

# Charles Read

*7753, 1<sup>st</sup>. Battn. Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. KIA 7<sup>th</sup> December 1914*

Although the name on the War Memorial is spelt Read this man is probably Charles Reed as any records relating to Warboys only have details of Reed and not Read. The "Soldiers Died in the Great War" has an entry for a Charles Reed born in Warboys who was a Corporal in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (DCLI). It is most likely that the man is Charles Reed the son of William and Eliza (nee Peal).

Charles was born in Warboys in 1880 the youngest of seven children. He lived with his paternal Grand-parents Jane and Sarah. His mother died in 1884. His elder sister Frances married Frank Robinson and their third child **John** was killed in 1918 and is also on the War Memorial. By 1901 Charles and his father William were living together in Ramsey Road and both working as agricultural labourers. They were neighbours of **Charles Taylor** and **John Richardson** also listed on the War Memorial.

Charles enlisted in London and his army number indicates that he joined the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry as a member of the Regular Army before the 14 March 1906.



This picture shows DCLI soldiers arriving in Ireland in 1914.

At the outbreak of war the Battalion was stationed in Ireland and received the orders to mobilise at 5.25am on 4 August 1914. They landed at Le Havre 15 August 1914 in heavy rain to an enthusiastic welcome from the French. As part of the Regular British Army they were immediately plunged into battle and took part in all the major battles of the first few months.

On 4 December 1914 the DCLI began to march to Wulverghem where they took up positions in the front line facing German trenches about 130 yards away. The DCLI held these trenches for 4 days until 8 December, lying in water but unable to move during the day as any movement drew fire from the German trenches. Charles was killed in action on 7 December 1914 so was probably a victim of that fire. In

In 1919 he was buried in Wulverghem-Lindenhoek Road Military cemetery but was originally buried elsewhere. Maybe in Cornwall Cemetery Messines. as the bodies of 20 men from the DCLI, now reburied in Wulverghem, were originally buried there. All were killed during December 1914 to January 1915.