

Edward Thomas Wall (Oct-Dec 1896 – 9 October 1916)



Edward was the son of Daniel and Eliza Wall (nee Collins) who married in April 1893 in Portsea, Hampshire. Daniel was born in Ireland and Edward's mother, Eliza was born in Ryde on the Isle of Wight. Edward's father was a Colour Sergeant in the army but died aged 44 in July 1899 on the Isle of Wight, when Edward was about two years old.

Daniel and Eliza had 10 children but only 9 had survived by 1911: so Edward grew up with three brothers and five sisters. They were Ellen born in Aldershot, Hampshire in 1884, Eliza 1886 and Ada 1887, both born in Westerham, Kent, Edith 1890, Florence 1891, Bernard 1894, Richard 1895, and Joseph born in 1899. Edith and all the subsequent children, including Edward, were born in Tonbridge, Kent. Both the 1901 and 1911 Censuses show Eliza living as a widow with her children in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

During World War 1 Edward served with D company, 2nd/18th Battalion London Regiment (London Irish Rifles). His brothers Richard and Joseph also enlisted. Richard was a Bombadier in the Royal Garrison Artillery and Joseph, was a Private in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment. Joseph's home address and that of Eliza, his mother, was given as 60 St John's Road, Isleworth when he joined up in September 1915.



60 St John's Road, Isleworth

Interestingly Edward's other brother, Bernard was in a Catholic seminary in 1911 training for the priesthood. He later became the Rt Reverend Bernard Wall, Bishop of Brentwood from 1955 until 1969.

Edward's Battalion was in the front line near Mont St Eloi, not far from Arras in France in October 1916. In the early days of the month the troops were subjected to gas attacks as well as shelling. At 8pm on 9 October a raiding party of about 100 soldiers was sent out towards the German lines but as the moon was bright they could be seen as they advanced. The enemy were well prepared and their lines were thickly manned. The raiders were met with both very fierce machine gun fire and rapid rifle fire. The war diary records many casualties and possibly Edward was among these, as he was killed in action on 9 October 1916 when he was aged 19. The Battalion War diary records a letter issued by the Corp Commander saying "I have read the report of this raid with great interest and I consider the party showed determination and gallantry and a fine fighting spirit which reflects well on the Battalion". Edward is commemorated at the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France and also on the St Bridget's Memorial, Isleworth. His brothers, Richard and Joseph survived WW1.