



## HENRY JOHN COZIER

25 September 1915

**Henry John Cozier** was born in Thame in September 1879 and baptised at St Mary's Church on 2nd October. He was the fourth child of seven born to Richard and Phyllis Cozier living in North Street. He married Florence Wharton in Thame on 23rd May 1904 and went to live at 20 Wellington Street\*, from where, in 1911, he was working as a general labourer. They had five children but one of them, Elizabeth, died in infancy.

Henry would have had some military experience, most likely with the local Territorial Force or Special Reserve, before volunteering for enrolment on the National Reserve in Thame. His Reserve classification in the event of mobilisation was Class I which was for service with a combat unit at home or abroad.

When war broke out, he went with several other reservists from Thame to join the county's regiment, the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, 3rd (Reserve) Battalion and would have spent the next few months in Portsmouth involved with the training of new recruits before their posting to service battalions.

Eventually, in July 1915, Henry was posted to the Western Front as part of a reinforcing draft for the 5th (Service) Battalion. During the Battle of Bellewaarde Farm\*\* Henry, age 36, was posted missing, but it was not until the following year that his death was confirmed.

8867 Private Henry John Cozier, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, has no known grave and is commemorated on The Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres. He is remembered in Thame on the War Memorial and on the Memorial Boards of St Mary's Church, All Saints' Church and Christchurch.

*The Thame Remembers Cross was placed at The Menin Gate Memorial on 31st October 2015 by Thame Museum Chairman, David Dodds and Jenny Dodds.*

**\* Note on address:** This house no longer exists, but for some years prior to his marriage Henry John Cozier and his siblings were living at 61 Wellington Street which the street re-numbering in Wellington Street post WW1, 61 became No. 2 Wellington Street



**\*\* The attack at Bellewaarde Farm:** The 42nd Infantry Brigade, including the 5th Battalion of the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, was ordered to attack Bellewaarde Farm east of Ypres at 04:20hrs on 25th September 1915, as a subsidiary attack in connection with the Battle of Loos. It was a disastrous day for the 5th Battalion, losing 13 out of 15 officers and 463 out of 767 men, killed, wounded or missing. Three men from Thame were to die that day, in the same action. By 18:00hrs the German front line had been gained and the attacking battalions withdrawn to be consolidated by fresh troops. The nine battalions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division lost more than 3,800 officers and men in an area no greater than a thousand yards square.