



GRAVE OF THE MONTH – AUGUST 2026

PHILIP JOHN WEBB (1896–1918)

**Gunner 301153 Philip John Webb,
10th Mountain Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery**

Philip was born in Farnborough in 1896, the son of John William Webb and his wife Sarah née Quelch. This is the small village of Farnborough, on the downs above Wantage, perhaps best known as the home of John Betjeman, the popular Poet Laureate who lived in the old rectory. A memorial window by his friend, the artist John Piper, can be seen in the village church.

After finishing his schooling aged 13/14 Philip found a job as a grocer's errand boy – a typical first job for a town lad, but less common in the villages where farm work predominated. Before long Philip moved to Newbury; where he worked for a local baker, George Whitehorn, whose main premises were in Bartholomew Street. This was a sizeable local business, a photograph from the 1930s shows 42 baking staff.



Shrewsbury Terrace, No 2 is the second house from the near end..

When war was declared in August 1914 young Philip had other matters on his mind; he was getting married. Later that year, on Christmas Day, he married his sweetheart, Emily Hazell. The newly-weds found accommodation at 2 Shrewsbury Terrace, Buckingham Road.

War then took Philip away from his bride and interrupted his baking career; he enlisted on 7 July 1915. He was posted to the Royal Garrison Artillery, custodians of many of the largest guns in use at the Front. His first taste of action was on the Western Front, where he was wounded at Vimy Ridge in 1916 – this was not at the famous Battle of Vimy Ridge, which took place in 1917, but a smaller German offensive in May 1916.

On 14 March 1918 Philip was wounded, the report of his later death suggests that this occurred after 'crossing the Jordan'. However, this does not fit with the campaign history because the EEF did not cross the Jordan in force until later that month, during the First Attack on Amman (also known as First Battle of Jordan). It is not at all unlikely that small reconnaissance parties had crossed the famous river before that date, but it seems unlikely that they would include artillery.

However, the result was that Philip was evacuated to hospital in Cairo, where he was evidently deemed well enough to be shipped home, a lengthy sea journey in those days. Back in England he was sent to the same Birmingham hospital that he spent time in on his return from Salonica.

There his condition deteriorated, very possibly the result of an infection of his wound. He died there on 15 August 1918.



Locally Philip is remembered through his grave in Newtown Road Cemetery, where, in 1993, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission added a headstone to the family plot after the large family headstone has become illegible. In the 1980s the headstone inscription was still partially legible when the memorial inscriptions in the entire cemetery were recorded on behalf of the Berkshire Family History Society (copy available in Newbury Library). Included in the inscription was the only surviving record of the date that Philip was wounded.

He is also remembered on tablet 2 of the [Newbury Town War Memorial](#), the [memorial board](#) and [roll of honour](#) in St Nicolas Church, Newbury.



His parents also ensured that he was included on the [Brightwalton War Memorial](#) and the [roll of honour](#) in All Saints Church, Brightwalton.