

**Lance Corporal**

**FRED BILLING**

**2565 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regt)**

**Died 2 March 1916**

**Aged 33**

**Commemorated on the Loos Memorial**

**Panel 25 - 27**

Fred Billing was typical of the men of Buckland who served and died in WW1: he came from a traditional agricultural background, and from a family who'd lived in the village for centuries. Yet he was unusual in having left Buckland by the age of 18, and was living with his wife and family in Surrey by the time he enlisted in 1914.

His father, John Hake Billing, was born in 1857; Billings and Hakes are there in the Buckland St Mary Registers from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. John married Jane Wilmot in the summer of 1881; Fred was born on the 13 August 1882, and christened on October 1. There was one other child, Rosa Jane, born in 1887. John lived and worked as an agricultural labourer at Wetherhayes and Tanlake. Fred was at Brown Down School, Otterford for 18 months, between May 1893 and December 1894, but there's no record of him at Buckland.

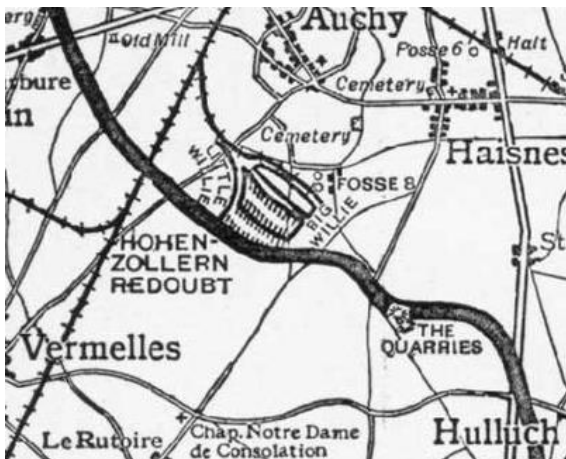
By 1901, Fred, aged 18, was working as a grocer's assistant in Bristol Road, Bridgwater, but he must have travelled south; in 1903 he was working as a Grocer's Porter in Swanage, and on 18 October he married Amy Aylwin, also working in Swanage as a parlourmaid. She was born in Sussex, but her family had later moved to Burgh Heath, near Banstead in Surrey. By 1911 Fred and Amy had moved there too, with their four children: Grace 6, Rosa 4, Fred 2 and Frank 1 month. A last baby, Ethel, was born in the autumn of 1913. They lived at 5 Wheelers Cottages on The Green in the centre of the village (now demolished – the Billings would have trouble recognising this now – to an eye used to the West Country - very suburban place). Fred was working as a builder's labourer in 1911.

War was declared on 4 August 1914; Fred volunteered (no compulsion at this stage of the war) on 7 September 1914 at Epsom. One can only imagine what his wife Amy, with her 5 small children, must have thought of this. Pride? Terror? The Surrey Attestation Register (the list of those who presented themselves to sign up, or attest) gives us an idea of his appearance. He was 32 years of age, height 5'5", weight 145lbs, chest 37" (expansion 3"), fair complexion, blue eyes and light hair.



*Royal Fusiliers Memorial, London*

*Fred Billing, probably soon after enlistment*



He served in the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). This was a Service Battalion, formed on 21 August 1914, and part of Kitchener's New Army - K1 - formed specifically to fight WW1. It was part of the 36<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 12<sup>th</sup> (Eastern Division). After training at Colchester and Aldershot, it left for France in late May 1915. Fred Billing's Service Records have not survived, so much of what happened has to be surmised (all Battalion War Diaries, kept daily, normally name only officers, not other ranks). It seems probable he left for France too in May 1915. \*

The Battalion were initially engaged in typical trench warfare. Their Division was then involved in the Battle of Loos, fought over the dead flat coal mining area north of Lens from 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915, till it petered out during October and was bogged down for the winter season. It was not a battle the British had chosen; they were not ready for a major offensive in terms of manpower or munitions, but were being committed by their Allies to a battle in an area unsuited to attack, without clear objectives.

The first day brought relative success, but, as so often, the success was whittled away and broke down in stalemate. It was also the first time the British Army had used poison gas, euphemised before the attack, the writer Robert Graves tells us, as 'The Accessory'. Losses were very heavy. At some point in this period Fred Billing attracted enough notice to be promoted to Lance Corporal.

Early Spring saw the action in which he was killed, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1916. The extract below is taken from *The Royal Fusiliers in the Great War* by H C O'Neill (with thanks to Lewis Wood).

Notes: Little Willie was the trench leading north from the redoubt, and the north face of the redoubt itself. Big Willie was the trench along the eastern limb of the redoubt. The Chord seems to have been the trench joining the two.

The Hohenzollern Redoubt was a German position in the First World War, near the French village of Auchy-les Mines.

## HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT, MARCH, 1916

The Chord. — By this time, however, local actions had begun, and in two of them the Royal Fusiliers were engaged. The first was the action on March 2nd, 1916, at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and was carried out by the 8th and 9th Battalions. The objective was The Chord, joining Big Willie and Little Willie. At 5.45 p.m. the 8th Battalion, on the left (or north), exploded three mines and the 9th four. The largest of the latter ("A") was intended to wreck the bulk of The Chord, but it only affected about one-third of its length.

The trench mortars and artillery were to have begun simultaneously, but the former began half an hour and the latter a quarter of an hour earlier. Immediately after the explosion of the mines 50 men of A Company of the 8th Battalion, under Captain A. E. K. Mason and Second Lieutenant Wardrop, and 50 men of B Company of the 9th, under Captain the Hon. R. E. Philipps, rushed across and seized the part of The Chord allotted to them. Twenty of Philipps' party were buried through the explosion of the mine blowing in part of the assembly trench, and Philipps was slightly wounded in the face. But the men went forward rapidly and either cut through the wire or went over it where it was covered by the earth cast up by the explosion.

Of the party of the 8th Battalion, only Wardrop and one man reached The Chord, the rest being either killed or wounded." This, we believe, must have included Fred Billing, blown up in the explosions.

He has no known grave; he's commemorated on the Loos Memorial, Loos-en-Gehelle, along with 20620 other names killed between the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915 and the end of the war. Many of these bodies lay unburied till that time, and were unidentifiable, because their sole identity disc had been taken to count casualties; later, 2 discs were issued.

On his Medal Roll Card, his date of death is given, not as March 2, but July 7. The Battalion's Colonel, Lt Col Annesley, was also killed on that day, and is buried at Warloy-Baillon Communal Cemetery Extension, miles away on the Somme; Fred's name isn't mentioned there. It seems that this latter date must be a mistake, and that his presence on the Loos Memorial (see the CWGC site) is correct. As the card also gives his date of entry to France as March 6 1915 (contradicted by the known facts of his Battalion's movements), further doubt is cast on its accuracy.

The March date is also confirmed as "officially accepted" by the UK Army Register of Soldiers' Effects, detailing money owing to each soldier's dependents - £3.13.10 in Fred's case.

MRIC Fred Billing

The image shows a Military Record Card (MRC) for Fred Billing. The card is filled with handwritten information in red ink. At the top, the name 'BILLING' is written in large letters, followed by 'Fredrick'. Below this, there are several sections with handwritten details, including '8/10/16', 'Rice 0/25/66', and 'RMA 4-4-16'. The card also mentions '1/1 France' and '16-25-15'.

MRIC Fred Billing

W 2087. 4272315-10 DRA.-VI. & Supp. L&A. 42																		
Record No.	Registry No.	Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Account and Date	Date of Authority	To whom Authorised	Amount Authorised			No. of List in which advertised	
					Account and Date	£	s.	d.	£	s.				d.	£	s.		d.
344421	197833	Belling Fred	8/1 Bn	Officially below Royal accepted 10.16	3	13	10	3	13	10	NO. 17	19-4-12	Med: Army 7 August 1912	3	13	10	Suppression	
				These as on 2.3.16								17-9-19	Ind. Army 2	6			P.D.	
					WAR GRATUITY.													
					19-20 15 8 15													
					TERRITORIAL 5851													
					PAID 2/10/20													
					11444 6													
					6													

A. F. W 5370 JENT

DATE 28 8 19...

The UK Army Register of Soldiers' Effects – Fred Billing.

Fred's name is not only on the Loos Memorial and the Memorial in Buckland St Mary, but on at least three others: the Memorial in Banstead Church, that in St Mary's, Burgh Heath and that in the Burgh Heath Memorial Hall.



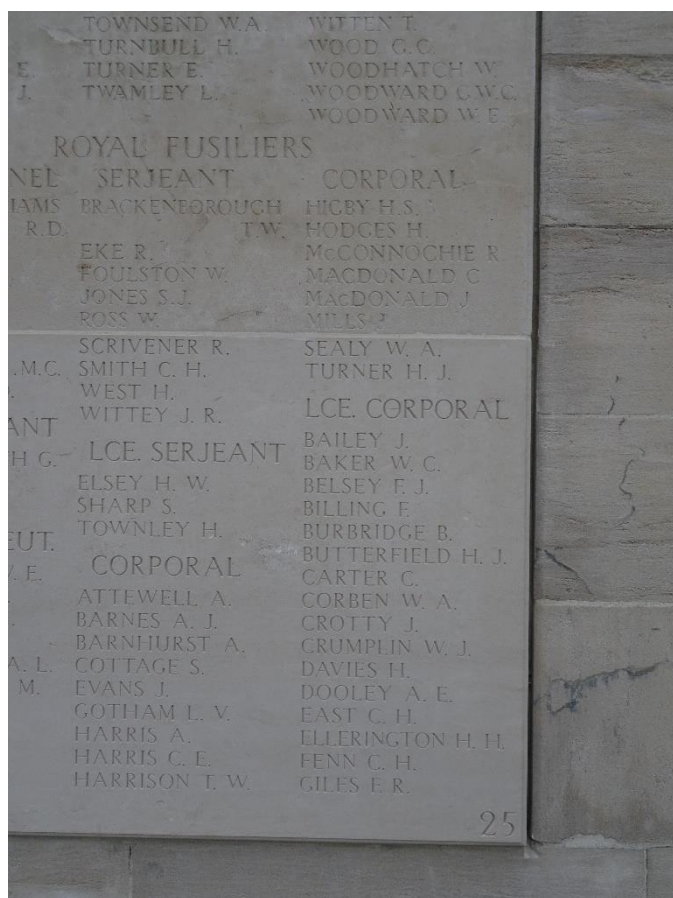
One wonders not only at the grief within the families of these men, but at how a widow such as Amy Billing, with five young children, can have coped. She at least had her family close at hand. She remarried in 1920.

(My thanks to Robert Brown, Brenda Harrison and Lewis Wood, all of the Banstead area, for their valuable input.)

\*This period is well summarised online in *The Wartime Memories Project*:

“The Division landed at Boulogne; by the 6<sup>th</sup> June they were in the Meteren-Steenwerck area with Divisional HQ being established at Nieppe. They underwent instruction from the more experienced 48th (South Midland) Division and took over a section of the front line at Ploegsteert Wood on the 23rd of June 1915. They were in action in The Battle of Loos from the 30th of September, taking over the sector from Gun Trench to Hulluch Quarries, consolidating the position under heavy artillery fire. On the 8th they repelled a heavy German infantry attack and on the 13th took part in the Action of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, capturing Gun Trench and the south western face of the Hulluch Quarries. During this period at Loos, 117 officers and 3237 men of the Division were killed or wounded. By the 21st they moved to

Fouquieres-les-Bethune for a short rest then returned to the front line at the Hohenzollern Redoubt until the 15th of November, when they went into reserve at Lillers. On the 10th the Division took over the front line north of La Basse canal at Givenchy. On the 19th of January they began a period of training in Open Warfare at Busnes, then moved back into the front line at Loos on the 12th of February 1916.”



Loos Memorial, Panel 25

<<<<<

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This includes information about Fred's wife Amy and much information kindly passed on by researchers in Fred's later home, Burgh Heath.



Page 2]									
The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the									
Civil Parish (or Township) of	County of	Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parishes or Townships of	Urban Sanitary District of	Rural Sanitary District of	Local Government District of	Ecclesiastical Parish or District of	
Barkland Hill							Barkland Hill	Chapel	
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf-and-Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic
5	Lake Cottages	1	William G. Powell	Head	Mar	36	Blacksmith	Dover Hawkehurst	
			Harriet	Wife	Mar	32		Lomsett B.I.M.	
			Willie	Son		8	Scholar	Do	
			Henrie	Do		6	"	"	
			Riguel	Son		5	"	"	
			Ally	Son		3	"	"	
			Erna	Do		8 mo	"	"	
6	Do	1	James Billing	Head	Mar	57	Ag Lab	Lomsett B.I.M.	
			Caroline	Wife	Mar	30		" B.I.M.	
			William J.	Son		10	Scholar	" B.I.M.	
			Mary Ann	Son		9	"	"	
			William J.	Son		6	"	"	
			Belwin	Do		4	"	"	
7	Do	1	John Billing	Head	Wid	70	Ag Lab	"	
			John Hake	Son	Wid	24	Do	"	
8	Public Hall	1	Joshua Billing	Head	Mar	49	Carpenter	Barnack Station	
			Isabel	Wife	Mar	64		Blon	
			Harriet Billing	grand daughter	Wid	20	Dispensary	B.I.M.	
1	Part of Tanlake Cottages		Isaac Wyatt	Wid	Wid	69		Do	
			Mary Dinkson	Wid	Wid	46	Servant	Do	
4	Total of Houses...	4	Total of Males and Females...			11			

NOTE.—Draw the pen through such of the words of the headings as are inappropriate.

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1	2	3	4	5	6	RG 11/2385	

CENSUS 1881 J H BILLING

Administrative County of Somerset The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

Civil Parish of Buckland & Mary Municipal Borough of Chard Rural Sanitary District of Chard Parliamentary Borough or Division of South Somerset Ecclesiastical Parish or District of Buckland & Mary

Page 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
No. of House	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	ROOFS	Area of Ground	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	SEX	AGE last Birthday	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employed	Employed	WEEKS BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb	(2) Blind	(3) Lame, Deaf, or Idiot	
53	2 Waterways Cott.	1		John Nicks Billing	Head	M	34	Agricultural Laborer		X	Somerest Buckland & Mary				
				Jane	Wife	F	30				Do Ambler & Nichols				
				Fred	Son	M	5	Scholar			Do				
				Ben Jane	Son	M	3				Do				
54	1 Lake Dairy	1		William Spence	Head	M	28	Farmer		X	Do Staple & Payne				
				Elizabeth	Wife	F	22				Do				
				Edna Kate	Son	M	10				Do Buckland & Mary				
55	1 Burleigh Farm	1		James Tunbridge	Head	M	27	Farmer		X	Do				
				Emily	Wife	F	26			X	Do				
				Mark Matthews	Son	M	16	Domestic Servant		X	Somerest Buckland & Mary				
				John Buff	Son	M	14			X	Do				
56	1 Farm House	1		Abraham Graham	Head	M	32	Farmer		X	Do				
				Harriet	Wife	F	28			X	Do Buckland & Mary				
				Henry	Son	M	25	Scholar			Do Buckland & Mary				
				Elizabeth	Son	F	16	General Servant Domestic			Do				
				Fred	Son	M	14	Domestic Servant		X	Somerest Buckland & Mary				
				Caroline	Wife	F	20	Midwife			Do				
57	1 Westhay Farm	1		Samuel Buttle	Head	M	30	General Laborer (Ag)		X	Do				
58	1 Hardy Cott.	1		Edith	Wife	F	30				Do				
				Fred	Son	M	8	Scholar			Do				
				Edna	Son	M	6				Do				
				John	Son	M	5				Do				
				Edna	Son	M	1				Do				
58	1 Greenland	1		John Matthews	Head	M	23	Artic Agricultural Laborer		X	Do				
				Elizabeth	Wife	F	21				Do				
				Mark	Son	M	1				Do				
59	1 Dead Man	1		John Matthews	Head	M	52	Farmer		X	Do Buckland & Mary				
				Elizabeth	Wife	F	49			X	Do				
				Fred	Son	M	9	Scholar			Do				
				Edwin	Son	M	6				Do Buckland & Mary				
7	Total of Houses and of Tenements with less than Five Rooms	7	12	3	Total of Males and Females	16	14								

Note.—Draw the pen through each of the words of the headings as are inappropriate.

Eng.—Sheet C.

Reference—  
RG12/1892

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CENSUS 1891 J H BILLING





## CENSUS 1901 FRED BILLING

# CENSUS

OF

## ENGLAND AND WALES,

1911.



### SCHEDULE.

*Prepared pursuant to the Census (Great Britain) Act, 1910.*

**This space to be filled up by the Enumerator.**

Number of Registration District..... 31

Number of Registration Sub-District..... 1

Number of Enumeration District..... 18

Name of Head  
of Family or  
Separate Occupier. }

Ms Billing

Postal Address

X 5 Wheelers Cottages  
Burgh Heath

### NOTICE.

This Schedule must be filled up and signed by, or on behalf of, the Head of the Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of the dwelling (house, tenement or apartment).

If a house be let or sub-let to two or more occupiers each



**CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.**

*Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.*

*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.*

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE last birthday and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Person aged ten years and upwards				BIRTHPLACE of every person	NATIONALITY of every person born in a Foreign Country	INFIRMITY
			State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—	Personal Occupation	Industry or Service with which worker is connected	Whether Employee, or Working on Own Account	Whether Working as Boss						
1. Fred Billing	Head	28	Married	4	4	4	Builder Labourer	732	Married	General Building	140		
2. Amy Billing	Wife	30	Married	4	4	4				General Building	230		
3. Grace Billing	Daughter	6								Domestic Service	360		
4. Rose Billing	Daughter	4								Domestic Service			
5. Frederick Billing	Son	2								Domestic Service			
6. Frank Billing	Son	1 month								Domestic Service			
7.													
8.													
9.													
10.													
11.													
12.													
13.													
14.													
15.													

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

I certify that—  
 (1) All the names on this Schedule are entered in the proper way in ink;  
 (2) I have entered the names and initials in Columns 2 and 3 separately, and have compared later with the total number of persons;  
 (3) After making the necessary inquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appear to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Initials of Enumerator: J. L. 3 3 6 4

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this dwelling (Kitchens, Bathrooms, or Apartments). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count sanitary, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom, or workroom, office, shop.

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: Fred Billing  
 Postal Address: 5 Waverley Cottages, Dorset Heath, Bury.

CENSUS 1911 FRED BILLING (PROBABLY HIS OWN HAND WRITING)



# CENSUS

OF

## ENGLAND AND WALES,

1911.



### SCHEDULE.

*Prepared pursuant to the Census (Great Britain) Act, 1910.*

This space to be filled up by the Enumerator.

Number of Registration District..... 308  
 Number of Registration Sub-District..... 2  
 Number of Enumeration District..... 2

Name of Head  
of Family or  
Separate Occupier.

Mr John Hake Billing

Postal Address.....

Buckwood  
Buckland 81 Mary

### NOTICE.

This Schedule must be filled up and signed by, or on behalf of, the Head of the Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of the dwelling (house, tenement or apartment).



**CENSUS 1911 J H BILLNG**

Page 12]

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

Civil Parish (or Township) of	City or Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of	Town or Village or Hamlet of	Urban Sanitary District of	Rural Sanitary District of	Electoral Parish or District of		
Compton				Compton		Northampton			
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c. and No. of HOUSE	HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic
1	Coltup	1	Harvey Hillwell	Head	Mar	44	Agricultural Labourer	Compton	
			Robert Hillwell	Wife	Mar	36	Labourer	Compton	
2	Coltup	1	Charles R. Ophir	Head	Mar	30	W. Carter	Compton	
			Rose Ann Ophir	Wife	Mar	30	Carter	Compton	
			Alie M. Ophir	Daughter		8	Schooler	Compton	
			Frederick Ophir	Daughter		2	Schooler	Compton	
			Samuel Ophir	Daughter		11 months		Compton	
			Edmund Jones	Servant	Mar	44	Agricultural Labourer	Compton	
1	Compton	1	John Brown	Head	Mar	46	Agricultural Labourer	Compton	
			Rosa Brown	Wife	Mar	32	Labourer	Compton	
			Frederick Brown	Son		14	Labourer	Compton	
			Edith R. A. Brown	Daughter		10	Schooler	Compton	
			William Arthur	Son		7	Schooler	Compton	
			Mary Ann Arthur	Daughter		5		Compton	
			John Brown	Son		8 months		Compton	
			Frederick Brown	Son	Mar	16	Agricultural Labourer	Compton	
			William Henry	Servant	Mar	64		Compton	
2	Coltup	1	Michael Bridle	Head	Mar	80	Labourer	Compton	
			Mary Bridle	Daughter	Mar	48	Housekeeper	Compton	
			Esther Bridle	Son		35	Housekeeper	Compton	
			William Bridle	Son	Mar	34	Agricultural Labourer	Compton	
			Frederick Bridle	Son	Mar	29		Compton	
4	Total of Houses...	4	Total of Males and Females...			11	11		

(1) Deaf and Dumb  
(2) Blind  
(3) Imbecile or Idiot  
(4) Lunatic

Detached  
part of  
East  
Stonham  
See North  
Stonham  
Stonham

Detached

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CENSUS 1881 AYLWIN FAMILY



NOTES.—Draw the pen through such of the words of the headings as are inappropriate.

## CENSUS 1891 AYLWN FAMILY

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## CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 5539475-7

REGISTRATION DISTRICT

CHARD

1882 BIRTH in the Sub-district of Combe St Nicholas in the Counties of Somerset Dorset and Devon

Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
264	Widemouth August 1882 Bridestown Buckland St Mary Somerset R.D.	Fred	Boy	John Lake Billing	Jane Billing formerly Wilcock	Labourer	Jane Billing Mother Buckland St Mary	fourteenth September 1882	Robert Mumckton Registrar	

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the

19th

day of

March

2014

BXCG 116744

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AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT


WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

7231132 68844 04/13 3MSSD 033113

RJW







**CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE**      **GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE**

Application Number 5539475-8

1903. Marriage solemnized at <u>the Register Office</u> in the District of <u>Wareham</u> in the County of <u>Dorset</u>								
Column No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
82	Eighteenth October	Fred Billing	21 years	Bachelor	General Butler	Swanage	John Hake Billing	Laborer
	1903 Nineteenth	Anna Augusta Maud Aylwin	23 years	Spinster	Domestic Servant	Swanage	Charles William Aylwin	Laborer
Married in the <u>Register Office</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>by Certificate</u> in before <u>by me,</u> <u>Fred Billing</u> <u>Harbert Nutt</u> <u>Robt. Linn</u> This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>A. A. M. Aylwin</u> in the Presence of us, <u>Lydia Emily Phillips</u> <u>Charles Robert Hake</u> <u>Deputy Substantiated Registrar</u>								

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a register of Marriages in the Registration District of Wareham


Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 19th day of March 2014

MXG 217263

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7231132 69981 04/13 JMSLD 031294

  
SMH

## BILLING AYLWIN MARRIAGE

British Newspaper Archive

Find My Past - UK, IE & AU World War 1 One ww1

8th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

8th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) was at Hounslow on 21 August 1914 as part of Kitchener's First New Army and joined 36th Brigade, 12th (Eastern) Division. 36th Brigade underwent training at Colchester then final training was undertaken near Aldershot from the 20th of February 1915, with the cavalry, motor machine gun battery, sanitary and veterinary sections joining. The Division proceeded to France between the 29th of May and 1st of June 1915 landing at Boulogne, they concentrated near St Omer and by 6th of June were in

the Meteren-Steenwerck area with Divisional HQ being established at Nieppe. They underwent instruction from the more experienced 48th (South Midland) Division and took over a section of the front line at Ploegsteert Wood on the 23rd of June 1915. They were in action in The Battle of Loos from the 30th of September, taking over the sector from Gun Trench to Hulluch Quarries consolidating the position, under heavy artillery fire. On the 8th they repelled a heavy German infantry attack and on the 13th took part in the Action of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, capturing Gun Trench and the south western face of the Hulluch Quarries. During this period at Loos, 117 officers and 3237 men of the Division were killed or wounded. By the 21st they moved to Fouquieres-les-Bethune for a short rest then returned to the front line at the Hohenzollern Redoubt until the 15th of November, when they went into reserve at Lillers. On the 9th of December, 9th Royal Fusiliers assisted in a round-up of spies and other suspicious characters in the streets of Bethune. On the 10th the Division took over the front line north of La Basse canal at Givenchy. On the 19th of January they began a period of training in Open Warfare at Busnes, then moved back into the front line at Loos on the 12th of February 1916. In June they moved to Flesselles and carried out a training exercise. They moved to Baizieux on the 30th June and went into the reserve at Hencourt and Millencourt by mid morning on the 1st of July. They relieved the 8th Division at Ovillers-la-Boisselle that night and attacked at 3.15 the following morning with mixed success. On the 7th they attacked again and despite suffering heavy casualties in the area of Mash Valley, they succeeded in capturing and holding the first and second lines close to Ovillers. They were withdrawn to Contay on the 9th July. They were in action in The Battle of Pozieres on the 3rd of August with a successful attack capturing 4th Avenue Trench and were engaged in heavy fighting until they were withdrawn on the 9th. They moved north and in 1917 were in action at Arras in The First Battle of the Scarpe, The Battle of Arleux and The Third Battle of the Scarpe. They remained in the Arras sector until the 30th of October when they moved to Hesdin for the Cambrai offensive in which the Division suffered heavy losses. The 8th Royal Fusiliers was disbanded in France on the 6th of February 1918 when the army was reorganised.

- See more at: <http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/royalfusiliers8-gw.php#sthash.FALSBzHo.dpuf>



Name:	<b>Fred Billing</b>
Birth Place:	Birchwood, Somerset
Residence:	Burgh Heath
Death Date:	2 Mar 1916
Death Place:	France and Flanders
Enlistment Place:	Epsom
Rank:	L Corporal
Regiment:	London Regiment
Battalion:	8th Battalion
Regimental Number:	2565
Type of Casualty:	Killed in action
Theatre of War:	Western European Theatre

### FROM SOLDIERS DIED IN WWI

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
BILKING		8/R Fus.	Lt Col	G/2565
Frederick				
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks	
VICTORY	T.P. 104 B/2	118		
BRITISH	DT	DT		
15 STAR	SP/68 B	6	KIA 4-4-16	
Theatre of War first served in		(1) France		
Date of entry therein		6-3-15		

K 1380.

SEE NOTES IN BIOGRAPHY ON MISTAKE IN DATE OF DEATH



**FRED BILLING – FROM A DESCENDANT**



## ARMY REGISTER OF SOLDIERS' EFFECTS





**DUDS CORNER CEMETERY**



	TOWNSEND W.A.	WITTEN T.
	TURNBULL H.	WOOD G.C.
E.	TURNER E.	WOODHATCH W.
J.	TWAMLEY L.	WOODWARD G.W.C.
		WOODWARD W.E.

## ROYAL FUSILIERS

NEL	SERJEANT	CORPORAL
IAMS	BRACKENBOROUGH	HIGBY H.S.
R.D.	T.W.	HODGES H.
	EKE R.	McCONNOCHIE R.
	FOULSTON W.	MACDONALD C.
	JONES S.J.	MACDONALD J.
	ROSS W.	MILLS J.

	SCRIVENER R.	SEALY W. A.
M.C.	SMITH C. H.	TURNER H. J.
	WEST H.	
ANT	WITTEY J. R.	LCE. CORPORAL

H G.	LCE. SERJEANT	BAILEY J.
	ELSEY H. W.	BAKER W. C.
	SHARP S.	BELSEY F. J.
EUT.	TOWNLEY H.	BILLING F.
V. E.	CORPORAL	BURBRIDGE B.
	ATTEWELL A.	BUTTERFIELD H. J.
	BARNES A. J.	CARTER C.
	BARNHURST A.	CORBEN W. A.
A. L.	COTTAGE S.	CROTTY J.
M.	EVANS J.	CRUMPLIN W. J.
	GOTHAM L. V.	DAVIES H.
	HARRIS A.	DOOLEY A. E.
	HARRIS C. E.	EAST C. H.
	HARRISON T. W.	ELLERINGTON H. H.
		FENN C. H.
		GILES F. R.



## MENT

VATE  
TT H.F.  
ING M.  
ON B.E.  
CK T.  
IN W.E.  
HEWS A.E.  
CK R.F.  
TT S.A.  
R.C.S.  
R.W.J.  
T G.H.  
ELL A.W.  
ELL M.  
E.  
T.  
N D.W.  
C.

N.L.  
N M.  
D.  
A.G.  
H.E.  
N D.V.  
J.  
T.G.  
E.T.  
M.B.  
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D.  
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T.  
P.

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E.  
E.  
G.  
G.

24

## ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT

## PRIVATE

RALPH A.J.  
REES W.S.  
ROBERTS F.  
ROBERTS H.M.  
ROBINSON J.  
ROE R.G.  
ROSE A.  
ROWE E.  
ROWLANDS A.E.  
ROWSON H.  
RUFFLE H.  
RUTTENS E.  
SABIN F.  
SADLER B.  
SANDERS C.E.  
SCOTT J.  
SCOTT J.W.

SEARLE J.L.  
SEARS G.  
SECCULL J.H.  
SHARLOTT T.C.  
SHARPE J.  
SHEPHERD C.  
SHEPPARD H.B.  
SHUTT J.  
SIDWELL H.  
SIMPSON J.  
SMALLWOOD E.  
SMALLWOOD J.  
SMITH H.

## PRIVATE

SMITH J.  
SMITH P.W.  
SOUTHAM W.E.  
SPRIGGS E.  
STEADMAN J.  
STEVENS W.D.  
STOKES A.  
STYCH J.  
SURGENOR L.  
SWIFT J.C.  
SWINNERTON S.J.  
TALBOT J.  
TALLIS T.  
TAYLOR A.  
TAYLOR C.R.  
TAYLOR G.A.

TEAGUE C.E.  
THOM D.L.  
THOMPSON G.A.  
THOMPSON H.F.  
TILLEY E.S.  
TONGUE F.  
TOPP A.  
TOWNLEY F.  
TOWNSEND W.A.  
TURNBULL H.  
TURNER E.  
TWAMLEY L.

## PRIVATE

TYLER A.  
WALSH J.  
WARD A.  
WARD J.  
WARDER W.  
WASLEY F.C.  
WATERMAN G.S.  
WATKINS G.H.  
WATKINS T.  
WATTS B.E.C.  
WEBB A.  
WEBB E.T.  
WEBSTER F.  
WELLEN A.  
WELLS H.G.  
WEST H.  
WESTON L.

WHITCROFT T.  
WHITE E.  
WHITE G.  
WHITMORE H.  
WHITTAKER G.  
WILCOX A.  
WILCOX J.  
WILSON J.  
WITTEN T.  
WOOD G.C.  
WOODHATCH W.  
WOODWARD C.W.C.  
WOODWARD W.E.

## ROYAL FUSILIERS

## LIEUT. COLONEL

GARNONS-WILLIAMS  
R.D.

## CAPTAIN

DILNUTT E.W.  
MASON A.E.K.  
PHILLIPS S.  
TIFFANY H. W. M.C.  
WADDELL J. D.

## LIEUTENANT

MURRAY-SMITH G.  
POLLAK O. D.  
SCHOFIELD C.

## SECOND LIEUT.

BALBIRNIE J. V. E.  
BARROW H. H.  
HERSEE C. P. A.  
NEWCOMB C.  
OHLMANN G. A. L.  
THOMPSON A. M.

## SERJEANT

BEARD A. E.  
BELL A.

## SERJEANT

BRACKENBROUGH  
T.W.  
EKE R.  
FOULSTON W.  
JONES S.J.  
ROSS W.

SCRIVENER R.  
SMITH C. H.  
WEST H.  
WITTEY J. R.

## LCE. SERJEANT

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SHARP S.  
TOWNLEY H.

## CORPORAL

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COTTAGE S.  
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HARRIS A.  
HARRIS C. E.  
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MACDONALD C.  
MACDONALD J.  
MILLS J.

SEALY W. A.  
TURNER H. J.

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BAILEY J.  
BAKER W. C.  
BELSEY F. J.  
BILLING F.  
BURBRIDGE B.  
BUTTERFIELD H. J.  
CARTER C.  
CORBEN W. A.  
CROTTY J.  
CRUMLIN W. J.  
DAVIES H.  
DOOLEY A. E.  
EAST C. H.  
ELLERINGTON H. H.  
FENN C. H.  
GILES F. R.

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## ICE CO

GUYAN  
GUYMER  
HOLT W.  
HOULIS  
HOWES  
MASON  
MOSS F.  
MUNRO  
OLIVER  
PARNUM  
RUGGLE  
SALTS  
SHEAR  
SHORT  
STOCKE  
THOMAS  
WESTON

WHITE  
WILKES

## PRIVATE

ALLEN  
BAILEY  
BAKER  
BALL E.  
BARSTE  
BATSON  
BATTER  
BATTLE  
BEATTIE  
BEBBING  
BELL E.  
BENTA  
BEVAN  
BIRCH S.  
BLACK  
BLAYN  
BODDY  
BOLT A.  
BOLTON  
BOOTH  
BOUGH  
BOURN  
BOWLE  
BRADY  
BRIDGE  
BRIGHT  
BRITAIN  
BRODER  
BROOK  
BROOK  
BROWN  
BRYAN  
BUCK  
BURGE  
CALCO  
CALVE  
CANON  
CARTE











ROYAL FUSELIERS MEMORIAL



ALL SAINTS BANSTEAD





BURGH HEATH MEMORIAL HALL MEMORIAL

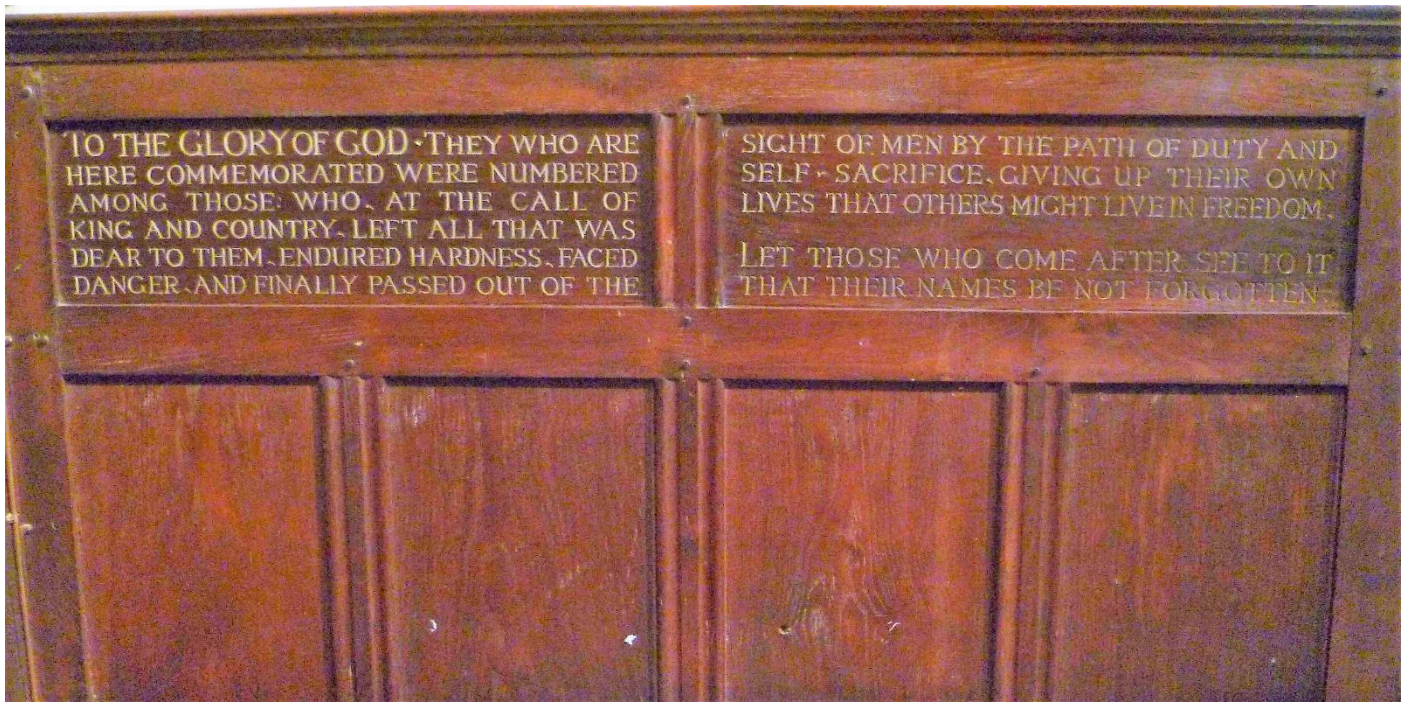


BURGH HEATH MEMORIAL HALL









BANSTEAD CHURCH MEMORIAL







THE LADY CHAPEL, BANSTEAD. BELOW, AN IDEALISED BURGH HEATH - FROM THE MEMORIAL HALL







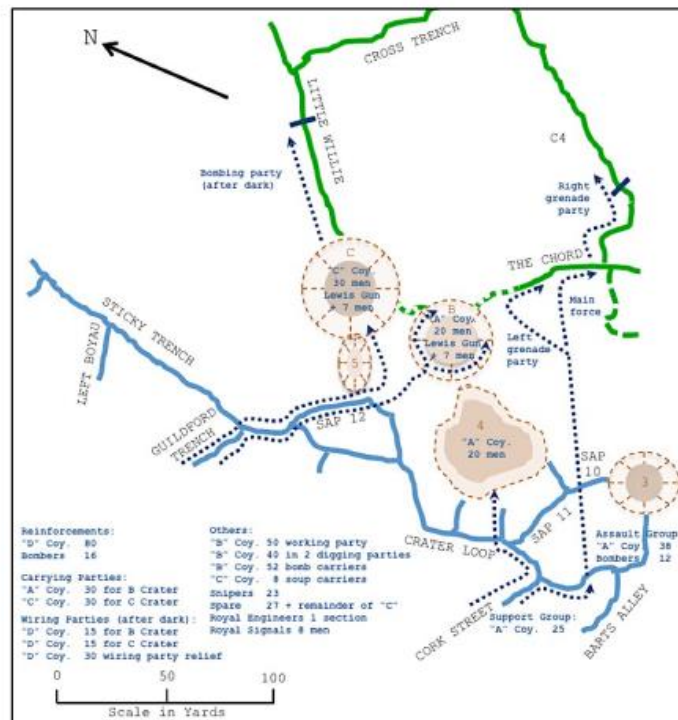
ST MARY'S BURGH HEATH



# Banstead Remembers

*Lance Corporal Fred Billing  
of 5 Wheeler's Cottages, Burgh Heath*

*8<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)  
Died in France, aged 33  
2<sup>nd</sup> March 1916*



*The attack of the 8<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers on the Hohenzollern Redoubt*

## WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MARCH at All Saints Church, Banstead

7:30am: the churchyard flag will be raised to half-mast  
11:55am: a short service of remembrance will be held  
Noon: a church bell will be tolled 100 times

All are welcome to attend to help commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fred's death. Please come and remember the sacrifice that our local community made 100 years ago in World War One.

We will remember them.

# World War One 100

## *Lance Corporal Fred Billing of 5 Wheeler's Cottages*

Fred Billing was born in Buckland St Mary, Somerset, on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1882, to a family whose name can be found in the Parish registers as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. His father, John Hake Billing, was an agricultural labourer and his mother, Jane, was from nearby Combe St Nicholas. They had one other child, a daughter, Rosa Jane, in 1887. As a teenager, Fred became a grocers' porter in Swanage.

Charles Aylwin, a Sussex-born carter, labourer and railway platelayer, moved his family to Burgh Heath in the late 1880s. By 1901, one of his daughters, Amy Augusta Aylwin, had moved to Dorset and was working as a parlourmaid when she met Fred. They married at Wareham in 1903 and had 3 children in Swanage (Grace, Rosa and Frederick) before moving their young family up to Burgh Heath to be closer to Amy's family, who lived at 5 Oatlands Road.

The Billings lived at 5 Wheeler's Cottages, which used to stand on the green by the *Sheepshearer's Arms* and opposite the *Surrey Yeoman* and Fred worked as a builder's labourer. Another boy, Frank, was born in 1911 and finally another daughter, Ethel, in 1913.

Fred (32 years old, 5ft 5in, weighing 145lbs with blue eyes, light hair and a fair complexion) joined the 8th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers at Epsom on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1914, one of the busiest recruiting days of the war.

They arrived in Boulogne on May 31st 1915 and underwent a period of trench training at L'Epinette, spending time in the line alongside more experienced units so as to learn the ropes. They were in the trenches on their own by the end of June.

They were lucky enough not to take part in the Battle of Loos in September but buried the dead from the battle, "a sickening fatigue. Men not able to work at it continuously as all bodies were in advanced state of decomposition." They took part in their first real action on 18<sup>th</sup> October, capturing a German trench and then later holding off a counterattack.

They spent much of a wet and cold winter resting and training but were back in the line in February 1916. News of the death of Fred's mother would have reached him in late February, just days before his own.

The Hohenzollern Redoubt was said to be the strongest fortification on the Western Front and it was in German hands. A carefully-conceived plan, in exhaustive detail, was prepared to capture one of the trenches on its west face. On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1916, 4 huge mines under No Man's Land were detonated by the Royal Engineers and the men of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers dashed across to capture the German trench from its dazed defenders. They seized the trench and held it but at a high cost, particularly for the 8<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers. The 8<sup>th</sup> suffered 254 casualties, Fred among them.

Like 37 other men of the 8<sup>th</sup> who died that day, Fred has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, on the Buckland St Mary war memorial, on panels in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Buckland, in All Saints, Banstead, in St Mary's, Burgh Heath, and in the Burgh Heath War Memorial Hall. He was 33.

Fred was awarded the British War Medal, the Victory Medal and the 1914-15 Star.



In Memory of  
Lance Corporal  
**Fred Billing**

2565, 8th Bn., Royal Fusiliers who died on 02 March 1916

Remembered with Honour  
**Loos Memorial**



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

