

Augustus Brooks



Augustus was born in 1873 to Charles and Rosa (née Relf) who had married in 1860. They had four other children: Charles (1862); William (1864); Rosa (1865) and Henry (1868). According to the 1871 census, Charles senior was a sergeant in the Metropolitan Police. By 1881 he had retired from the police and was the landlord of the Waterman's Arms, Town Wharf, Isleworth. Charles junior was a railway clerk; William a dye worker and Rosa and Henry were at school.

By the 1891 census, the family had moved to 4 Blenheim Place, Worple Road Isleworth. Charles senior had died aged 61 in 1889 and Rosa was a widow. Augustus, now 18, was working as a house painter alongside his brother Henry, aged 23.

In 1901 Augustus and his siblings had moved to 2 Devon Villas, North Street, Isleworth. *See right for a map of old Isleworth, including North Street, South Street and the junction of Worple Road in 1894.* He was 28 and listed as an artisan painter, Charles was still working as a railway clerk and William as a tester in an Aniline Dye Factory. Rosa, now 35, is living with her brothers. Their brother Henry had married Minnie Philpott in 1897 in Thanet.

By 1911 Augustus, Charles and Rosa had moved to 52 North Street, Isleworth. His brother William had married Ellen Cripps in 1902 and they were living at 13 Montague Road, Hounslow and William was a practising chemist. Henry and Minnie were living in Margate with Minnie's mother, Sarah.

When the war broke out, Augustus enlisted on 7th September, 1914 at Camden Town into the 19th London Regiment. Although he was 41, he gave his age as 34 ½! His service number was 2719 and he was a Private in A company and was part of the Expeditionary Force to France. He arrived in Le Havre on 10th March and whilst marching to Allouagne, men complained of sore feet as often they didn't have the correct size boots. After swapping between themselves, this was partially remedied. They were billeted in farms around Allouagne and undertook training, church parades, twice daily rifle checks and digging trenches.

On 7th April the Battalion marched to Bethune, occupying one wing of the girl's college. From here they marched onto Festubert where they took over from the Oxford and Bucks light infantry. On 3rd May the Battalion moved back to Bethune. Between 16th and 21st May they were heavily shelled and suffered heavy casualties. On 21st they moved to Beuvre where the enemy had shelled and wounded three of the advance party before the main company arrived. On 6th June his Battalion relieved the Glasgow Highlanders at Labourse. They continued through the summer of 1915 in the area around Allouagne then took part in the Battle of Loos from 25th September to 1st October. He had served for just 1 year and 19 days before being killed in action on 25th September, 1915 at the Battle of Loos. At this Battle, the 1/19th London Regiment former part of the second wave as part of the 47th Division attacking the southern side of Loos village. In total 14 officers and 372 other ranks were killed, including the CO. Augustus's body was recovered by a GC unit on 1st October, 1915 and his death was reported on 20th October, 1915. He was buried in the Loos Memorial Cemetery, grave ref 130-135. He was awarded the 1915 Star, the Victory and British medals. He left everything he owned to his sister Rosa. He is also honoured in All Souls Church, Haliburton Road, then in Isleworth, as well as at All Saints Church, Church Street, Isleworth.

According to the 1939 Register records, Henry, now widowed and aged 71, had returned to live with his sister Rosa at "Mimosa", 295 St Margaret's Road.

