

In Memory of

Private WILLIAM HENRY FREEGARD

**202515, 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment
who died on 8 May 1918**

**Son of Edward and Julia Freegard
of 82 Thornend, Christian Malford, Wiltshire**

Remembered with honour TYNE COT MEMORIAL

The Tyne Cot Memorial is located 9 kilometres north east of Ieper. 'Tyne Cot' or 'Tyne Cottage' was the name given by the Northumberland Fusiliers to a barn which stood near the level crossing on the Passchendaele-Broodseinde road. The barn, which had become the centre of five or six German blockhouses, or pill-boxes, was captured by the 3rd Australian Division on 4



October 1917, in the advance on Passchendaele. The Tyne Cot Memorial is one of four to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. Broadly speaking, the Salient stretched from Langemarck in the north to the northern edge in Ploegsteert Wood in the south, but it varied in area and shape throughout the war. The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge. The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence. There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when in the Third Battle of Ypres an offensive was mounted by Commonwealth forces to divert German attention from a weakened French front further south. The initial attempt in June to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, quickly became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and the rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally came to a close in November with the capture of Passchendaele. The German offensive of March 1918 met with some initial success, but was eventually checked and repulsed in a combined effort by the Allies in September. The battles of the Ypres Salient claimed many lives on both sides and it quickly became clear that the commemoration of members of the Commonwealth forces with no known grave would have to be divided between several different sites. Those United Kingdom and New Zealand servicemen who died after 16 August 1917 are named on the memorial at Tyne Cot, a site which marks the furthest point reached by Commonwealth forces in Belgium until nearly the end of the war. There are now 11,956 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery, 8,369 of these are unidentified.

From the Parish Magazine: June 1918 - We are now enquiring about Private W. H. Freegard who has not been heard of by the family for more than a month. **September 1918** - Our anxiety about Private W. H. Freegard has not yet been relieved. No further news has come from the War

Office or the Red Cross Society's Enquiry Department. We only know that he is missing, and still hope to hear more. **July 1919** - Edward Freegard, an old and well-known inhabitant, had long felt the weakness of his three score years and ten, and his illness was very short. Old parishioners recalled the fact that about 30 years ago he acted as Assistant Sexton, and took part in the Services of the Church, including the Burial of the Dead. For nearly a year he had to bear the anxiety and sorrow, shared by many relatives and friends, of having lost a devoted son, reported "missing," and only assumed to have been killed upon the return of the prisoners of war.

William was son of a railway labourer living in the village. At the time of William's death the battalion war diary has little to report. It is known that William died of wounds but not when he received them.