

## Henry James Arscott



Henry James was born in 1884, the son of Frederick George Arscott (a market gardener's carman in 1901 and a school caretaker in 1911), born in the south west of England, who died in 1933 and Eleanor Tappern, born in Goring, Oxfordshire, who died in 1934. They had married in Hammersmith in 1875, and Frederick's occupation was a railway official. The family lived in Brentford in 1891 and after that around Linkfield Road in Isleworth. James Henry (as recorded at birth) was baptised at St John's Church, Isleworth on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1884; he had four brothers and sisters: William Isaac (1873-1916), a cycle engineer at Pears Factory and later a rubber worker, who married Ada Coleman in 1900, George David (1877-1942), a rubber worker living in Birmingham, who married Edith Phyllis Biggs in 1905, Alice Elizabeth (1880-1948), who married William Thomas Coleman in 1905 and Esther Elizabeth (1882- 1908). Henry James was a baker's carman in 1901 and a florist when he married Ethel Mary Spencer, the daughter of a baker, on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1904 at Holy Trinity Church, Hounslow and they had four children: Ada Winifred (1907-2002), Clara Eleanor Spencer, born in 1910, Ethel Irene (1913-1993) and Walter Henry Spencer born in 1915. They lived in Hounslow, Teddington and Isleworth and were residing in 49, Argyle Road, Teddington in 1911 (where Henry James was a barman) and at 6 Newton Road Isleworth from 1913 onwards.



*6 Newton Road,  
Isleworth in 2016*

Henry James enlisted at Woolwich on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1915. He was 5'4 ½" inches in height, with grey eyes and dark brown hair and joined the Army Veterinary Corps (9562). He later transferred to the Royal Field Artillery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Reserve Brigade (92009) and after a period at Aldershot was sent to France on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1915. He became ill in 1916, and was admitted to hospital in Abbeville, suffering from shortness of breath, cough and pains between the shoulder blades and returned to England on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1916. He was discharged from service on 4<sup>th</sup>

February 1917, at Brighton, as a result of 'total incapacity' from infection by TB during his active service. His record refers to his trade as a veterinary dresser, and he was discharged as a driver, with his military character as 'Good' and character awarded in accordance with King's Regulations, as 'Steady and sober'. The Board allowed 25 shillings a week as pension, and each of the four children- the allowance of 2 shillings and 6 pence per week.

Henry's health deteriorated rapidly and he died on June 5<sup>th</sup> 1917 at home, 6 Newton Road, Isleworth 'after much suffering' and was buried at Isleworth Cemetery. The coffin, palled with a Union Jack, was conveyed on a gun carriage to the cemetery, where after the interment, a firing party from the Royal Fusiliers, discharged three volleys over the grave. His obituary, reported in the Middlesex Chronicle on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1917, gave an account of the funeral and the mourners. He is also remembered on the memorial at St John the Baptist Church in Isleworth. Henry James's wife Ethel, was born in the Isle of Wight. Her brother Walter James Spencer lost his life in South Africa at the start of the war and is also listed on the Isleworth Memorial. Tragically, Ethel died too in 1919, aged just 34, leaving their four children orphaned. Their children would probably have been cared for by their grandmother Fanny Spencer, Ethel's mother, who lived with them in the latter years of her life, and by their paternal grandparents who resided nearby in Loring Road in Isleworth. Walter Henry was employed as a butler and living in Guildford in 1939. In 1940 he married Theresa Bodauszky in Surrey. In 1939, Ethel Irene was living at 202, Twickenham Road, Isleworth as a machine operator for toilet preparations, in 1944 she married Henry Chapman in Islington. Clara Eleanor married Clifford Porter locally in 1934 and by 1939 they were residing at 34 Amhurst Gardens, Isleworth. Ada Winifred married Albert Stitson in Hammersmith in 1959. William Issac and Alice Elizabeth's partners were the siblings of two of the Coleman brothers, who died in the Great War and were also listed on the Isleworth Memorial.