



Private William Hyghgate (7942) was the second son born on the 17th Sep. 1879 to Edward Hyghgate and Harriet Roshier who lived in the Parish of St Peter's Church in Brighton where William was later baptised. William had an older brother Herbert (b 1878), a sister Annie (b 1882) and two younger brothers Andrew and Ernest (b1886/1888). Their father was a builder's labourer who, by 1901 was no longer living with the family.

When William was about 16, his name can be found on the Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services – official number 189510. He was working on a training ship HMS St Vincent in Portsmouth harbour. However, his Navel Record shows that he only worked from July until Oct 1896. His character was deemed as 'very good', but it appears he was discharged as 'unfit'. William's next recorded job was as a 'new hand' in the locomotives, carriages and wagon department at Brighton Station. The year was 1900. Not long after this, William decided to join the army. He was 21 and attested in Chichester on 3rd Jan.



Arrival of Boer prisoners. Kind permission of - <http://sainthelenaisland.info>

1901 joining 3rd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment (reg.no. 8462). The following year William was sent to the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic Ocean to assist in the prisoner of war camps that had been set up on the island to house prisoners from the Boer War. For his service (3yrs 160days), William was awarded the South African Medal and five Clasps, as well as the 1901 and 1902 King's Clasps. William had found

his niche.

The 1911 Census records that William is now serving with 1st Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment stationed in Rawalpindi in India. He is single and is about 31. This Battalion was one of the few infantry battalions that remained in India throughout the whole of WW1. However, William did not remain there! It is unclear when or why William returned to England, but we do know that he enlisted again at Arundel joining 2nd Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment reg. number L/7942. William served in France from Jan. '15. For the next four years William fought at many ferocious battles, including Aubers and the Battle of Loos, as well as smaller skirmishes. At some time during his long service, we know that William had 'myalgia' (muscle pain and spasms) as recorded on the Sick and Wounded NCO list at Hounslow's record office. This affliction is not surprising when one considers the appalling conditions that the WW1 soldiers lived and fought. The Battles of the Hindenburg Line took place from 12th Sep – 12th October 1918 and it was probably where William's luck finally ran out. He was killed in action on 24th Sep.1918 - so very close to the end of the war. William was 39. Sadly, it appears that William's parents' marriage did not last. After the war, the CWGC record that it was William's brother, Mr Henry Hyghgate of 21, Swanscombe Rd Chiswick that dealt with the grave details. William also left £63 1s 9d to this brother. Father Edward was living as a boarder in 1901 and 1911. He died In Brighton in 1924. Younger brother Andrew, who lived at 12 London Road Brentford, served with the Royal Field Artillery and survived the war. William was awarded the 15 Star and the Victory & British War medals. He is buried at Bellicourt British Cemetery Ref. 1V P 2.

