

ROCKET, Conrad – killed in action – 14 April 1917 – aged 24

Conrad Rocket was born in 1893 at All Saints, Chardstock. He was the son of James Miller Rockett (born in All Saints Chardstock 1861) and Elizabeth Sarah Rockett (born Chardstock 1866).

In 1901 Conrad, aged 8, was living with his parents, James (40) a farmer and Elizabeth (36) at Knights farm, All Saints, Chardstock, together with his older brother Benjamin J (10).

In 1911 James was farming at Yard Farm, Chardstock and with him were his wife Elizabeth and sons Benjamin (20) and Conrad (18), both working on the farm.

Conrad enlisted in the Devonshire Regiment in Axminster (No. 30417) in November 1915, and he was killed in action on 14 April 1917. He is remembered on the Arras Memorial, in Faubourg-d-Amiens Cemetery in Arras. The Arras Memorial commemorates almost 35,000 servicemen from the UK, South Africa and New Zealand who died in the Arras sector between the spring of 1916 and 7 August 1918 and who have no unknown grave. (Arras offensive of April-May 1917).

Writing to his mother, Sergt B Hill said *“Your son was killed on the morning of the 14th, and I was very grieved to hear of his death. I was very fond of him; he was a god pal, and his heart was in the right place. Since his death we have been in some terrible fighting, and many of his comrades and clums have been killed. I saw you son just before we went into the line. He was quite cheerful; and we shook hands and wished each other good luck. A German bullet passed through his head, and he was killed instantaneously. He gave h is life for the dear land of home.”* From the notice of his death in the paper. *His picture and the words were under the heading of Membury.*

Conrad is listed on the Membury Village Hall list of ‘persons belonging to this parish’ who served in the Great War, but he is not on the list of those ‘killed in action in the Church’ – or under Membury in the Devon Roll of Honour. But he is remembered on the Chardstock war memorial. It is unclear what his connection was with Membury to be on the Village Hall list, although in 1911 there was a Mary Jane Rockett, aged 61, living at Heath Common, Membury who may have been a relative.