



Ivor James (70984) was “a trumpeter of barely 16 years of age”.

His battalion, in the Royal Field Artillery, crossed to France on the SS Coleen Bawn on 18th Aug 1914 in readiness for an advance towards the German lines on 21st and thus to the Battle of Mons. Ivor survived Mons and the First Battle of the Marne. On September 13th at the First Battle of the Aisne, the Germans destroyed and partly demolished all the bridges over the River Aisne except one, where a few planks acted as a makeshift bridge. Hundreds of soldiers crossed this whilst under heavy shellfire. Others floated across the river on pontoons. It is very possible that this was where young Ivor, **a boy soldier**, was killed in action on 16th Sep 1914 – just 30 days into the war.

Ivor’s name can be found in the British Army Schoolchildren & Schoolmasters records 1803-1932. He attended **The Royal Army Military Asylum in Kent** which was founded in 1801 and originally set up to educate orphans of British servicemen in the regular army who had been killed in the Napoleonic Wars. Ivor joined the school, as a trumpeter, on 31st March 1908 when he was 10 years old. Ivor’s father, Corporal Ivor Treharne James (a Gunner) had been killed in the Boer War in about 1900. Ivor probably didn’t remember his father. Perhaps he wanted to follow in his footsteps?

Ivor’s parents had married in the Parish of St Michael and All Angels in Woolwich Kent on 2nd June 1894. His mother was Rosina Frances Dunlop and her father was a Sergeant Major. Rosina and Ivor’s first child was a daughter, Beatrice Hannah Treharne James born in 1895.

Life must have been very difficult for Rosina as a widow with two young children. The 1901 Census tells us that Rosina was living in Neath in Wales as ‘head’ of the family and her occupation is ‘shopkeeper’. **The 1911 census makes interesting reading.** Ivor’s sister is now an ‘inmate under training for service’ at the **Royal Victoria Patriotic Asylum in Woolwich**. This school was originally set up for daughters of soldiers killed in the Crimean War and continued to take girls who lost their fathers in WW1. Ivor is 12 and still at the Army School near Dover, (renamed as The Duke of York’s Royal Military School). Rosina (now 39) is living as a widow at 29 Prospect Place Woolwich, and is working as a Needlewoman. Later in the year, Rosina finds some happiness again when she marries Henry Bell who lives at 44 Talbot Road Isleworth.

Ivor leaves his school in Nov. 1912 and joins the regular army. **He is 14 years old and has no future.**

Ivor is buried at Vailly British Cemetery, and is also remembered on the All Souls and All Saints Memorials, as well as the Dover War Memorial Project.

