

2ND LIEUTENANT WILLIAM GEORGE ROBINSON

Service Number:

8th Battalion Leicester Regiment

Killed in action 2nd October 1917, Aged 26

Born Burbage

Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium Panels 50&51

Burbage War Memorial

St Catherine's Church Memorial

Lectern St Catherine's Church

Family Gravestone St Catherine's Churchyard.



William Robinson, son of William and Emma Robinson. William was their only child. His father was a Burbage hosiery manufacturer. He was born at Broomhill House, Lutterworth Road in 1892, and educated at Hinckley Grammar School, he became a general manager assisting his father and uncle in the family hosiery business.



Figure 271 Broomhill House

He showed remarkable business ability and took an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the comfort and welfare of the employees with whom he was most popular. The (James) Robinson family who lost their son Ben in the conflict lived in the cottages next to Broomhill House and worked at the factory.

William joined the territorial force of the Honourable Artillery Company on the 4th April 1916 and went out to France on December 8th 1916. Returning to England, he entered Keble College Oxford in February 1917 to study for a commission, which he gained in June 1917.

With the Leicestershire regiment, he crossed to France on July 8th where he quickly became involved in the Third Battle of Ypres. An offensive mounted by Commonwealth forces to divert the Germans from a weakened French front further south. The initial attempt in June to dislodge the enemy from Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north eastwards, which began in July, quickly became a dogged struggle against the enemy and

rapid deteriorating weather. The campaign finally ended in November with the capture of Passchendaele by which time William had been killed.

A letter received from France told the family, Lieutenant Robinson was advancing from shell hole to shell hole across no man's land towards German lines when an enemy shell exploded over them. Lieutenant Robinson and two of his men were killed instantaneously, although another officer and his men, in another shell hole a few yards away, escaped without a scratch.

William's name is on the Tyne Cot Memorial, which bears the names of 35,000 officers and men with no known grave.



Figure 272 Tyne Cot Memorial



Figure 273 Tyne Cot Memorial Inscription

SEC.-LIEUT. WILLIAM GEORGE ROBINSON,
OF THE
8th BATTALION LEICESTER REGIMENT.

SEC.-LIEUT. WILLIAM GEORGE ROBINSON was born at Hinckley on May 21st, 1891, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. William Robinson, of Broomhill House, Burbage, his father being a member of the well-known firm of Messrs. Robinson Bros. (Burbage) Ltd., Hosiery manufacturers, Burbage, Hinckley.

He received his education at the Hinckley Grammar School and for his life held brilliant prospects; as an assistant to his father and uncle at their Burbage Manufactory he showed remarkable business ability and an intelligent interest in the welfare of the employees, with whom he was most popular.

On his release from business in the County of Leicestershire, Lieut. Robinson joined the Territorial Force of the Honourable Artillery Company in April, 1916, and after preliminary training in England went to the Western Front in December of that year, returning later to England to study for a commission.



SEC.-LIEUT. WILLIAM GEORGE ROBINSON,
8th Battalion Leicester Regiment.

On February 6th, 1917, he entered the Officers' Cadet Corps at Keble College, Oxford, whence he passed out in June, when he was gazetted Sec.-Lieutenant and posted to the Leicestershire Regiment. He crossed to France for the second time on

BRITISH ROLL OF HONOUR.—SEC. LIEUT. WILLIAM GEORGE ROBINSON.

July 8th, 1917, and had seen three months' service as a commissioned officer when he was called to make the supreme sacrifice on October 2nd, 1917.

His Company Commanding Officer, writing to Mrs. Robinson, said : —

" It is with the deepest regret that I write to inform you that your son, Sec.-Lieut. W. G. Robinson, "C" Company, 8th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment, was killed in action on October 2nd. He was hit by a shell in the body and died immediately. During the past six weeks while I have been with the Company I found him one of the best to work and get on with, and in every way a splendid officer. All who knew him, officers and men, join with me in expressing our deepest sympathy with you in your tremendous loss."

Another officer, who also took part in the action in which Lieut. Robinson laid down his life, and who was a close friend, wrote :—

" It was no small shock to me on going over to his Battalion to enquire for him to learn the sad news he had been killed. From the information I got, he was killed instantaneously with two or three more fellows by a Boche shell which landed in the trench they were in. I am informed he was absolutely fearless and led his men as only a gallant officer and gentleman could. . . . His name will be added to the long roll of gallant officers of the Leicestershire Regiment who have died for their King and Country."

Whilst the Chaplain in a letter to Mrs. Robinson writes : —

" His loss will be keenly felt by all ranks. He unflinchingly did his duty. I am glad to say both he and his brother officers received the Blessed Sacrament before going up to the line. He died a hero's death."

Unassuming and of a most attractive disposition, Lieut. Robinson's death is deeply deplored by a wide circle of friends as well as in the Army.

An only child he was intensely devoted to his home, where the memory of his absolute uprightness and devotion to all that was best and highest will ever be cherished, whilst to the Roll of Britain's Heroes another name is added with reverence and with pride.

BURBAGE FALLEN OF THE GREAT WAR



Figure 276 Headstone 2nd Lieutenant Robinson

His parents gave the Brass Lectern in St Catherine's Church in his memory and it is believed later gave up the family business and retired to Skegness.



Figure 277 2nd Lieutenant Robinson Lectern