

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Private William Evans (17940)
13th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment

William Evans was the second son of Mr & Mrs James Evans of Lower Ruspidge, Cinderford. He enlisted in 1915, leaving his occupation in one of the local coal mines. His brother, James, had been killed in action with the 10th Gloucesters in August 1916, and another brother served in the Royal Navy.

Private William Evans of the 13th (Service) (Forest of Dean) Battalion (Pioneers) Gloucestershire Regiment died of wounds on 11 November 1917; he was 20 years of age. Private Evans is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinghe.

It was probably of little consolation for his family to read the comment written by the editor

of The Dean Forest Mercury: "... the family stand high for their patriotic action at the time of their country's great need and the following letters received by the family were reproduced in that edition:

Dear Mrs Evans, Just a few lines because I think it my duty to inform you. I'm sorry to tell you that Will has met with an accident, but hope and trust that he will get over it. Well, Mrs Evans, I should have written before, but our officer has been trying to find out where he was, but he can't find which hospital he is in, but hope you will hear from him before long. I'm sorry to say that he had a piece of shrapnel go through the back and come out of the stomach, but he was quite cheerful. We are all

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upset about it, and hope and trust that you will cheer up and keep a good heart. We all know it is very hard for you, but try and keep a good heart. I feel quite downhearted about it myself and all his pals. He was one of my best men, and I always thought a lot of him. I remain, yours sincerely, F Turley.

Dear Madam, I very much regret to inform you that your son, No 17940 Pte W Evans, of this battalion, was wounded by a bursting shell yesterday morning, the 11th inst at about 6 o'clock. He was on duty with his waggon at the time and was standing by his animals when a shell burst quite close to him. It would be misplaced kindness on my part if I were to pretend to you that he was not seriously wounded. I am only too sorry to have to tell you that his injuries must have been serious. He was immediately tended, and taken at once in a motor ambulance to hospital, though which hospital I have as yet not been able to find out. In the course of a day or two I shall be notified, and will at once communicate to you whatever news I receive. I hope sincerely it will be good news. You may rest assured that everything possible will be

done for him in hospital. Although, as you know, the conditions out here are often very terrible, and the hardships which men have to undergo from time to time are altogether indescribable, yet nothing in skill or money or comforts is spared for the welfare of the wounded men. Your son is a very good soldier. He has always done his work well and uncomplainingly. I hope we shall hear of his speedy recovery. Yours faithfully, Martin Smith, Lieut.

Dear Mrs Evans, I very greatly regret to tell you that your son, Pte W Evans, was brought here on Sabbath morning, sorely wounded in the abdomen. He was given very special attention, but passed away that same afternoon at 4.45pm. I saw him shortly after he was brought in, and he was glad when I suggested writing to you, and asked me to send his best love to all. Even in your great sorrow, I think you will be glad to know that he was brought here, where he received every possible attention, and I am sure you will cherish the message of love he asked me to send. With respectful sympathy, yours sincerely, Robert Howie, Chaplain.