

World War 1

Birmingham City Police

PC E67 Sidney BAYLISS

Private 25157
8th battalion East Surrey Regiment
Died of wounds France 3rd-4th March 1917

Sidney was born in Whitacre Heath, Coleshill, son of James and Ann, the sixth of nine children. Sidney's father was a farmer and sub post master and the children helped on the farm and in the post office.

Sidney's two brothers were also Birmingham City Police officers, Alfred joined 9th March 1907 and Thomas joined from Warwickshire Police on 25th May 1903.

Alfred retired 31st December 1933, and Thomas retired 30th June 1929.

Sidney joined Birmingham City Police 27th October 1913 as a 22-year-old farmhand, he served on the E Division with warrant number 8389 and collar number PC E67.

Sidney left the police in November 1915 to enlist in the army, he initially joined the 5th battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment but later transferred to 8th battalion East Surrey Regiment.

Sidney was injured in action on 14th February 1917 in the taking of a German strongpoint and was taken to a Canadian run hospital in France with gunshot wounds.

Sidney was reportedly making steady progress but as the infection was spreading in his leg, a decision to amputate was made. Sidney did not regain consciousness and died 4th March.

A Canadian chaplain wrote several letters to Sidney's mother and reported his condition. The Chaplain and a nurse were at Sidney's bedside as he died. Sidney's great niece still has the letters written by the Chaplain to Sidney's family.

Sidney is buried at Doullens Communal Cemetery, Extension number one, France and is also commemorated on the WW1 War Memorial at Saint Giles Church, Nether Whitacre, Coleshill.



All photographs of Sidney by kind permission of Sidney's great niece, Diana Spoor. Sidney in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment with his army colleagues (Sidney far left)



Sidney third from right front row



Royal Warwickshire Regiment
Sidney 3rd from right rear row



Photograph of cemetery and headstone are courtesy of Su and Paul Handford
Taken August 2022

