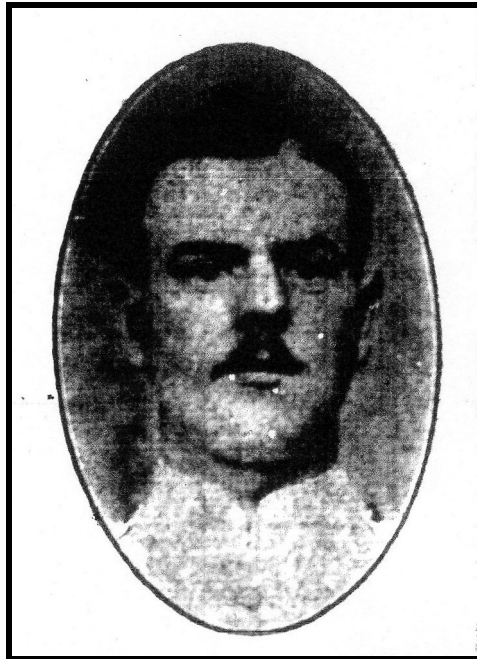


Pte. Arthur EAGLETON (1878 – 1915)

(York and Lancaster Regiment)



Arthur Eagleton was born in Leeds in 1878. He was the eldest child and only son of Stephen John Eagleton and Clara Kay who were also born in Leeds.

Stephen was a tailor and by 1901 the family had moved from Leeds to James Street, Batley. Arthur had two sisters but his sister Catherine died in Leeds aged 8 and by the 1901 Census only his sister Eliza Jane was at home with her parents. Arthur was living at Clerk Green and was a Tailor's Presser.

In 1902 he joined the army in Bradford and by 1903 was stationed in Dover. Between 1903 and 1911 he was stationed in India. His records show that he was 5'6" tall, weighed 126lbs, had a fresh complexion, grey eyes and fair hair. His religion was C of E and he had several tattoos including crossed flags and clasped hands on his forearms.

He met Edith Hewins who came from Birmingham and they married at St Andrews Church in Bordersley near Birmingham on the 4th June 1911. Arthur was a Reservist between 1911 and 1914 and was still living in Birmingham.

He was called up at the beginning of the war but his records show that he was soon in trouble having broken out of camp and being found drunk in the local Red Lion public house.

On the 30th October 1914 Arthur was wounded in France. He reported many adventures to his father Stephen John Eagleton who was now living at 7 Rock Mount, Oaks Road, Soothill. Whilst in hospital he handed his father a souvenir of a case he had placed at the top of his trench carrying 4 bullets so as to be handy when he wanted to re-load. After being placed there and with Arthur lying in the trench below, a German bullet or piece of shrapnel struck two of his bullets and flattened the bullet noses out.

He was returned to the Front in February 1915. On the eve of his departure he wrote a letter to his father saying, "I am going to France and shall be glad to get there in the thick of it, just to see what stuff I am made of. If I come back with my lower region full of bullets I shall have nothing to grumble at." However he was soon in trouble again for not having his hair cut, not marching properly and being drunk in the Billet. A further letter home stated, "I am on the track once more and am going to get my own back. I am enjoying soldiering more now than when I was at home."

His wife Edith, who was living in Birmingham, received official notification of his death from Arthur's Company Officer saying, "I am very sorry to inform you that your husband was killed on duty in the trenches on Sunday the 11th April. I am glad to say he suffered no pain as he was shot in the head. We shall miss him so very much for he was always so jolly in the Company."

Edith Eagleton continued to reside at 52 Baker Street, Small Heath, Birmingham and was awarded a pension of 10 shillings. In 1919 she married again to John Davis.

Arthur Eagleton, 7145 1st Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment, is Remembered with Honour at Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial. His name also appears on The War Memorial in St Paul's churchyard, Hanging Heaton.

Researcher

Susan White, Batley History Group, December 2014