

23: Harry Edward Dayas

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: H. E. Dayas

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: 13th Bn. Cheshire Regiment

Service Number: 1132 Date of Death: 10 June 1917 Age at Death: ?

Buried / Commemorated at: Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Bailleul, Departement du Nord, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France

Additional information given by CWGC: None

Harry Edward ['Dick'] Dayas was 'about 20' according to the *Chester Chronicle* (although he was probably aged 24) when he died after being wounded in France.

		Male	Female			
Jane A. Dayas	Widow	33	✓	Manageress (Laundry)	Worker	Hereford
Arthur Dayas	Son	13	✓			Wem, Salop
Winifred Dayas	Daughter	10	✓			Wem, Salop
Harry E. Dayas	Son	8	✓			Ludlow, Salop
Harry Hemming	Brother-in-law	27	✓	Paver Road Lab	Worker	Cheltenham
Maud Hemming	Daughter	5	✓			Cheltenham

1901 census (extract) – Moorside, Neston

Jane A. Dayas	33	widow, manageress (laundry)	born Hereford
Arthur	13		born Wem, Shropshire
Winifred	10		born Wem, Shropshire
Harry E.	8		born Ludlow, Shropshire
Harry Hemming	27	widower, brother-in-law, paver, road labourer	born Cheltenham
Maud Hemming	5		born Cheltenham

Harry Edward Dayas, often known as 'Dick', was a son of coachman John Charles and laundress Jane ('Jenny') Adelaide Dayas and he was born in Wem in early 1893.

John Charles Dayas married Jane Adelaide James in Wem in late 1886 but he died sometime before the 1901 census although no record of his death has been found.

Harry's mother became the manageress of the Neston Laundry (the Neston & Parkgate Hygienic Laundry & Cleaning Company) and his brother, Arthur James Dayas, became an army lieutenant and was injured early in the war. Arthur married and emigrated to Australia at the end of the war and he died on 2 January 1963 in Toowoomba, Queensland.

At the time of the 1911 census the family was living at Deeside Cottage on Old Quay Lane, Parkgate, close to the laundry.

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Number of Scholads 7
(To be filled up by the Enumerators
after collection.)

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)				(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling)	
<p>I certify that —</p> <p>(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex column.</p> <p>(2) The number of males and females in Columns 3 and 4 respectively, and have compared these men with the total number of persons.</p> <p>(3) After making up the necessary figures I have compared all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.</p> <p>Initials of Enumerator: <u> <i>AK</i> </u></p>	Males	Females	Persons		<p>Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Flat, Apartment, or Apartment House), and the number of Rooms in the Kitchen as a room but do not count cellars, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; see warehouse, office, shop.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6.</p>
	2	3	5	0	<p>I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.</p> <p>Signature: <u> <i>Jonny Adelaide Douglas</i> </u></p> <p>Postal Address: <u> <i>Douglas Cottage, Weston, Gloucestershire</i> </u></p>

Jenny Adelaide Dayas	42	widow, manageress, laundry (steam)	born Pembridge, Hereford
Arthur James	24	assistant foreman, motor tyre works	born Wem, Shropshire
Winifred Francis	22	assistant manageress, laundry (steam)	born Wem, Shropshire
Harry Edward	18	apprentice dyer & cleaner, dyeing and cleaning works	born Ludlow, Shropshire
Elizabeth Evans	43	general servant (domestic)	born Newtown, Montgomery

The 13th (Service) Battalion Cheshire Regiment, unofficially the Wirral Battalion, was formed at Port Sunlight on 1 September 1914 by Gershom Stewart MP and was based at Chester. In October 1914 the battalion moved to Salisbury Plain and came under the orders of 74th Brigade in 25th Division in Kitchener's Third New Army. By December 1914 the battalion was in billets in Bournemouth, moving to Aldershot for final training in May 1915 before, on 25 September 1915, being mobilised and landing in France.

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The 25th Division, with which Harry was serving, was selected to be one that would make the assault and was placed in the front line between the two main roads with the New Zealand Division to the right and the 36th (Ulster) Division to the left. The 74th Brigade, including the 25th Division, led the main attack with the 7th Brigade on its left and with the 75th Brigade in close support. In addition to its own field artillery, the Division enjoyed the support of the Guards Division artillery and 34th, 93rd and 2nd New Zealand Army Field Brigades RFA. Two huge mines were exploded at the start of the attack, at Spanbroekmolen and Ontario Farm just outside the boundaries of the Divisional front and the Division lost 24 infantry company commanders during this initial stage. Although the action in total led to 145 officers and 2907 men being killed, wounded or missing, it was considered a success.

A note on Harry's Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects records that he died at the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station in Belgium although it was actually located at Bailleul in France, adjacent to the border. The hospital had moved to Bailleul (to a site called St Joseph College) from Estaires in May 1917 in readiness for the casualties expected in that area from the forthcoming actions and, and between 6 - 9 June 2,450 wounded were admitted.

Arthur Crookenden, the Colonel of the Cheshire Regiment made the following comments on The Battle of Messines:

In this great battle, we were represented by four Battalions. Three of them, the 10th, 11th and 13th were in the 25th Division and attacked under the orders of the Anzac—Australian and New Zealand Army Corps—just North of Messines. The fourth was the 9th Battalion, in the 19th Division, which attacked just north of Wytschaete. The areas in which they attacked are shown on the sketch map.

Starting on the right, the 25th Division was in the Wulverghem Sector. The 13th Battalion, in the 74th Brigade, commanded by Colonel L. H. K. Finch, went over the top at zero, under cover of the terrific explosions of the mines, and of a hail of steel from 250 British guns of all calibres. This Brigade had the greatest depth to pass, some 2,000 yards.

There was a slight ground mist. As our mines went off and barrage fell, a line of light from the simultaneous discharge of enemy S.O.S. rockets sprang into view and extended for six miles from North to South, a very peculiar and striking spectacle. The troops moved forward in a gathering cloud of dust and smoke from the explosions of mines and shells, as well as from mist and gas.

The 13th Battalion swept over the first German trenches and the leading companies, "C" and "D" (Lieut. Pigott and Captain Thomas), reached the second line, their objective. Some direction had been lost, but Colonel Finch, arriving with the leap-frogging companies, "A" and "B" (Lieut. Gilderall and Captain Moir), led them forward to the Battalion objective.

* * * *

The 10th Battalion, under Major J. B. Howell, M.C., Colonel A. C. Johnston having had the mortification of being retained with the "B" teams by Division H.Q., started in the second wave of the 7th Brigade and reached their final objective without much loss. On the way, their left company (Captain S. F. Morgan), captured and passed Hell Farm, but the second wave were counter-attacked from Hell (Lenfer) Wood. Both

these places are on the left of the area marked on the map. A grim struggle ensued, in which our men gradually gained the upper hand, and killed or captured all the German defenders of the wood and the farm.

In the meantime, the 11th Battalion, in the 75th Brigade, under Colonel W. K. Evans, D.S.O., left their assembly positions at 6.50 a.m. to attack the most distant of the Division's objectives. They secured them quickly, but pushing on too keenly, an officer and some men of the 11th Battalion found themselves attacking Despagne Farm. The officer suddenly realized that he was ahead of our barrage. It was too late to do anything but get the men into shell holes and await the storm. It came and fell in all its terrible fury, but the bulk of the little party were lucky enough to live to tell the tale.

Thanks to the excellent arrangements made by the Staff, and to the energy of carrying parties, material for consolidation, as well as food and water, was rapidly on the spot, and was promptly used to make counter-attack as difficult as possible for the Germans. The position gained was, in short, consolidated, and none too soon, for at 1.45 p.m. a strong counter-attack by a German battalion from the Blauwepoort Beek was beaten off mainly by rifle fire of the 11th Battalion and a platoon of the 8th Border Regiment. The opportune arrival of boldly handled sections of machine guns was of very great help.

The casualties were :—

13th Battalion.—2 officers and 29 others killed, 4 officers and 132 others wounded.

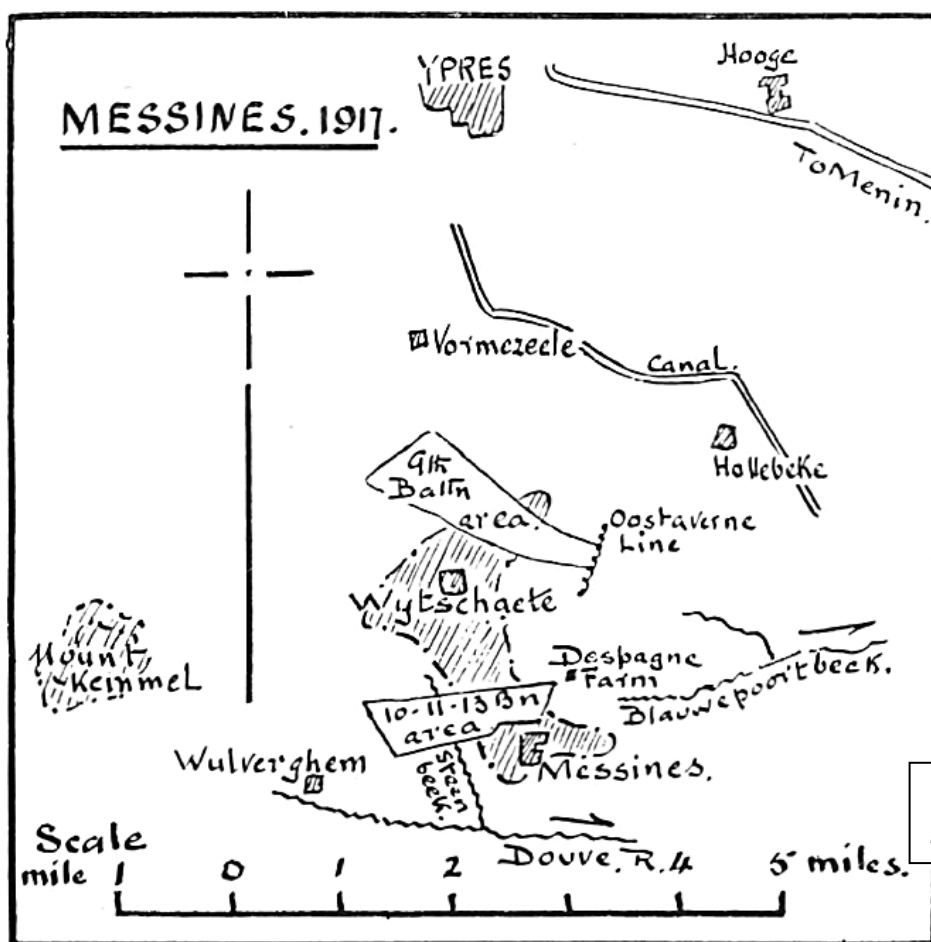
10th Battalion.—1 officer and 26 others killed, 7 officers and 14 others wounded.

11th Battalion.—3 officers and 43 others killed, 8 officers and 170 others wounded.

It is impossible to omit reference to the artillery. Their programme was, as can well be imagined, most carefully arranged to suit the estimated rate of progress of the infantry. So skilfully had this been done by the Divisional Commander, General E. G. T. Bainbridge, that no alteration was required by the infantry during the whole battle. Standing barrages moved forward in such a way that all Germans within 1,500 yards of our infantry were kept under continuous fire. These standing barrages remained till "relieved" by the arrival of the "creeping" or "rolling" barrage, and then moved on to their next task.

To augment the normal means of getting supplies of all kinds forward to the fighting troops, a pack transport company was formed in the Division, in five convoys. All did excellent work. One of them was under Lieut. Green of the 13th Battalion.

As has been shown, the capture of each objective was carried out with few casualties, but the subsequent shelling of our newly-won lines was amazingly and unexpectedly accurate. Carrying and working parties also suffered heavily. The enemy guns took a heavy toll of life in the days following the assault.



Cheshire Observer - 26 December 1914

The History of the Cheshire Regiment in the Great War : 1914 - 1918

ROLL OF HONOUR.—Considering the large number of men supplied to the Army and Navy by Neston and district, the local casualty list has not been a heavy one, although our boys have gone through plenty of fighting. The recent death in action, however, of Private Dick Dayas, is most pathetic. Mrs. Dayas was expecting her son home on special leave, and on Saturday waited up very late for him, but to her great disappointment he did not turn up. On the Sunday morning a letter was received from the War Office announcing the death of her son in action in France, which had taken place one day during the past week. Private Dayas was of the 13th Cheshires, and about 20 years of age. His brother, Lieut. Arthur Dayas, was wounded at the commencement of the war. "Dick" was a great favourite (especially amongst the workers at the local laundry, of which his mother is manageress) and much sympathy is extended to Mrs. Dayas and family in their bereavement. Following this came the announcement of the death of another well known local man, and although there is little doubt but what the news is true, it has not been officially confirmed. It is pleasing to see our wounded local heroes making good progress towards recovery. Visits have been paid by Privates Carruthers and Rooke, the former suffering with trench feet, now happily recovered, and the latter, who was seriously wounded in France, and whose parents were wired for in March last, is making good progress. —Four local young men had a good send-off last Tuesday evening (destination unknown). They were cheerful and in the best of spirits. Nothing can daunt the pluck and indomitable spirits of our "Tommies."

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 23 June 1917

Transcript (part)

ROLL OF HONOUR – Considering the large number of men supplied to the Army and Navy by Neston and district, the local casualty list has not been a heavy one, although our boys have gone through plenty of fighting. The recent death in action, however, of Private Dick Dayas is most pathetic. Mrs Dayas was expecting her son home on special leave, and on Saturday waited up very late for him, but to her very great disappointment he did not turn up. On the Sunday morning a letter was received from the War Office announcing the death of her son in action in France, which had taken place one day during the past week. Private Dayas was of the 13th Cheshires, and about 20 years of age. His brother, Lieut. Arthur Dayas, was wounded at the commencement of the war. 'Dick' was a great favourite (especially amongst the workers at the local laundry of which his mother is manageress) and much sympathy is extended to Mrs Dayas and family in their bereavement.

DIED OF WOUNDS.

Cheshire Regiment.—Dayas, 1132, H. E. (Neston); Peters, 18553, Lance-Corpl. S. (Chester).

Cheshire Observer - Saturday 14 July 1917

Cheshire Observer - Saturday 23 June 1917

LATE PRIVATE DAYAS.—Special reference was made at the Parish Church on Sunday to the death in action of Private Dayas, and condolence was extended to the bereaved family. At the close of service Mr. R. Howick (organist) played the Dead March in Saul.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 7 July 1917

DAYAS—On June 10th, killed in action, Private Harry Edward (Dick), Lord Kitchener's first army, youngest son of Mrs. Dayas, Deeside, of Neston.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 23 June 1917

[illegible]

92.		Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
DAYAS.		Ches. R.		Pt.	W/1132	
Harry E.						
Mond.		Roll.	Page.	Remarks.		
VICTORY		J/2/101 ⁶	176	DQW. 10.6.17.		
BRITISH		- do -	do			
15. STAR		J/2/181	94.			
Theatre of War first served in		C) France.				
Date of entry therein		25.9.15.				

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