BERNARD GERALD LAWRENCE CHILCOTT

1886 – 28/12/1917

Christened on 18th July, 1886, at St. Mary's Tyneham, Bernard was one of seven children of James Arthur Chilcott and his wife Caroline nee Lawrence.



Until 1901 the family lived at Baltington Farm near Tyneham. (It no longer exists as it was requisitioned by the Army in WW2.)

By 1901 the Chilcott family had moved to nearby Lutton Farm, Steeple. Their eldest daughter, Minnie, died aged 17 on 19th May, 1901, and is buried in the churchyard of St.Michael and All Angels, Steeple.

Some farmers and farm workers were exempt from conscription in WW1, but Bernard Chilcott joined The Royal Garrison Artillery 250th Seige Battalion as a Gunner.



9.2-inch howitzer in action on the Somme, 1916.

This is the type of gun Bernard was trained to operate.



Positioning a 9.2-inch howitzer and its ammunition in the mud of the Ypres Salient, 1917.

Sadly Bernard Chilcott lost his life in the muddy fields of Ypers, Belgium on 28th December, 1917. He was aged 31.

Bernard is buried at the “Aeroplane Cemetery” Ypers and remembered on the War Memorials at both Steeple and Lytchett Matravers. Bernard’s connection with Lytchett Matravers was that his parents retired from farming to live at Heath Cottage (now the Dr’s Surgery) in Lytchett Matravers in around 1917 and they lived there until James Chilcott’s death in 1933. Bernard’s brother, Reginald Chilcott, farmed at Bere Farm (now The Barn Restaurant), in the 1920s. He married Amy Brown of Holton Heath Farm in 1922. They later moved to Liss in Hampshire where they owned a Poultry Farm.

Written by Hilary Hayes, October 2025.