

WILLIAM JAMES BULLEN

Pte. G/44123, 17th Battalion (1st Football), Middlesex Regiment

**Died on Tuesday, 13th February 1917, 49th Casualty Clearing Station,
Contay, Arras**



Sandpit Cottages 1906

William James Bullen was born in one of the Roots (now Sandpit) Cottages on January 13th 1882, the second child of Henry and Eliza. Henry, who was born at Woking Lye in 1857, was an 18-year-old soldier in the 52nd Regiment when he married Eliza Phillis Furlong Martell at Portsmouth Register Office in 1875. Henry George, their first child, was born there two years later, but by the time of the 1881 census the three of them had moved in with Henry's father, George, at Cemetery Cottage, Brookwood Cemetery, although Henry was still a soldier at this time. However, by the next year he had left the army and become a labourer, almost certainly at the Cemetery, a job he continued for the rest of his life. Four sisters and one brother, George Alfred, who was destined to be the only male survivor, were born over the next eleven years, which entailed a move from tiny Sandpit Cottage to Blatchford Cottages, at the top end of Chapel Lane first, then for fifteen years next to John Faggetter in Gibbs Acre and finally to one of the East End Cottages (now demolished), towards the far end of Chapel Lane, which would be the Bullen family home for the next twenty four years.

William James married Ellen Ashenden, a hospital nurse and baker's daughter at St Hugh's Roman Catholic Church, Inkerman Barracks in 1916. They had no children and all that is subsequently known is her address, probably in the early 1920s, when William's medals were sent to her c/o Mrs Killham at Bury, Sussex, and her death in North West Surrey in 1972.

He enlisted at Ealing into the 17th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment.

The Commonwealth War Graves report for William Bullen states that he died on February 13th and was buried about four miles west of Bouzincourt, at Contay Cemetery, which was the burial ground for the 9th and 49th Casualty Clearing Stations. As the Battalion was well away from enemy action and there was no mention of casualties in the War Diary, it seems likely that he would have died as the result of an accident or illness; possibly pneumonia, given the conditions.