

**SERJEANT**

**JAMES REYNOLD FEATHERSTONE**

**Service Number:** L/9221

**Regiment & Unit/Ship**

The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)

"B" Coy. 6th Bn.

**Date of Death**

Died 07 October 1916

Age 28 years old

**Buried or commemorated at**

BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY

V. G. 5.

France

**Country of Service** United Kingdom

**Additional Info** Son of James David and Amelia Jane Featherstone, of 15, Hilton Terrace, Lower Halling, Rochester,

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FEATHERSTONE, JAMES REYNOLD. Sergeant L/9221, "B" Coy. 6th Bn., The Buffs (East Kent Regiment), killed in action, 7 October 1916, aged 28. Born: Wouldham; enlisted: Chatham; residence: Snodland. Buried: Bancourt British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, grave V. G. 5. Memorials: All Saints, Snodland; War Memorial, Snodland Cemetery; St John Halling. [Death reported KM 9 Dec 1916] Son of James David and Amelia Jane Featherstone, of 15, Hilton Terrace, Lower Halling, Rochester, Kent. (The Battalion had returned to the Somme area on the previous day ready for a planned attack on the 7th. This took place, but there was great loss of life from German machine-gun fire.)

[Source: Snodland Historical Society Website]

Military British Army Service Records 1760-1915, As per citation, (Period, 1760-1915), British Army WWI Service Records 1914-1920 James Reynold Featherstone

Army Reserves (Special Reservists) 6 years service attestation of no9051 James Reynold Featherstone of The Buffs born in the parish of Wouldham near Rochester, Kent. British subject age 20 years 3 months occupation labourer signed in Chatham 16 August 1909 5'9" high, 137lbs weight, blue eyes, fair hair, CofE, small soft moletop right buttock joined at Canterbury 19 August 1909 for a special course of training discharged 23 January 1910 into the Regular Army obtained Unlitary Telegraphy Certificate 14 9 1914 next of kin father James David Featherstone, mother Elizabeth, brothers Albert and Leonard of 3 Jessimine Cottages, Holborough Road, Snodland character in special reserve - very good.

[Source: Featherstone One Name Study]

## Memorial: (WMR 88176) Halling, Kent

Born Wouldham, Rochester, Kent. Enlisted Chatham, Kent. Resided Snodland, Kent. Son of James David Featherstone and Amelia Jane Featherstone of 15, Hilton Terrace, Lower Halling, Rochester, Kent. Buried Bancourt British Cemetery, Pas De Calais, France. Grave Ref: V. G. 5. At the time of the 1901 census, the Featherstone family resided at Rochester Road, Burham, Kent. Head of the house was 37 year old Otham, Maidstone, Kent native James David Featherstone, who was employed as a Cement Miller. David (junior) enlisted in the army on a regular engagement of 7 years with the Colours, and 5 years in the Reserve on Saturday 24 January 1910. When he enlisted in the army, James stated that he was 20 years and 9 months old. He was attested to initially serve in the 1st Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment). One Wednesday 4 October 1911, James was posted to the 2nd Battalion of his regiment, and was serving in the same battalion at the time of his appointment to a Lance Corporal on Sunday 3 December 1911. Prior to his service during the Great War, James served in The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) at Singapore and India. He was posted to France for service with the British Expeditionary Force on Sunday 17 January 1915, and promoted to the rank of Corporal on Monday 8 February 1915. On Saturday 1 May 1915 James's battalion had a fresh draft of other ranks join it in Belgium direct from England, who due primarily to time constraints were not initially allotted to the different companies in the 2nd Battalion, and it was decided to locate the new men in a new support trench in front of a wood. All of the positions occupied by the battalion were subjected to an extraordinary amount of enemy shellfire the day after the arrival of the fresh draft, with numerous casualties being inflicted on the battalion. Several commentators have made very similar comments when referring to the days' events, along the lines of the British artillery guns being virtually powerless to offer support and return shellfire onto the German artillery gun emplacements. Many of the same commentators, and also probably of more important significance and relevance, is some of the correspondence which was written by some of the survivors who had served in the battalion during late April and early May 1915, with the writers of same commenting about not getting artillery support due to the lack of the gunners ammunition. Many of the gunners also became casualties, as the direct result of being fired upon by enemy field guns. During the hours of darkness on the night of 2/3 May the intensity of the German shelling subsided, but at first light on the morning of Monday 3 May 1915, the 35 artillery bombardment of the battalion positions was once again renewed. Throughout the whole of the day on Monday 3 May the enemy guns continued to fire at will, and as on the previous day, the doubtless frustrated British gunners were unable to offer all but a token reply. It was during the action fought by his battalion on Monday 3 May 1915; James was wounded and initially posted as 'Missing.' In addition to the officers and other ranks in the battalion who suffered woundings, the action cost the lives of almost 150 other ranks. On being recovered from the battlefield, James was evacuated back to the United Kingdom, and received treatment for his injuries as a patient at the 3rd Scottish General Hospital at Glasgow. Having recovered sufficiently from his wounds, James was posted to serve in the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) at the Citadel, Western Heights, Dover, Kent on Thursday 19 August 1915. He remained in the latter battalion until being posted to serve in the 6th (Service) Battalion of his regiment on Friday 9 June 1916, and remained in the battalion until he was killed in action. Prior to his demise, James had been made an Acting Sergeant on Tuesday 11 July 1916, and promoted to a Sergeant on Tuesday 15 August 1916. James was numbered amongst the 8 officers and 121 other ranks that lost their lives in the 6th (Service) Battalion on Saturday 7 October 1916 during the Battle of the 'Transloy Ridges.' The battalion total casualty roll for the day numbers 368, including their Medical Officer, Captain Wilfred Pagen R.A.M.C., who is also commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial. What follows is the War Diary entry for the day: - "Quiet morning. At 1.30 p m the enemy opened heavy machine gun fire and shrapnel barrage on the front line. At 1.45 p m the attack commenced. Very heavy M.G. fire was opened, which held up "C" Company on the right. "A" and "B" companies reached the 1st objective (Rainbow Trench) with fairly heavy casualties but on advancing from 1st to 2nd objectives were completely held up with M.G. fire. Twenty men of "C" Company succeeded in getting into the German trench, with troops from the 61st Brigade, and advanced with them. The 1st objective was held until 12 midnight when the Battalion was relieved by the 6th Queen's." Captain J.C. Page, the only officer of the 6th (Service) Battalion who was not either killed or wounded on Saturday 7 October 1916, led just 40 other ranks from the field of the 'Battle of the Transloy Ridges, and was later awarded the Military Cross.

[Source Wouldham]