

THE LAST BRITISH SOLDIER TO DIE IN WW1

The 11th November 2018 will mark 100 years since the First World War ended. Four years of fighting in the trenches of northern France and Belgium (along with many other places around the world) saw millions die. The war was marked by huge losses in battle and, many isolated deaths daily.

For Private George Ellison, a professional British soldier from before the outbreak of war, he must have felt that he would be one of the fortunate ones. Namely, having heard that peace would be declared in a few hours on 11th November 1918, he would be returning to Leeds shortly. George had survived many horrific battles that took the lives of thousands on both sides of the conflict (Mons, Ypres and Loos amongst others). However, just 90 minutes before the conflict was officially ended, he was killed whilst on patrol. He was the last British casualty killed in the war. His grave faces that of John Parr, who was ironically, the first British soldier killed in WW1.

6. What does the tagline mean?

The Basics:

1. When did World War 1 end?
2. Name two places which saw fighting.
3. Why might Private Ellison consider himself lucky at the start of the last day?
4. When did he die?
5. What is strange about his grave?



Further work

Imagine that you are a British soldier in WW1 who has been told that the war will end in a few hours. Write a letter home describing:

How you feel about the news?

What you are looking forward to?

What you will remember about your time in the army?

For more information on this subject:

Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCThn2tN2qw>

The Last Days of WW1 - BBC Timewatch with Michael Palin (Recommended for ages 15/16+)

Books:

Hundred Days by Nick Lloyd

A Soldier's Sketchbook by John Wilson