

IN MEMORY OF BERNARD TURNER

DIED IN ACTION 8 FEBRUARY 1917

Lived in a small house where the Great Western Pub car park now lies
PLAQUE No. 16

When Bernard was born, his mother was not married. Eighteen-year-old Agnes Turner was living with her family in Farm Street, Harbury, when she gave birth to a boy in 1891. The father of her child is not recorded, and four years after the birth of her son she married Mark Hunt, a 25-year-old wagoner from Bishops Itchington.

According to the 1901 census, in April 1901 nine-year-old Bernard was living with his mother and stepfather at Ball Farm, Harbury, near or part of the cement works. Ten years later he was working as a kiln worker, living with his parents at The Limeworks, Harbury Station. Mark was a carter on the lime works, and Agnes worked as an office caretaker, the whole family employed in a similar area.

In 1916, Bernard married Clara Bates but shortly afterwards enlisted in the army in Coventry and left for France. The dates of the wedding and his enlistment suggest a connection - perhaps that Clara and Bernard had been seeing each other for a while, and had already thought of having a life together when his choice to fight forced an early marriage on them. Now if he died, she would be his widow.

Bernard took part in the battle of the Somme and other battles, fighting as a rifleman in the 16th Battalion Rifle Brigade. He died of his wounds on 8 February 1917 aged only 25.

He is buried in Hazebrouck Communal cemetery, his name remembered on a monument marked by a striking white cross, shot through with black.

It was in the spring after Bernard's death far away from her that Clara gave birth to their daughter, Millicent.



Harbury World War 1 Memorial Trail

Remembering the men of Harbury parish who fell during the first world war in service of their country.

