

Frederick McElwain



Frederick was born around 1894, the first 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 the building trade 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 2016**) and by 1911, to 4 Castle Place, off South Street. Frederick 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. 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. George Henry married Lydia Clements in 1915 and served with the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment, and 32nd Battalion) and died in June 1916 in Belgium, only six weeks after going to the front and two months after the birth of his child, George Henry. 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.



Frederick died on the Somme but his body was never found and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Monument. The exact date of his death is therefore unknown. The war diary for the 20th battalion, Royal Fusiliers, shows no action on 13 July 1916, the official date of his death. The battalion were near Givenchy until 8th July when they were relieved by 1st Herts. They moved to billets in Annezin until 10th July and they then moved on, by train, to Poulainville and Vecquemont on 11th. They marched to Buire sur L'Ancre on 12th and the diary notes they "awaited orders" on 13th July. They moved again several times but the 1st recorded action was on 20th and 21st July when they were part of 19th Brigade attack at High Wood. Several officers and 375 other ranks were recorded as dead, wounded or missing when they withdrew back to Buire on 21st July. Private McElwain (S2131) is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, **see above**, as well as at All Saints, Church Street, Isleworth He also received the British War and Victory medals.