

## *Frederick James Bence*

Private, 1st Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment. Joined at Chippenham, February 16th, 1917 (18 years). Served in France. Reported "missing" March 23rd, 1918; posted as dead July, 1919. General Service and Victory Medals.



FREDERICK BENCE WAS born in 1898 in Southampton. His father, also Frederick, was a stonemason who clearly travelled the country in pursuit of his trade. He was born in Colerne but married a woman from Scotland – Margaret McJannet – and was living in Southampton when his son was born. Very shortly afterwards they moved to Walthamstow, Essex, where sisters Catherine and Isabella were born. By 1911 they were living in Pound Mead, Corsham, and father Frederick was a foreman of stonemasons with Bath Stone.

*War Records of Corsham* shows that Frederick enlisted in February 1917. The Medal Rolls Index shows that he was initially in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry and then the Princess Charlotte of Wales's (Royal Berkshire) Regiment. He was reported missing on 23rd March 1918 but not officially recorded as killed in action until July 1919. The confusion over his status appears to be reflected on the St Bartholomew's Memorial, where his is the last name entered, out of alphabetical sequence. He is remembered at the Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais, France.

The family continued to live locally, both parents dying in 1927. Isabella married Harry Romain and Catherine married Herbert Dancey.