

John Henry Higgins

Scots Guards

1890 - 1915



John Higgins was not a Swanbourne man, so does not feature on the Swanbourne War Memorial. But he married a Swanbourne girl, and was the first person with a village connection to be killed during the Great War, and his death was reported by the vicar, Rev Forrest, in his Roll of Honour of February 1916.

He was born and brought up in Ludlow, Shropshire. His father, John Henry Thomas Higgins was a baker.

John Higgins' wife was Agnes Fanny Turvey, daughter of James Turvey, the blacksmith and his wife Eliza (nee North). They lived at 2, Smithfield End, and Agnes was born in the Autumn of 1888 and baptised on 25th November, 1888. In 1911, she was working as an under Housemaid in the home of an elderly widow in Kensington, London.

At the same time, John Higgins was a carter in the Grocery business. Whether his work took him down to London markets, and this is how he met Agnes, we do not know. But they married in London in the Spring of 1914 [registered Apr – Jun 1914 Hampstead volume 1a Page 1586].

In August 1914, John Higgins joined the 1st Battalion of the Scots Guards, who were stationed at Aldershot as part of the 1st (Guards) Brigade of the 1st Division. On 14th August, they were mobilised for war and landed at Le Havre as part of the British Expeditionary Force (B.E.F.) and engaged in various actions on the Western Front including the Battle of Mons and the subsequent retreat, The Battle of the Marne, The Battle of the Aisne, First Battle of Ypres.

John Higgins was seriously wounded in the chest on January 6th 1915 and died in hospital at Boulogne, France on 10th Jan (or 17th Jan according to the Commonwealth War Graves website). He is buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France (see below).



John Higgins name appears on the memorial plaque in St. Leonards Church, Ludlow.

