

Driver Harry Albert Stubbs

4545 1st/5th Howitzer Battery, Royal Field Artillery



Harry Stubbs was the son of John and Helen Stubbs of Newport, Isle of Wight. At the 1911 census, Harry was boarding with William and Sarah Osmond in Winchester Street, Overton.

Hants & Berks Gazette, 2 December 1916

On Friday last there appeared in the casualty list the name of Pte. H. Stubbs, Howitzer Battery, as having died as a prisoner of war from Kut. Mrs. Stubbs, who was a Miss Tilbury, of Overton, last heard from her husband on Christmas Day, 1915, but knowing that so many had received no news she had buoyed herself up with the hope that he might still be alive. Deep sympathy is felt for her in her distress. Pte. Stubbs was an Isle of Wight man, but came here as a postman some years ago. He was very popular, and amongst other things played in goal for Overton at football, twice breaking his leg – once on the Overton ground and again at Kingsclere.

Harry died on 14th October 1916, aged 28.

The town of Kut lies on the River Tigris between Basra on the Persian Gulf and Baghdad. The siege of Kut was one of the worst British military disasters of WW1. A relatively small force of British and British Indian forces advanced against the Turks from Basra towards Baghdad in 1915. The Turks counter-attacked and surrounded the British force in the town of Kut. There followed a 147-day siege which ended on 29th April 1916. Captured British and Indian soldiers were brutally treated on their march to Turkish prisoner of war camps in Anatolia. Of the 11,800 men who left Kut-al-Amara with their captors on 6 May 1916, 4,250 died from disease and starvation either on their way to captivity or in the camps that awaited them at the journey's end. Kut was retaken by the British on 24 February 1917.

Harry is buried in the Bagdad North Gate Cemetery, reference XXI P3. His grave registration report notes that his body was exhumed from the Konia Cemetery, Asia Minor. He has a 'Venresse' Headstone stating 'buried near this spot'. The headstone bears the words 'RESTING IN PEACE' paid for by his widow, by then remarried, Mrs. E Bunce.

Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery is located in a very sensitive area in the Waziriah Area district of Baghdad. Whilst the current climate of political instability persists it is extremely challenging for the Commission to maintain its cemeteries and memorials located within Iraq. A two volume Roll of Honour listing all casualties buried and commemorated in Iraq has been produced. These volumes are on display at the Commission's Head Office in Maidenhead and are available for the public to view.

