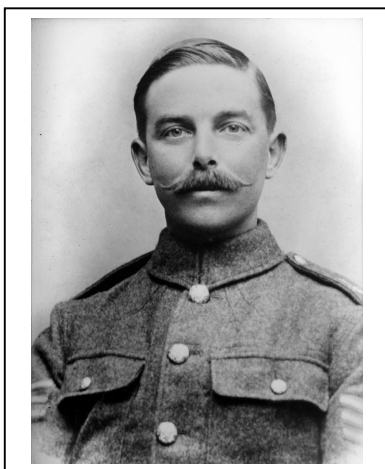


FREDERICK WILLIAM COUCHMAN

1877 - 1917

6th Battalion, The Buffs (East Kent Regiment)



Surname/Christian name: Couchman. Frederick William,

Rank/Service No: Sgt. G/13673

Regiment/Unit: 6th Btn. The Buffs, East Kent Regiment.



Regiment Badge

Date of Death: 3rd October 1917, Arras, France.

Age: 30 (see footnote).

Type of Casualty: Killed in Action.

Theatre of War: The Somme.

Born/Year/Location: Born 28th March 1887 in Horsmonden.

Enlisted/Attestation: 22nd Sept 1914, Ashford, Kent

Son of/Address: Son of George Couchman and Ellen Couchman (nee King) of Horsmonden and Brenchley respectively. George and Ellen married in Horsmonden in 1884 and lived at Tompsett's Farm Cottages, Lamberhurst Road, Horsmonden, Kent.

Husband of/Address: Eva Gertrude Harvey of Wramplingham, Nr Wymondham, Norfolk.

Buried/Commemorated/Memorial: Windmill British Cemetery, Monchy-le-Preux, Pas de Calais, France.

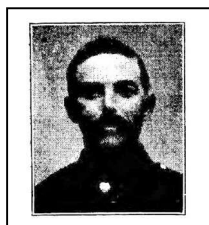
Personal Inscription: "FOR OUR LOSS WE MUST NOT WEEP NOR OUR LOVED ONES WISH TO KEEP"

Relevant Military Record/Service details: Frederick joined the local Volunteers before enlisting into the 3rd/5th Buffs (East Kent Regiment) on the 22 Sept. 1914 at Ashford, Kent. as Private G/13673 Couchman. He then transferred into the 6th Battalion, The Buffs, on 22nd Sept 1914, declaring that he was previously in the 5/Buffs Territorial Force (Weald of Kent).

Frederick embarked with the British Expeditionary Force for France, landing on the 30th December 1916 and was sent to the Front.

On the day that Sgt Couchman was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme 3rd Oct 1917, the 6th Buffs were in the frontline trenches at the village of **Gueudecourt**, which lies on the Le Sars – Le Transloy road north east of Flers.

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour:



COUCHMAN, FREDERICK WILLIAM, Sergt., No 13673, 6th (Service) Battn. The Buffs (East Kent Regt.) 2nd s of George Couchman of Tompsett's Farm, Horsmonden, co. Kent, by his wife, Ellen, dau of William King: *b.* Horsmonden aforesaid, 28 March, 1885; educated there; was for a time. A member of the Territorial Force (The Buffs), and on the outbreak of war rejoined voluntarily: Served with the expeditionary Force in France and Flanders, and was killed in action at Arras 3 Oct. 1917. Buried at Monchy-le-Preux. His Commanding Officer wrote: "He was in my platoon, and a splendid fellow, both in and out of the line. It was his willingness to help others that won him the deepest love of both officers and men, and his death is regretted by all; his courage and comradeship will always be remembered by those who have been privileged to serve with him" He married at Horsmonden 22 April 1916, Eva Gertrude (Centre Lodge, Benacre Hall, Wrentham, co. Suffolk) dau. of John Harvey.

Other Relevant Documents/War Office Correspondence:

Damaged Service Records:

The Service Records are from Frederick William Couchman's service file, several pages of which were badly fire damaged and subsequently water damaged during the extinguishing of the fire, when the Army repository in Wandsworth was hit during a German air raid in 1940.



Attestation of Frederick W. Couchman, 6 years' service in the United Kingdom. The document is signed by the Adjutant General and the Officer Commanding the Buffs, dated 25th Dec 1916.

Medical Inspection Report for Frederick W. Couchman, dated 27th Dec 1916. The report is signed by a medical officer and includes details of the soldier's health and fitness for service.

Imperial and General Service Obligation form for Frederick W. Couchman, signed by the soldier and his commanding officer on 27th Dec 1916.

Attestation and Medical and Service Obligation Records

Statement of Services document for Frederick W. Couchman, detailing his military history from 1914 to 1917. It includes a table of promotions, postings, and dates.

Date	Promotion, Reduction, or Operation	Rank	From	To	Signature of Officer
22.9.14	Private	Private	22.9.14		
28.11.14	Lance Corporal	Lance Corporal	28.11.14		
19.12.14	Corporal	Corporal	19.12.14		
1.5.15	Lance Sergeant	Lance Sergeant	1.5.15		
24.1.16	Sergeant	Sergeant	24.1.16		
30.12.16	Discharged		30.12.16		

Statement of Services document above shows Frederick's promotions and posting records listed below.

- Private** - 2/5th Buffs D Company from 22nd Sept 1914 to 27th Nov 1914.
- N.B. 'D' Company, men from Horsmonden, Goudhurst, Brenchley, Lamberhurst, Yalding & Paddock Wood.
- Lance Corporal (paid)** - from 28th Nov 1914 to 18th Dec 1914
- Corporal (paid)** from 19th Dec 1914 to 30th April 1915
- Lance Sergeant** from 1st May 1915 to 23rd Jan 1916
- Sergeant** - promoted 24th Jan 1916 - Attached to 6th Buffs 30th Dec 1916

Military History Sheet for Frederick W. Couchman, detailing his service from 22nd Sept 1914 to 3rd Oct 1917. It includes a table of dates, ranks, and units.

Date	Rank	Unit	Notes
22.9.14	Private	2/5th Buffs D Coy	
28.11.14	Lance Corporal	2/5th Buffs D Coy	
19.12.14	Corporal	2/5th Buffs D Coy	
1.5.15	Lance Sergeant	2/5th Buffs D Coy	
24.1.16	Sergeant	6th Buffs	
30.12.16	Discharged		
3.10.17			

Military History Sheet - Home 22nd Sept.1914 - to - 29th Dec.1916/B.E.F. 30th Dec. 1916 - to - 3rd Oct 1917.

Total service - 3 years, 12 days

Regiment or Corps	Rank	Name	Place of Birth	Place of Capture	Remarks
1st Bn. The Buffs	Sgt	Frederick W. Couchman	19th June 1917		Trench Fever
			28th July 1917		Admitted to No. 5 Convalescent Depot at Cayeux-Sur-Mer
			22nd August 1917		Rejoined his unit in the field
			3rd October 1917		Killed in action

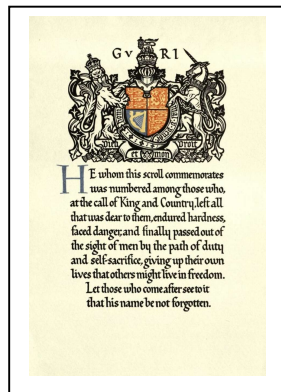
Regiment or Corps	Rank	Name	Place of Birth	Place of Capture	Remarks
1st Bn. The Buffs	Sgt	Frederick W. Couchman	19th June 1917		Trench Fever
			28th July 1917		Admitted to No. 5 Convalescent Depot at Cayeux-Sur-Mer
			22nd August 1917		Rejoined his unit in the field
			3rd October 1917		Killed in action

The War Office Casualty sheets above show that Frederick suffered from Trench Fever in the field on 19th June 1917 and was taken to No. 5 Convalescent Depot at Cayeux-Sur-Mer. From Cayeux he arrived at Etaples on 28th July until his recovery allowed him to rejoin his unit in the field on the 22nd August 1917. Sadly, Frederick was killed in action on 3rd October.

War Medals, Plaque and Scrolls Documentation Medal Roll Index Medals and Awards Received



British War and Victory medals



Memorial Scroll



Memorial Plaque (Death Penny)

W5080 Memo re Memorial Plaque/scroll

MEMORIAL SCROLL

In order that it may be enabled to dispose of the places and acres commemorated of the soldier named Frederick W. Couchman in accordance with the wishes of His Majesty the King, I have to request that the requisite information regarding the estate of the deceased now living may be furnished to me in the form of a statement in accordance with the instructions printed on the back of this scroll.

The declaration thereon should be signed in your own handwriting and returned to me when certified by a Minister of the Crown.

Frederick W. Couchman
1st Bn. The Buffs

W5080 Memo re Memorial Plaque/scroll

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of the
British War Medal VICTORY MEDAL
granted in respect of the service of
Sgt. F. W. Couchman, The Buffs.
Date: 2.9.21.
Signature: Eva. G. Couchman

I. V. No. 2994
Medal roll page 1411

and medal receipt above

Samples of Military and Service Documents:

Personal Effects. Private property of the late 13673 Sgt Couchman F.W. 6th E. Kent Regt. 2 Discs, Wallet, Miniature photo in case, Leather match case, Photos, Cards, Letters. Receipt for above signed by his wife Eva.

Memo from War Office to Officer in Charge of Infantry No. 2 Records, Hounslow, to send personal effects and any medals granted to Eva Gertrude Couchman.

Soldiers Effects: Documents and images relating to personal effects and Pension

608559	13673 Couchman Frederick William	6 Nov 1917	16 10	7 9 10	16 10	7 9 10	16 10
		WAR GRATUITY	16 10			16 10	

Name	Couchman, Fred W.	Regimental No.	13673
Regiment	6th E. Kent Regt	Date of entry	11/2/18
Date of issue	29/4/18	Date of expiry	29/4/18
Rate of pension	16 10	Notes	16 10
When issued	29/4/18	By whom	W. J. ...

Record i

Record ii

Record iii

i: Widows - Form 2

Memo from Ministry of Pensions to Infantry Records No. 2 Hounslow to inform them that the widow of 13673 Sergeant F.W. Couchman has been awarded a weekly pension of 16 shillings and threepence with effect from 29 April 1918.

ii: Register of soldier's effects.

£7-9s-10d pay credits plus a £16. War Gratuity to widow, Eva

iii: Pension ledger index card confirming above

Additional Personal and Family Information: Frederick's family background is a long line of agricultural workers who were at Tompsett's Farm in Horsmonden for well over a century. In 1911 Frederick, aged 24, was living with his parents at Tompsett's Farm and was employed as a Domestic Chauffeur for Bernard Spring-Rice a wealthy business man of Sprivers, Horsmonden.

At this time Eva Gertrude Harvey age 29 was employed by the Spring-Rice family as a live-in cook and it was here the relationship started between Frederick and Eva.

Eva continued in service to Mr & Mrs Spring-Rice after Frederick's death and when they left Sprivers and moved to Glebe House, Burwash, in late 1918/early 1919. Eva went with them and became their senior servant, Cook/Housekeeper. After the death of Mrs Cecily Spring-Rice, Eva stayed on as Housekeeper for Bernard Spring-Rice until he died in 1953. Later that year Eva married William Standing of Burwash at Westminster. She died at Hayfield House in Burwash Common East Sussex October 1970 aged 87.

Family History: Baptism/Marriage records etc

Frederick took leave prior to being sent to the Front and married Eva Gertrude Harvey on the 22nd April 1916 at St. Margaret's Parish Church, Horsmonden, by which time he had been promoted to Sergeant in the 3/5th Bn. The Buffs, shown in the Parish Marriage Book below ...

Page 103

1916 Marriage solemnized at <u>Horsmonden</u> in the <u>Church of St Margaret</u> in the County of <u>Kent</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Residence.	Rank or Profession of Father.
205	22 nd April	Frederick William Couchman	29	Bachelor	Sergeant 3/5th Buffs	Churchgate	George Couchman Kent	
	18 1916	Eva Gertrude Harvey	29	Spinster		Horsmonden	John Harvey Kent	

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by after solemnized by me.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Frederick William Couchman in the presence of us, Herbert Paine Percy S Whelan
Eva Gertrude Harvey Violet Elizabeth Couchman
John Thomas
William Standing

The marriage was performed by the Rev. Percy S Whelan, vicar of Brenchley, and the witnesses were Herbert Paine, Frederick's brother-in-law, and Violet Elizabeth Couchman, Frederick's sister.

Form W5080 above shown above filled in by widow and witnessed by the local Rector

Next of Kin in order:

Widow - Eva Gertrude Couchman, Centre Lodge, Benacre Hall, Wrentham, Suffolk.

Father - George Couchman, 4, Heathleigh Cottages, Horsmonden, Kent.

Mother - Ellen Couchman, 4, Heathleigh Cottages.

Brothers/Sisters (full blood):

George Edward, age 35, Broadford Cottages, Horsmonden (should be George Edward),

William Stephen, age 25, Paddock Wood Vicarage **John Thomas**, age 22, 4, Heathleigh Cottages, **Ellen**

Rebecca, age 29, 8 The Retreat, Goudhurst, **Violet Couchman**, age 21, 4 Heathleigh Cottages, **Dorothy**

Couchman, age 11, 4, Heathleigh Cottages,

Additional information on Siblings: George Edward b. Horsmonden 1885 - served in the East Surrey Regt. Wounded Prisoner of War he was Honourably discharged from Army. Awarded Victory & British War Medal, Silver War Badge.

Ellen Rebecca b. Horsmonden 1889. Married Herbert Paine in 1914.

William Stephen b. Horsmonden 1894 - served with 1/5th Bn. East Kent Regt.

John Thomas b. Horsmonden - served with 4th Bn. London Regt. awarded the Military Medal for exceptional bravery in the field.

Violet Elizabeth b. Horsmonden 1889. Married Thomas P McGrath in 1921.

Dorothy Ada * b. Horsmonden 1906. Married Albert Edward Victor Barham in 1930. * See footnote 2

United Kingdom War Memorials.

Horsmonden War Memorial.



1922



Present Day



Oak Memorial Plaque

Sgt Couchman is shown right block, row one, no. 4



St Margaret's Church Memorial Scroll

Sgt. F W Couchman_V1-230831 P7

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Entry

CWGC CERTIFICATE

In Memory Of

Serjeant

F W COUCHMAN

Service Number: G/13673

6th Bn., The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) who died on 03 October 1917 Age 32

Son of George and Ellen Couchman, of Horsmonden, Kent; husband of Eva G. Couchman, of Glebe House, Burwash,
Sussex

FOR OUR LOSS WE MUST NOT WEEP NOR OUR LOVED ONES WISH TO KEEP

Remembered with Honour

WINDMILL BRITISH CEMETERY, MONCHY-LE-PREUX

I. E. 20.



|||||
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
|||||

COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

COUCHMAN, Serjt. F. W., G/13673. 6th Bn.
The Buffs. Killed in action 3rd Oct., 1917.
Age 32. Son of George and Ellen Couchman, of
Horsmonden, Kent ; husband of Eva G. Couch-
man, of Glebe House, Burwash, Sussex. I. E. 20.

CWGC Unit text

Sgt. F W Couchman_V1-230831 P8

Graves Registration Reports, Details of Grave and Burial Returns:

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM

REPORT No. 2 SCHEDULE No. 1

PLACE OF BURIAL: WINDMILL BRITISH CEMETERY

Map Ref: Sheet 51B K.15.2.1.1.2

Regiment	No.	Rank	First Name	Second Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Age at Death	Sex	Remarks
1/ Buffs	18976	Private	F. W.	Couchman	10-0-17	30-10-17	32	M	
2/ Buffs	18976	Private	F. W.	Couchman	10-0-17	30-10-17	32	M	

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM

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Personal Gravestone Inscription:

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM

REPORT No. 2 SCHEDULE No. 1

PLACE OF BURIAL: WINDMILL BRITISH CEMETERY

Map Ref: Sheet 51B K.15.2.1.1.2

NAME AND ADDRESS OF FIRM: WINDMILL BRITISH CEMETERY

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT A HEADSTONE PERSONAL INSCRIPTIONS to be read in conjunction with COMPREHENSIVE REPORT A HEADSTONE MILITARY INSCRIPTIONS together with TWO STANDARD LAYOUTS (the layouts to be used are quoted on the badge design).

Badge Design No. and Layout	Headstone No.	Line 1	Line 2	Line 3	Line 4	No. of Letters in text
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1027/1E	126	FOR OUR LOSS WE MUST NOT	WEEP	NOR OUR LOVED ONES WISH	KEEP 14 0 48	48
		(Mrs. F. G. Couchman, Glebe House, Burwash, Sussex).				

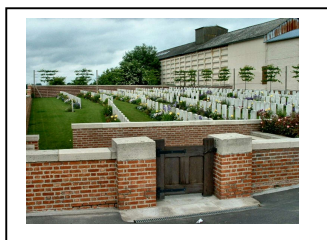
Those lines of Personal Inscription which are underscored are to be engraved on the headstone in the manner indicated in the Specimen Inscription appearing on Drawing No. 6.

Name and Address of Next of Kin are given below and will not appear on the headstone.

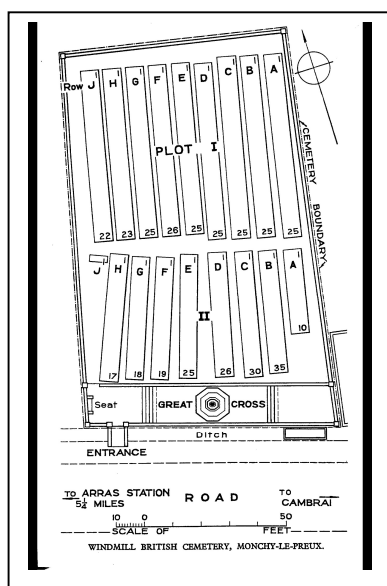


Sgt. Couchman's Gravestone

Military Cemetery: Windmill British Cemetery, Monchy-le-Preux, Pas de Calais, France.

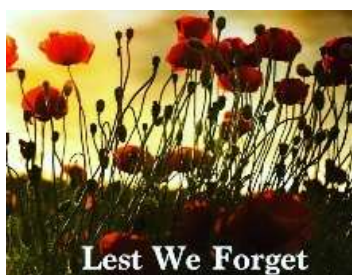


Cemetery Plan:



Plot 1, Row E, Grave no. 20.

Frederick William Couchman



Footnotes and Acknowledgements:

1: CWGC quote: "Concerning our spelling of Sergeant: "Serjeant" spelt with a "J" is peculiar to the British and New Zealand armies and is used in connection with those services only. The British army did not change its spelling to "Sergeant" with a "G" until November 1953. As we commemorate those who died during the two world wars only, the "Serjeant" spelling is historically correct. CWG headstones for Sgt's are spelled with 'J'.

2: Frederick will have many relatives, nieces and nephews, and their descendants, including the Barham family of Horsmonden.

Sgt. Couchman's nephews, Ray, John ("Gongey"), Ted, Eric and Gerald Barham, all played for Horsmonden's football team over a span of several years, also his nieces from the same family, Mildred, Thelma, Enid, Megan and Maureen Barham. Enid Chappell (Barham) lives in Horsmonden with her Husband David. The Barham's were the children of Sgt. Couchman's sister, Dorothy Ada, who married Albert Edward Victor Barham in 1930, and lived at Hoath Meadow before moving to 8 Gibbet Lane.

Cpl. Albert Maynard, of the 1st Battalion, The Buffs, was the Barham children's Great Uncle, who also fell in WW1 and is commemorated on Horsmonden's War Memorial.

3: Sgt Couchman was the Great Uncle of Alan Couchman and the late Sheila Larkin (nee Couchman).

4: There is a query about the birth date of Sgt Couchman: CWGC records show that he was 32 when he was killed.

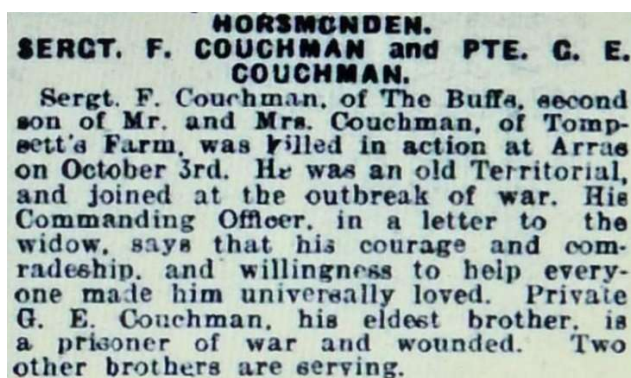
The De Ruvigny* says he was born on 28 March 1885. However, the official CRBI record, volume 2a, page 709 gives his birth as the 2nd quarter of 1887 when his birth was registered. Mother's maiden name - King. (Ellen King).

It is possible a clerk in the Army Records office made a transcription error as the official Civil Registration Birth Index records a birth date of 1887 which would make him 30 when he was killed.

***De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1919 is a data collection containing biographies of over 26,000 casualties of the Great War.**

∴

The local newspaper carried this report:
Source: Kentish Advertiser, Friday 30th November 1917



HORSMONDEN.
SERG. F. COUCHMAN and PTE. G. E. COUCHMAN.
Sergt. F. Couchman, of The Buffs, second son of Mr. and Mrs. Couchman, of Tomsett's Farm, was killed in action at Arras on October 3rd. He was an old Territorial, and joined at the outbreak of war. His Commanding Officer, in a letter to the widow, says that his courage and comradeship, and willingness to help everyone made him universally loved. Private G. E. Couchman, his eldest brother, is a prisoner of war and wounded. Two other brothers are serving.

Research and Compilation:

L Burgess and J Freeman

HORSMONDEN HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP

Sgt. F W Couchman_V1-230831 P11