

JAMES DEW

Born: 23rd August 1892, Letheringsett¹

Enlisted: 17th November 1915, Bury St Edmunds:

- (1) 12th Battalion Suffolk Regiment (Private 26853);
- (2) Tank Corps – transferred 27th January 1918 (Sergeant 308252)²



Medals: British War Medal; Victory Medal³



Demobilised: 11th February 1919⁴

James Dew was born on the 23rd August 1892 in Letheringsett, and baptised on the 27th March 1898, in Framingham Pigot parish church, the son of the son of Thomas George and Ann Elizabeth Dew (see Figure 1). The Baptism Register records that he was baptised with his younger sister, Beatrice Jane.

1898	March	James	Thomas George Ann Elizabeth	Dew	Framingham Pigot	Game Keeper	N. A. Loe
Born August 23 rd 1892	27 th						
No. 656.							

Figure 1: Extract from the Framingham Pigot Baptisms, 1898

The British Army Service Records 1914-1920 have survived for James, and these show that he enlisted on the 17th November 1915 in Bury St. Edmunds. He gave his correct age at enlistment as 23 years 4 months, and he was 5' 1 3/4" inches tall, and his occupation was a horseman. He listed his mother, Ann Elizabeth Dew, as next of kin. He was initially enlisted in the 10th Battalion the Suffolk Regiment (a Reserve Battalion) and transferred to the 12th Battalion the Suffolk Regiment on the 24th March 1916, which the enlistment paper records as a 'Bantam' regiment.

¹ Baptisms Register, Framingham Pigot, 1898 (www.ancestry.co.uk); 1901 census, Framingham Pigot (p.8) (www.ancestry.co.uk); FreeBMD Quarter to December 1892, Erpingham, Vol.4b, p.65 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

² British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

³ British Army WW1 Medal Roll Index Cards, 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁴ British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

James spent the first part of his war service at Home, and was posted to France the following year, on the 20th July 1916. His *Casualty Form – Active Service* notes that he was wounded in action on the 16th August 1916, and the subsequent entries for the 18th and 19th August 1916 note that this was ‘shellshock’. On the 18th June 1917 he was wounded again when he received a gunshot wound to his left leg and right foot, for which he received treatment at the No.1 Canadian General Hospital the following day (the *Casualty Form* indicates that this was ‘slt’, i.e. ‘slight’). In common with many soldiers, he suffered from a variety of other ailments over the duration of his service – rheumatism (December 1916), scabies (February 1917), and haemorrhoids (December 1917). James was granted a period of leave from the 11th to 21st October 1917, which he overstayed by 3 days, and subsequently forfeited 3 days’ pay for overstaying his leave (21st to 23rd October).

On the 27th January 1918, he was sent back to Wareham, England, for duty with the Tank Corps. He was assigned a new service number – Private 308252. He was compulsorily transferred to the Tank Corps on the 30th April 1918 and posted to the Tank Corps Depot, 4th Carrier Unit, at Bovington (now home to The Tank Museum). He seems to have done well in this regiment, being appointed Acting Lance Corporal on the 16th April 1918 and promoted to Corporal on the 13th July 1918. On the 31st August 1918, he was appointed Sergeant – *Tank Mechanist Sergeant* – and promoted to Sergeant on the 5th October 1918, the rank which he held for the remainder of his military service. At some point it looks as if he was posted back to France, as the service record notes ‘B.E.F 12.6.18’.

In early January 1919 he was ‘ordered to report to Labour Base Depot Boulogne for despatch to UK as a miner’. He was granted 7 days leave from the 4th to 11th January 1919 in order to report to the Discharge Centre at Surbiton, to be transferred to the Reserve for the purposes of working in a coal mine.⁵ James was demobilised on the 11th February 1919. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal (see *Figure 2*).

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
DEW.		Suff. P. Tank. C.	Sgt.	26853. 308252.
James.				
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
VICTORY	Td/101 B/B	2960		
BRITISH	do	do		
STAR				
Theatre of War first served in				
Date of entry therein				

Figure 2: Medal Roll index card for James Dew

In the 1911 census, James is aged 18 and a ‘puller’, living with his uncle, William Dew, in Annfield Plain (Durham).⁶ This refers to the coal mining trade in which he was employed - his British Army Service Record, ‘*Statement as to Disability*’ notes that the name and address of his last employer prior to joining the service was the South Derwent Colliery Co., Annfield

⁵ Duty Order (Return of Miners to the UK), British Army WW1 Service Records 1914-1920 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

⁶ 1911 census, Kyo (Durham) (Schedule 279) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

Plain, Co. Durham, and that his occupation was 'coal miner'. The 1918 electoral roll, however, records James as an absent voter, living in Wood Norton.⁷

Further research into the Dew family reveals that James's father, Thomas George Dew, was born in 1864 in Salthouse, the son of George Valentine and Martha Ann Dew (nee Bunn).⁸ Thomas married Ann Elizabeth Platten, the daughter of George and Charlotte Platten, on the 31st May 1886 in Kelling parish church.⁹ He died on the 15th January 1937, aged 72, and is buried in Wood Norton.¹⁰ Ann Elizabeth Platten was born in 1868, in County Durham; she died in 1944, aged 76, and is buried in Wood Norton.¹¹

The 1911 census for Wood Norton¹² records that Thomas (aged 46, and a game keeper) and Ann had eight children, with the three youngest living at home. Census returns record James's seven siblings as:

Martha Ann	Born 1897, Kelling. ¹³ In the 1911 census, she is aged 23, married, and living in Hellington (Burgh Apton), having married Arthur Brookes in 1908. ¹⁴ She died in 1956, Hellington (Burgh Apton) with a recorded age of 67. ¹⁵
George Thomas	Born 16 June 1890, Spennymoor, Durham. ¹⁶ In the 1911 census, he is aged 20 and a farmworker, living with his widowed grandmother, Martha Ann Dew, in Holt. ¹⁷ He died on the 26 th December 1969 in Wood Norton, aged 79. ¹⁸
Rose	Born 28 October 1894, baptised 9 th December 1894, Kelling. ¹⁹ In the 1911 census, she is aged 16, and a parlour maid for the Norris family. ²⁰ She married Sidney Herbert Myhill on the 29 th November 1915, in Wood Norton parish church. She died in 1981, aged 87. ²¹

⁷ First Register of Parliamentary and Local Government Electors, 1918; Polling District: Foulsham, Parish: Wood Norton (Norfolk Heritage Centre, microfilm MF1038).

⁸ FreeBMD, Quarter to December 1864, Erpingham, Vol.4b, p.75 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

⁹ Marriage Register, Kelling, 1886 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹⁰ *England and Wales, National Probate Calendar, (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966, 1973-1995* (www.ancestry.co.uk); *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Burials, 1937 (p.132).

¹¹ FreeBMD, Birth, *Quarter to March 1868, Durham, Vol.10a, p.269* (www.freebmd.org.uk); *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Burials, 1944(p.132).

¹² 1911 census, Wood Norton, (Schedule 158) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹³ FreeBMD, *Quarter to September 1897, Erpingham, Vol.4b, p.69* (www.freebmd.org.uk); 1901 census, Framingham Pigot (p.8) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹⁴ 1911 census, Hellington (Schedule 62) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹⁵ Marriage Register, Thursford, 1908 (www.ancestry.co.uk); FreeBMD, Death, *Quarter to March 1956, Norwich Outer, Vol.4b, p.913* (www.freebmd.org.uk).

¹⁶ FreeBMD, Birth, *Quarter to September 1890, Durham, Vol.10a, p.371* (www.freebmd.org.uk); 1901 census, Framingham Pigot, (p.8) (www.ancestry.co.uk); FreeBMD, Death, *Quarter to December 1969, Norwich, Vol.4b, p.2037* (www.freebmd.org.uk). The death record gives his date of birth as 16 June 1890.

¹⁷ 1911 census, Holt (Schedule 255) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

¹⁸ FreeBMD, *Quarter to December 1969, Norwich, Vol.4b, p.2037* (www.freebmd.org.uk); Find a Will (<https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#wills>).

¹⁹ FreeBMD, *Quarter to December 1894, Erpingham, Vol.4b, p.80* (www.freebmd.org.uk); 1901 census, Framingham Pigot (p.8) (www.ancestry.co.uk); Baptisms Register, Kelling, 1894 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²⁰ 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 153) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²¹ *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Marriages, 1915 (p.102); FreeBMD, Death, *Quarter to September 1981, East Dereham, Vol.10, p.985* (www.freebmd.org.uk). The death record gives her date of birth as 28 October 1894.

Beatrice Jane	Born 8 th March 1897, Framingham Pigot, baptised 27 th March 1898 (Framingham Pigot). ²² In the 1911 census, she is aged 14 and living with family relatives (Rose Hannah McCormick, nee Platten) in South Wales. ²³ Beatrice married Joseph Shipley on the 16 th September 1925, in Wood Norton parish church. She died in 1960, aged 62. ²⁴
Charles	Born 5 th February 1899, Framingham Pigot. In the 1911 census, he is aged 12, and at school. He served with the 17 th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, being wounded in action in March 1918, and discharged from the service in October 1918. He died on the 21 st December 1918 and is buried in Wood Norton. His name is recorded on the War Memorial in Wood Norton parish church.
Grace Charlotte	Born 11 th June 1901, Framingham Pigot, baptised 13 th April 1902 (Framingham Pigot). ²⁵ In the 1911 census, she is aged 9, and at school. ²⁶ She died on the 12 th May 1969, at Hoe (Dereham), aged 68. ²⁷
Walter Norton	Born 3 rd January 1910, baptised 15 th May 1910, Wood Norton. ²⁸ In the 1911 census he is aged 1. ²⁹ He married Agnes Wilde in 1936, and died in 1982, aged 72. ³⁰

Following the war, James appears to have returned to live and work in Norfolk, marrying Sarah Kate Preston in 1921,³¹ and raising a family. In the 1939 Register, James is living in Grove Road, in Erpingham rural district with his wife and family. His occupation is given as a 'stone pit lorry driver'.³² Sarah died in Alington on the 22nd September 1986, aged 88.³³

James died in Yelverton in 1967, aged 74.³⁴

²² Baptisms Register, Framingham Pigot, 1898 (www.ancestry.co.uk); 1901 census, Framingham Pigot (p.8) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²³ 1911 census, Rhondda (Schedule 28) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²⁴ *Transcript and Index to Wood Norton, Norfolk, Parish Registers*, compiled by Keith and Shirley Howell (February 2000), Marriages, 1925 (p.104); FreeBMD, Death, *Quarter to March 1960, Newcastle upon Tyne, Vol.1b*, p.69 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

²⁵ Baptisms Register, Framingham Pigot, 1902 (www.ancestry.co.uk); 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 158) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²⁶ 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 153) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²⁷ FreeBMD, *Quarter to June 1969, Norwich Outer, Vol.4b*, p.1999 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

²⁸ Baptisms Register, Wood Norton, 1910 (www.familysearch.org); 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 158) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

²⁹ 1911 census, Wood Norton (Schedule 153) (www.ancestry.co.uk).

³⁰ FreeBMD, Marriage, *Quarter to December 1936, Norwich Vol.4b*, p.448 (www.freebmd.org.uk); FreeBMD, Death, *Quarter to September 1982, Trafford, Vol.39*, p.1700 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

³¹ FreeBMD, *Quarter to December 1921, Aylsham, Vol.4b*, p.282 (www.freebmd.org.uk).

³² 1939 England and Wales Register, Erpingham RD, Enumeration District TRKA, Schedule 38 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

³³ England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007, *Quarter to September 1986, Norwich, Vol.10*, p.1763 (www.ancestry.co.uk); England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966, 1973-1995 (www.ancestry.co.uk).

³⁴ FreeBMD, *Quarter to March 1967, Norwich Outer, Vol.4b*, p.875 (www.freebmd.org.uk); Ancestry family tree (www.ancestry.co.uk).