

## George Wilson Clement (33248)

Mrs Sarah Clement of 18 Hanworth Road was to lose both her son George (25<sup>th</sup> Feb)) and her husband Charles (1<sup>st</sup> Dec) in 1917.



Charles Wilson and Sarah Gye married on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1890 in Battersea. Charles (Junior) was born in 1893 (and was a regular in the Navy from 1912). The couple had six more children. George was born in 1897 and baptised at Holy Trinity, Hounslow on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1897. In the 1901 census, the family were living at 2 Lidgold Cottages in Heston. George's father was a 'furniture carman' - this would have been a horse drawn van. In 1911, his father is listed as a Nurseryman Labourer and later he was a groom at Hounslow Barracks. The family moved to 39, Campo Road in Hounslow and then to the Hanworth Road. Unfortunately we don't know when George joined up. His father Charles attested on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915 so perhaps they joined together? George was only 19 years old when he was '*killed in action*'. Private Clement was formerly with the Royal Fusiliers and then transferred to the Machine Gun Corps as a signaller. All of the Machine Gun Corps' operational records were destroyed by a fire in 1920, making it almost impossible to research where he died. However, the following Middlesex Chronicle report, dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 1917 tells us all we need to know about the short life of this young boy.

*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Clement, of 18, Hanworth-road, Hounslow, have receive the sad news that their son George, a signaller in the Machine Gun Corps, was killed in action in France on February 25th. This warrior, who enlisted in the Army a month after the outbreak of the war, when he was only 17 years of age, came of one of the old families of the district. He was a grandson of the late Mr. James Clement. who for many years was in the employ of Thomas Woods. Signaller George Clement was employed before the war at Pears' Factory, and his father is serving in the Royal Engineers at the front. Lt. N. V. Oxenden, the officer commanding the company of the Machine Gun Corps to which the young warrior belonged, in a letter to his mother dated February 26<sup>th</sup>, says:*

*"I am more grieved than I can say to have to tell you that your son George was killed in action last night. I will tell you the circumstances of his death. He was, of course, a signaller. and did not belong in my section, but by the present arrangement was temporarily attached to us. Well, my section and another were moving forward along a track-for there are no trenches here - at about 7 yesterday evening, very heavily loaded, and going slowly under considerable shell fire from 5.9 German howitzers. Dozens fell very near us in the course of an hour, and a piece of one of these, which burst not more than twenty yards to our left, hit George Clement on the back of the head, killing him instantly. He will be buried where he fell in a day or two by our Chaplain. Blunt as this account of a noble death may be I felt sure you would like all the detail I could give you. If I could make you feel half as strongly as I feel myself that his life was not wasted, but brought us one step, however short, towards peace and the cessation of our present toll of lives, I would be doing something in consoling you in your great grief".*

*The Chaplain wrote later :-" Your son was killed in action on February 25<sup>th</sup> whilst bravely doing his duty, and his officer and section were deeply grieved at the loss. I went out with Mr. Oxenden yesterday (March 3rd) to the spot, and read service over his grave, and I am sure you will be glad to know that his body was laid to rest by those who cared for him. All those who knew him will miss your son. He was greatly liked by his comrades and I know that they all sympathise with you who mourn his loss."*

George was buried at Adanac Military Cemetery Miraumont ref. III. G.25

Gone But Not Forgotten

