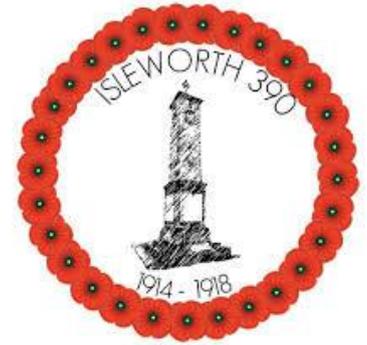




14 Byfield Road

Daniel Gearan

Daniel married Agnes Emma (nee Taylor) on the 2nd February 1905 at Brentford Registry Office, they had five children and, in 1911, they were living at 15 Mill Platt Avenue, Isleworth. **By May 1917, both Daniel and Agnes would be dead.** Agnes died in 1916 (at 31) from tuberculosis and exhaustion. Only 15 months later, on 3rd May 1917, Daniel (34) was 'missing, believed killed'. He died in the dark and confusion of a poorly organised attack on enemy lines at Cherisy.



Notes on the Operations at Cherisy 3rd May. "Zero hour. This was at least 1/2 an hour too early....the assault was too dark to distinguish enemy from friend....within even a few minutes at the start all units were hopelessly intermingled and formations as such ceased to exist. Field Service Regulations Page 19 *state* - 'a daylight attack is best...Night attacks should be avoided if possible'. This was clearly demonstrated to be sound. Our trenches were not organised for attack....no command or observation posts were constructed. Battalion commanders were forced to take up their command posts in unoccupied German dugouts, the exact position of which was, of course, known to the enemy.... The unreliability of signal wires laid over ground has been demonstrated in every attack"**Later the diary reports** "...owing to the noise from shelling and rifle and machine gun fire it was impossible to make the men hear any of the orders. **Estimated casualties 13 Officers, 381 Other Ranks**". (Signed A B Lewin Lieut. Col. Commanding 8th Battalion E. S. Reg. on 6th May 1917. From Regimental Diaries)).

Daniel Gearan's service records show that he enlisted at Hounslow for the Militia in 1899 long before the outbreak of WW1. He later joined the Middlesex Regiment (where interestingly, he became the battalion's chiropodist!) and was awarded The Queen's South Africa Medal. A total of 26 clasps were awarded with this medal and Daniel was awarded five of them for services in the second Boer War. Daniel transferred to the 8th Battalion East Surrey Regiment in 1916 and was promoted to Sergeant in February 1917.

For such an experienced soldier to lose his life in the unfortunate conditions described above is tragic. It appears that Daniel's orphaned children (Alice 13, Daniel Jr 11, William 8, James 5 and Charles 4) were cared for by their Uncle Daniel and Aunt Emily at 14 Byfield Road as their father had left his army pay (recorded in the Army Register of Effects 1901-1929) to "Aunt" Emily Gearan. Alice, James and Charles can be found in the 1939 Register. Alice (a hospital worker) is single and still living in the original family house in Byfield Road with her Aunt and Uncle. James (a rubber works factory hand) is single and living at 432 London Road and Charles (a general labourer for a concrete manufacturer) is single and living as a boarder at 35 Dawes Avenue. Daniel is also remembered on the Memorial in St Bridget's Church, Isleworth.

