gun fire was most encouraging to the men, and when the objective was reached he went forward and cleared the ground of enemy snipers. He again showed*

conspicuous gallantry in a subsequent attack east of Bousies, and although wounded he continued to lead his platoon until the objective was reached and the line organised."

Miles John Sterry DCM, MM and Bar was mortally wounded on 26 October and died at No 46 Casualty Clearing Station at Beugny on 27 October 1918, aged 33 years. He was buried at Delsaux Farm Cemetery, Beugny, Pas de Calais. He is also remembered on Cinderford town War Memorial.



Delsaux Farm Cemetery, Beugny, Pas de Calais