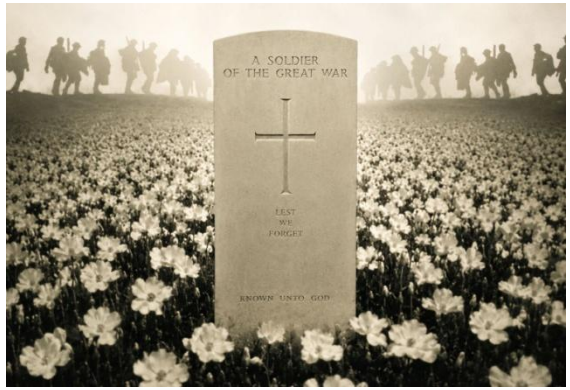
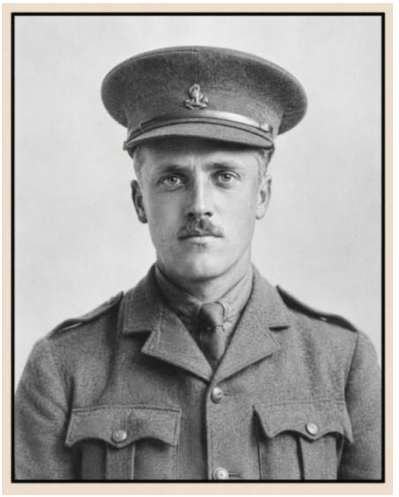




# Jack Best

# 1892 – 1918

## Civilian Research

| Field Name | Field Data | Source of data |
|---|---|---|
| **Casualty Name** | J Best<br>Jack according to NatWest Bank<br>And that is his registered birth name (ie not short for John) | https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc<br>FreeBMD |
| **Date of Birth** | 22/2/1892 Harrow according to NatWest Bank | https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc |
| **Date of Death (from Spreadsheet)** | 15/5/1918 | Student research – as it contains a pic I assume it's accurate<br>and NatWest Bank<br>https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc |
| **Age at death (from Spreadsheet** | 26 | Student research – as it contains a pic I assume it's accurate<br>and NatWest Bank and Sussex Gazette (see below) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Marital Status** | None indicated | |
| **Children (if any)** | | |
| **Occupation prior to Call up** | London & County Bank | Student research – as it contains a pic I assume it's accurate<br>NatWest Bank https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc |
| **Parents** | Mr Albert W Best and his wife Lizzie who at the time of his death were living at Bank House, Midhurst, Sussex | Student research – as it contains a pic I assume it's accurate<br>NatWest Bank https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc |
| **Listed Address(s)** | 1914 - Worthing area? He was based in Worthing before signing up<br><br>High Street, Uckfield, boarding and working as a bank clerk<br><br>3 Headstone Villas, Headstone Rd, Harrow on the Hill | https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc<br><br>1911 census<br><br>1901 census |
| **Parents /Fathers occupation** | Bank Clerk<br>At the time of Jack's death he and his wife were living at Bank House, Midhurst, Sussex so I presume he was working there then | https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc<br>and 1901 census |
| **Brothers and Sisters** | Albert F Best (older), Ernest Best (younger) | 1901 census |
| **Years at John Lyon School** | | |
| **University (if any)** | | |
| **Obituary** | See below | |
| | | |
| **Additional sources of data** | | |
| **War Memorials:** | John Lyon sundial as J Best | https://memorials.iwm.org.uk/name/341244 |
| | John Lyon plaque as J Best | https://memorials.iwm.org.uk/name/340960 |
| | Midhurst War Memorial as Jack Best | https://memorials.iwm.org.uk/name/1351348 |
| | | |

## Military Research

None found at this time

## Story of Sacrifice

Captain Jack Best: (1892 – 1918)

Jack Best was an Old Lyonian, a former bank clerk and an athlete who served with the Machine Gun Corps and rose to command a company before being killed instantly by shrapnel from a shell at Armentières on 15 May 1918, aged 26.

Civilian Life

Jack Best was born in Harrow on 22 February 1892, the second son of Albert and Lizzie Best. He was educated at John Lyon School in Harrow, where he completed his early school education, before moving to Churcher's College, Petersfield. In April 1909, aged 17, he worked as a bank clerk. The Worthing Gazette described him as working in branches of the London County & Westminster Bank at Horsham, Uckfield and Worthing.
He was also known locally for his athletics.

Jack's family lived at Bank House, Midhurst, Sussex, by the time of his death. He had two brothers, Albert who was older and Ernest, who was younger. Albert served during the war, was wounded five times and received the Military Cross, while his younger brother, Ernest, served with the Indian Regular Army in France, Palestine and India.

Military Life

At the outbreak of the First World War, Jack left his position at the bank and enlisted in the Hampshire Royal Garrison Artillery. After three months he was commissioned into the Royal Sussex Regiment. In 1915 he transferred to the Machine Gun Corps and went to the Western Front in March 1916. He served at the Somme and subsequently remained continuously at the Front until his death.
In August 1917, Jack became second in command of a Machine Gun Corps company, and in October he was promoted to Captain and given command of a company. Research, conducted by John Lyon pupils in 2014, records him as serving with the 94th Company of the Machine Gun Corps and notes that the regiment was the first to use tanks.
Jack's senior officer left a written testimonial about him: “In the short time we had grown to be friends I had always found him to be a soldier and a gentleman.”
The school research records that Jack survived the fighting on the Somme and later the battles around Armentières with barely a wound. On the morning of 15 May 1918, however, he was struck by shrapnel from a shell and killed instantly. He was 26 years old.
Jack Best was remembered at Civray British Cemetery. His name is also recorded on the John Lyon School memorials and the Midhurst War Memorial.
His recorded life therefore spans his education at John Lyon School and Churcher's College, his employment as a bank clerk, and his involvement in athletics, followed by his military service with the Hampshire Royal Garrison Artillery, Royal Sussex Regiment and Machine Gun Corps. He became a Captain and company commander before being killed by shell shrapnel at the Front on 15 May 1918.

Photos



Best Photo Original #1



Best Photo AI #1

This photo shows Best wearing the cap badge of the Royal Sussex Regiment.



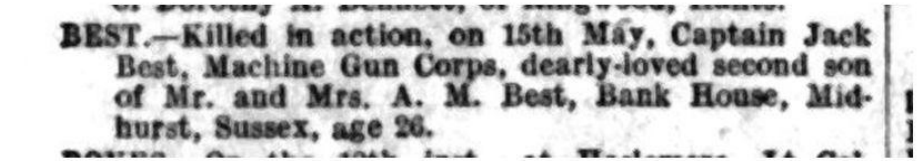
Best Photo Original #2

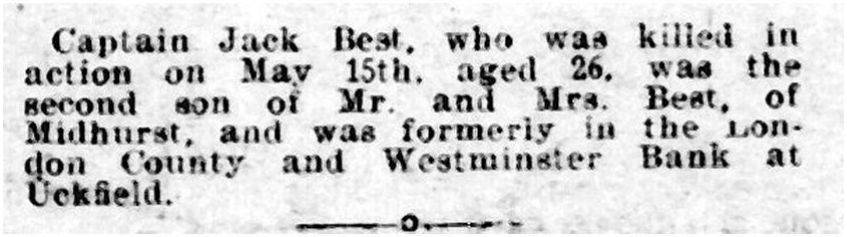


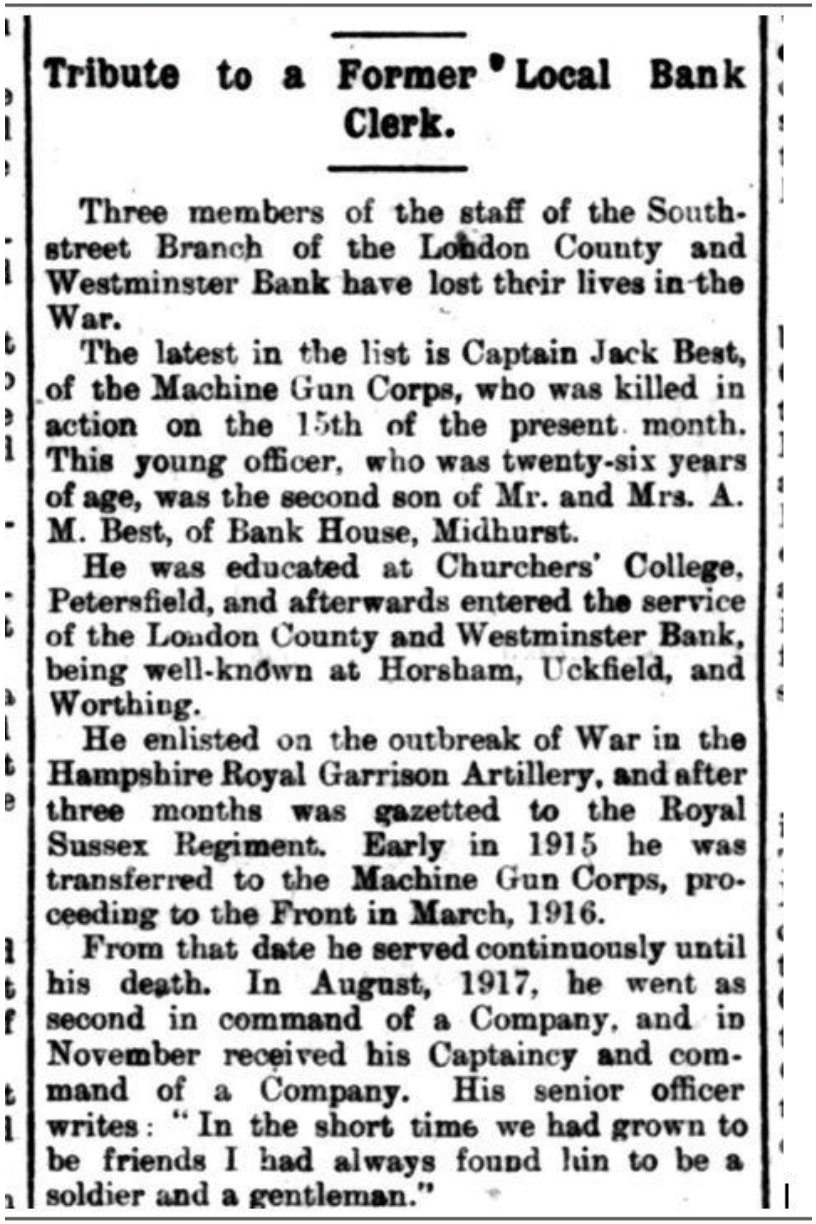
Best Photo AI #2

This photo shows Best in an enlisted man's uniform with the Hampshire Garrison Royal Artillery badge.

## Notes & Clippings

| **West Sussex Gazette, 23/5/1918** | |
|---|---|
| West Sussex Gazette, 23/5/1918<br><br>BEST.—Killed in action, on 15th May, Captain Jack Best, Machine Gun Corps, dearly-loved second son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Best, Bank House, Midhurst, Sussex, age 26. | West Sussex Gazette, 23/5/1918<br>BEST.—Killed in action, on 15th May, Captain Jack Best, Machine Gun Corps, dearly-loved second son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Best, Bank House, Midhurst, Sussex, age 26. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sevenoaks Chronicle & Courier 24/5/1918;**<br>**Similar obit in Hampshire Chronicle (25/5/1918)** | |
| Sevenoaks Chronicle & Courier 24/5/1918; Similar obit in Hampshire Chronicle (25/5/1918)<br><br>Captain Jack Best, who was killed in action on May 15th, aged 26, was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Best, of Midhurst, and was formerly in the London County and Westminster Bank at Uckfield.<br>——o—— | Sevenoaks Chronicle & Courier 24/5/1918; Similar obit in Hampshire Chronicle (25/5/1918)<br>Captain Jack Best, who was killed in action on May 15th, aged 26, was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Best, of Midhurst, and was formerly in the London County and Westminster Bank at Uckfield. |

| Worthing Gazette, 29/5/1918 | |
|---|---|
| Worthing Gazette, 29/5/1918<br> | Worthing Gazette, 29/5/1918<br>Tribute to a Former Local Bank Clerk.<br>Three members of the staff of the South-street Branch of the London County and Westminster Bank have lost their lives in the War.<br>The latest in the list is Captain Jack Best, of the Machine Gun Corps, who was killed in action on the 15th of the present month. This young officer, who was twenty-six years of age, was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Best, of Bank House, Midhurst.<br>He was educated at Churchers' College, Petersfield, and afterwards entered the service of the London County and Westminster Bank, being well-known at Horsham, Uckfield, and Worthing.<br>He enlisted on the outbreak of War in the Hampshire Royal Garrison Artillery, and after three months was gazetted to the Royal Sussex Regiment. Early in 1915 he was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps, proceeding to the Front in March, 1916.<br>From that date he served continuously until his death. In August, 1917, he went as second in command of a Company, and in November received his Captaincy and command of a Company. His senior officer writes: "In the short time we had grown to be friends I had always found him to be a soldier and a gentleman." |

Tribute to a Former Local Bank Clerk.

Three members of the staff of the South-street Branch of the London County and Westminster Bank have lost their lives in the War.

The latest in the list is Captain Jack Best, of the Machine Gun Corps, who was killed in action on the 15th of the present month. This young officer, who was twenty-six years of age, was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Best, of Bank House, Midhurst.

He was educated at Churchers' College, Petersfield, and afterwards entered the service of the London County and Westminster Bank, being well-known at Horsham, Uckfield, and Worthing.

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**Listing in the NatWest Bank memorial pages online https://tinyurl.com/vd8m3puc**



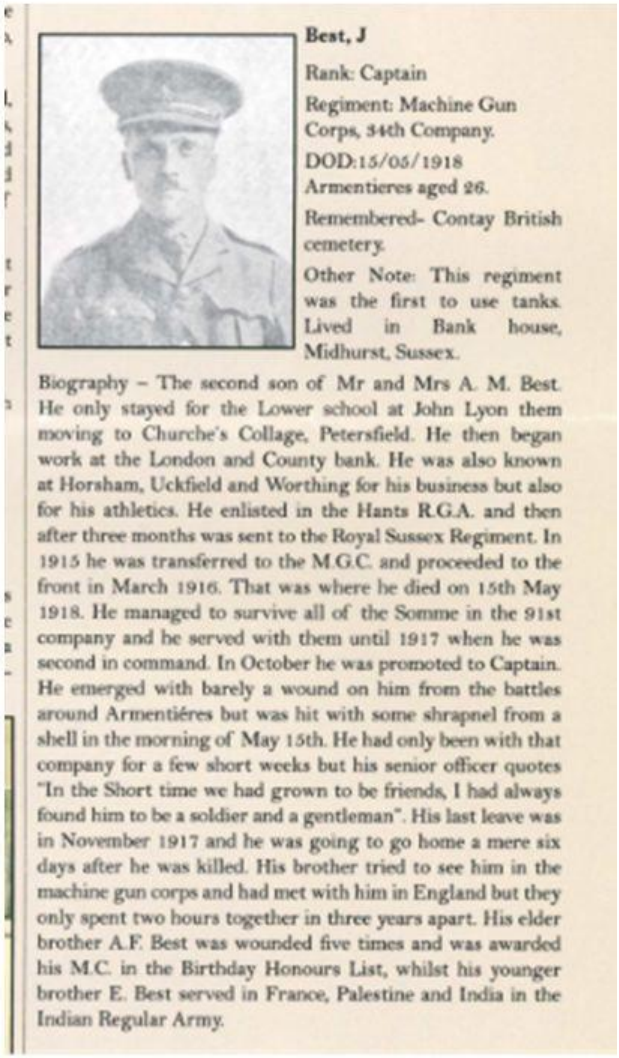
Bank: London County & Westminster Bank
Place of work: Worthing branch
Died: 15 May 1918

Jack Best was born in Harrow on 22 February 1892, the second son of Albert Best, a bank clerk, and his wife Lizzie. He was educated at John Lyon School, Harrow and Churchers College, Petersfield.

In April 1909, when he was 17 years old, Best went to work for London & County Bank. Later that year London & County Bank merged with London & Westminster Bank, and Best became an employee of the enlarged London County & Westminster Bank.

At the outbreak of the First World War Best left his job as a clerk at the bank's Worthing branch to join the army. He initially joined the Royal Garrison Artillery, and later in 1914 was commissioned into the Royal Sussex Regiment. In 1915 he transferred to the Machine Gun Corps, and fought on the Somme. In October 1917 he was promoted to the rank of Captain.

Captain Best was killed instantly when he was struck by a shell fragment on the morning of 15 May 1918. He was 26 years old.

| From Centenary issue of the Lyonian (pupil research 2014) | |
|---|---|
| **From Centenary issue of the Lyonian (student research 2014)**<br><br>**Best, J**<br>Rank: Captain<br>Regiment: Machine Gun Corps, 34th Company.<br>DOD:15/05/1918 Armentieres aged 26.<br>Remembered- Contay British cemetery.<br>Other Note: This regiment was the first to use tanks. Lived in Bank house, Midhurst, Sussex.<br>Biography – The second son of Mr and Mrs A. M. Best. He only stayed for the Lower school at John Lyon them moving to Churche's Collage, Petersfield. He then began work at the London and County bank. He was also known at Horsham, Uckfield and Worthing for his business but also for his athletics. He enlisted in the Hants R.G.A. and then after three months was sent to the Royal Sussex Regiment. In 1915 he was transferred to the M.G.C. and proceeded to the front in March 1916. That was where he died on 15th May 1918. He managed to survive all of the Somme in the 91st company and he served with them until 1917 when he was second in command. In October he was promoted to Captain. He emerged with barely a wound on him from the battles around Armentiéres but was hit with some shrapnel from a shell in the morning of May 15th. He had only been with that company for a few short weeks but his senior officer quotes "In the Short time we had grown to be friends, I had always found him to be a soldier and a gentleman". His last leave was in November 1917 and he was going to go home a mere six days after he was killed. His brother tried to see him in the machine gun corps and had met with him in England but they only spent two hours together in three years apart. His elder brother A.F. Best was awarded his M.C. in the Birthday Honours List, whilst his younger brother E. Best served in France, Palestine and India in the Indian Regular Army. | From Centenary issue of the Lyonian (student research 2014)<br>Best, J<br>Rank: Captain<br>Regiment: Machine Gun Corps, 94th Company.<br>DOD: 15/05/1918 Armentieres aged 26.<br>Remembered: Civray British cemetery.<br>Other Note: This regiment was the first to use tanks. Lived in Bank house, Midhurst, Sussex.<br>Biography - The second son of Mr and Mrs A. M. Best. He only stayed for the Lower school at John Lyon then moving to Churche's (Sic. Should be **Churcher's )** College, Petersfield. He then began work at the London and County bank. He was also known at Horsham, Uckfield and Worthing for his business but also for his athletics. He enlisted in the Hanmpshire Royal Garrison Artillery. and then after three months was sent to the Royal Sussex Regiment. In 1915 he was transferred to the M.G.C. and proceeded to the front in March 1916. That was where he died on 15th May 1918. He managed to survive all of the Somme in the 91st company and he served with them until 1917 when he was second in command. In October he was promoted to Captain. He emerged with barely a wound on him from the battles around Armentieres but was hit with some shrapnel from a shell in the morning of May 15th. He had only been with that company for a few short weeks but his senior officer quotes "In the short time we had grown to be friends, I had always found him to be a soldier and a gentleman". His last leave was in November 1917 and he was going to go home a mere six days after he was killed. His brother tried to see him in the machine gun corps and had met with him in England but they only spent two hours together in three years apart. His elder brother A.F. Best was wounded five times and was awarded his M.C. in the Birthday Honours List, whilst his younger brother E. Best served in France, Palestine and India in the Indian Regular Army. |