

## In Memory of

**Private JAMES EDWARD WILKINS**

**10073, 5th Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment  
who died age 30 on 18 April 1916**

**Son of Benjamin and Sarah Jane Wilkins  
of 72 The Green, Christian Malford, Wiltshire**

### **Remembered with honour BASRA MEMORIAL**

Until 1997 the Basra Memorial was located on the main quay of the naval dockyard at Maqil, on the west bank of the Shatt-al-Arab, about 8 kilometres north of Basra. Because of the sensitivity of the site, the Memorial was moved and is now located 32 kilometres along the road to Nasiriyah, in the middle of what was a major battleground during the first Gulf War. The Memorial commemorates more than 40,500 members of the Commonwealth forces who died in the operations in Mesopotamia from the Autumn of 1914 to the end of August 1921 and whose graves are not known.



The Order of Honour held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Basra Memorial, commemorating the names of all the Commonwealth casualties who died in Iraq during the First World War.

The 5th Battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment was formed in August 1914. In June 1915 it was sent to Gallipoli before going, via Egypt, to Mesopotamia in January 1916 as part of the ill-fated attempt to relieve the garrison of Kut. Between January and March 1916, several attacks were launched in an attempt to lift the siege. These attempts to break through the encirclement did not succeed and the cost was heavy with both sides suffering high casualties. Kut was surrendered in April 1916. The battalion remained in Mesopotamia for the rest of war, participating in the recapture of Kut, the Battalion being one of the first to cross the Diyala River, breaking the Turkish defences. Following the Diyala crossing, the battalion participated in the fall of Baghdad, and operations north of there. With the signing of the Armistice, the battalion demobilized in 1919.

**From Battalion War Diary - 18 April 1916:** Mesopotamia, Beit Aiessa sic [Bait Isa] - After heavy counter-attack 2Lt S.C.R.L. Clark sic [Clarke] wounded, other ranks killed 11, wounded 47, missing 6.