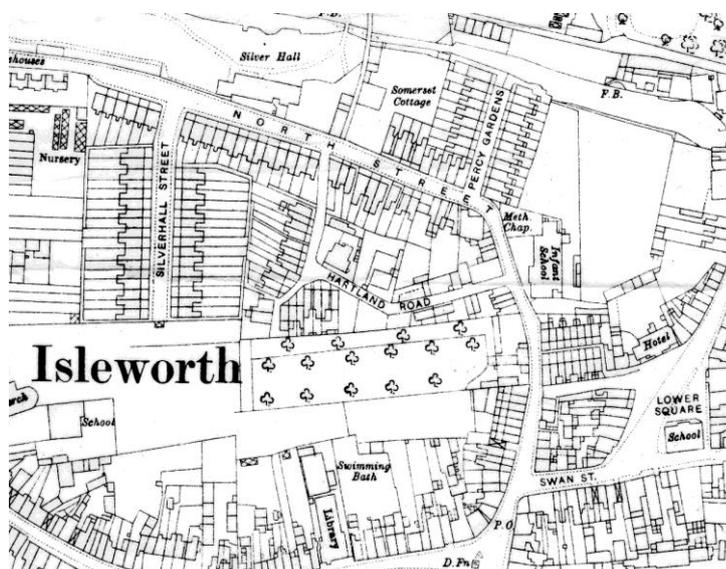


Thomas Edgar Overbury Byford



Thomas (known as Edgar) Byford was the son of Abraham Olley Byford and Helen Jane Capron. He was born in Hyde in Cheshire on February 19th 1893, and baptised at All Saints, Chorlton on Medlock, Manchester, April 2nd 1893. His parents had married in the Parish Church in Birmingham on June 19th 1891, Abraham Byford was a hairdresser, and his father referred to as a veterinary surgeon, and Helen Jane Capron's, father- a registrar. Both the bride and groom were said to be aged 32. At the time, Helen Jane was employed as a schoolteacher in West Bromwich. Abraham was born in Saling in Essex in 1858, moving around the country with his hairdressing trade. Helen Jane Capron, born in 1855, came from Barking in Essex. By 1901, the family was living in Lambeth, at 46 Dorset Road, and included Ronald Abraham, Edgar's brother, born in 1896 in Clapham. Abraham was listed on several local directories as a hairdresser. By 1911, they had moved to 36 South Street in Isleworth and Edgar was an 'office youth' at a coal merchants, and Ronald, an 'office boy' at a solicitors-possibly on his mother's side of the family, as her brother, Thomas Alfred was a solicitor. See below for a 1894 map of Isleworth and South and North Streets.

The original Post Office Rifles was formed in the C19th and assisted in various wars including the Egyptian and Sudanese campaigns in 1892 and 1895. Once the First



G. R. THE POST OFFICE RIFLES. 8TH BATTALION CITY OF LONDON REGIMENT

Are in Urgent Need of Recruits to complete Establishment of the 3rd Battalion, and an earnest appeal is therefore made to all Officers of Military age who are desirous of assisting their colleagues now fighting in Flanders.

The Object of the 3rd Battalion is to supply drafts, after having received the necessary training.

- 1. HOW TO ENLIST.**
 - (1) See your Postmaster and obtain official permission.
 - (2) Having obtained permission write to Officer Commanding POST OFFICE RIFLES, 159, Bunkhill Row, London, E.C.
 - (3) You should not be less than 2ft. 2in. in height with an expanded chest measurement of 34in.
 - (4) Age limits - 19 to 40. 19 to 45 ex Soldiers.
- 2. TERMS OF SERVICE.**
 - (1) Four years or duration of the War.
 - (2) Foreign Service Only.
 - (3) Free Discharge on termination of War or engagement.
- 3. Civil Posts will be kept open until return from Military Service, and such service will count for Civil Pension and for Increment of Civil Salary.**
- 4. THE PAY OF A RIFLEMAN** is equal to full Civil Pay in the case of all Established Officers, plus Free Kit, Rations and Quarters. N.C.O.'s receive Extra Pay of their Rank supplemental to Civil Pay. Un-established Officers receive Full Army Pay and Allowances, Free Kit, Rations and Quarters.

APPROVED BY THE HONORABLE GENERAL (Signed) J. HARVEY, Lt.-Col. 1891 Battalion City of London Regiment, (Rank Headquarters Force). F. A. LABOUCHERE, Lt.-Col. 1891 City of London Regiment. F. OWEN, Major 1891 City of London Regiment.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

World War started, a second Post Office Rifles Battalion was formed in September 1914- it became known as the 2nd/ 8th Battalions, London Regiment, initially providing reserves for the 1st Battalion. However, in May 1917, it moved to France and took part in the Second Battle of Bullecourt in May 1917. They were heavily involved in Ypres and Passchendaele throughout 1917, in the Third Battle of Ypres, sustaining devastating loss of life in September, at Wurst Farm Ridge. Edgar's army records have not survived but we do know that he joined the 2nd/8th Battalion of the London Regiment also known as the Post Office Rifles as Private Byford (385003); he had previously belonged to the

6th Battalion (321779) from 20/5/17-5/6/17. He served in France with the 8th Battalion from 6/6/17 until his death from wounds on August 1st 1917, whilst the Battalion was based at Carnarvon Camp. He was awarded the British War and Victory medals posthumously; his mother Helen, was his next of kin. Thomas Edgar is commemorated on The Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial. Helen moved to Vicarage Road Teddington in 1919 and died in 1924, aged 68; Abraham had preceded her in 1914. Very little information has been found about Ronald Abraham, Thomas Edgar's younger brother.