

PUGH John

Sergeant Pugh (10296) was a member of the 12th Btn Machine Gun Corps. He was born in Ledsham and enlisted in Aylesbury. His parents, John and Elizabeth of Heath Lane, are buried in Willaston Churchyard. Their grave commemorates their son who was killed in France, aged 34. He left a wife Emily Pugh of Wing, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. John is buried in Norfolk Cemetery Bercordel-Becourt having died on 22nd August 1918.

The Machine Gun Corps was formerly the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry. As a soldier in that Unit, John was initially Number 14686 before joining the Machine Gun Corps.



Machine Gun Corps

Formed: 1915

Disbanded: 1922

The Machine Gun Corps (MGC) was a corps of the British Army, formed in October 1915 in response to the need for more effective use of machine guns on the Western Front in World War I. The Heavy Branch of the MGC was the first to use tanks in combat, and the branch was subsequently turned into the Tank Corps, later called the Royal Tank Regiment. The MGC was disbanded in 1922.

At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 the tactical potential of machine guns was not appreciated by the British Military. The Army therefore went to war with each infantry battalion and cavalry regiment containing a machine gun section of just two guns per battalion. This was supplemented in November 1914 by the formation of the Motor Machine Gun Service (MMGS), administered by the Royal Artillery, consisting of motor cycle mounted machine gun batteries. A machine gun school was also opened in France.

A year of warfare on the Western Front proved that, to be fully effective, machine guns must be used in larger units and crewed by specially trained men. To achieve this, the Machine Gun Corps was formed in October 1915 with Infantry, Cavalry and Motor branches, followed in 1916 by the Heavy Branch. A depot and training centre was established at Belton Park in Grantham, Lincolnshire, and a base depôt at Camiers in France.