

George Henry McElwain



George Henry was born in 1896, the third son of William McElwain (born in India and died at home in Isleworth 18 North Street in January 1932) and Myra Hayden (born in Shropshire, married William in Brentford in 1907 and died in 1961.) William worked in brick building and then as a market gardener (as did his wife) and lived in Isleworth, in 15 Stafford Place, off South Street in 1881 and in 1891, at 4 Magdala Road. By 1901, he had moved with his family to 14 Queens Terrace (**see below for a photo taken in in 2016**) and by 1911, to 4 Castle Place, off South Street. George Henry had six surviving siblings, and a step brother William Hayden (born 1889).



Frederick, was working in the skin factory in 1911, probably Band's parchment factory in Brentford, and enlisted with the Royal Fusiliers, serving with the 20th Battalion, in the Somme. His body was never found, but his official death was 13th July 1916. Alfred was born in 1895 and also worked in the skin factory. He enlisted and despite being seriously wounded during the 'Big Push' and in hospital in Cardiff, continued with the Royal Artillery after the war and eventually served for 17 years and married Florence Jefferson when he was stationed in Northumberland in 1923; in 1939, they were living in Heston, with their family, where he stayed until he died in 1957. Annie, born in 1900 married Gordon Baldwin in 1921 and was living in the Twickenham area in 1939 with her husband and children. She survived until she was 99. Richard Edward (known as Ted) was born in 1901 and died in 1978; he married Ellen Clements in 1926; they lived in Worple Road, Isleworth in 1939 with their family and then moved to Worton Road after the war. Joseph, born in 1908 and died in 1970, lived in Star Road, Isleworth with his wife, Edna and family in 1939. John Francis McElwain, born in 1914 and died in 1992 in Dorset, was living in Heston with his mother, Myra in 1939, as a machinist at

the Rubber Works, before moving to Worton Road in the 50s with his wife and family. William Hayden joined the East Surreys on 28th August 1914 as an Isleworth resident aged 25, giving his wife, Matilda Bunce, as next of kin, living at 3 Cheam Cottages, Queens Terrace. He had tattoos on both arms which included a hand and heart and an anchor. The Middlesex Chronicle published an article about the McElwain family on 23rd September 1916, reporting that they had lived in Isleworth for near on 30 years and had given their four sons of military age (William, Frederick, Alfred and George) to the service of the country. They were all in their 20s and had been scholars of Worple Road schools.

George Henry married Lydia Clements in Brentford in 1915 and they had a child, in April 1916 named George Henry after his father. His father died from his wounds, aged 20, a few months later on 21st June 1916 near Ploegstraat, Belgium, having only been at the front 6 weeks. The 32nd battalion, Royal Fusiliers relieved the 11th KWK in Ploegstraat trenches 121, 122 and 123 on 17th June 1916. The 26th Royal Fusiliers were on their right and 21st Kings Royal Rifles on their left. Gas attacks were noted on 19th and 22nd June, with no casualties. They withstood bombardment from heavy artillery on 22nd June but there is no indication of when George was wounded. Private McElwain (GS 24608) was awarded the Victory and British medals and is remembered at the Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery (**see right**), and also at All Saints Church, Isleworth. In 1924, Lydia married Mark Howard, a police constable and they later moved to Epsom and had a family. Lydia died in 1992, the year after the death of her son, George Henry McElwain.

