

John Charles Pegrum



John Charles Pegrum was born in Stratford in 1893, and his birth was registered in West Ham in the 4th Quarter. His father, Charles John Pegrum (1857-1941) was born in North Weald, Essex and he worked as a plate layer in 1891, an electric works labourer in 1901, a coal porter in 1911, and a night watchman at a local shop, and retired pensioner in 1939. His parents had married in 1881, and their wedding was registered in West Ham in the 4th Quarter. Eliza Martin, Charles's mother, (1860-1928) was born in Chingford and baptised on 4th March 1860 there too. Her father was Charles Martin and on the 1881 census, Eliza, aged 21, was a servant and cook in Finsbury. They had two surviving children: John Charles (known as Charles, 1893-1915) and his older sister Edith Eliza (1890-1961). The family were living locally at 24 Colegrave Road, Stratford East in 1901 and also 1911.

Charles was a junior clerk at a grocers in 1911. That same year, his sister Eliza Ellen was working as a kitchen maid at 11 Ashburn Gardens Kensington. Interestingly, she was confirmed, aged 21, in June 1911, giving the same address, at St Jude's Church in Kensington. In 1914, 3rd Quarter, she married Francis Edward Braley in West Ham. Francis worked as a coal porter in 1901, and a carpenter and joiner in 1911; his father, born in Chiswick, worked in the brewing trade. By 1918, both Eliza and Francis were on the Electoral Register and living at 3 Worple Road, Isleworth. After her mother's death in 1928, her father Charles John Pegrum, also moved to Isleworth to live with his daughter and is recorded at that address on the 1939 Register. Francis Braley died in 1932 and Edith married Robert Oswald Henry in 1946, in Brentford, 4th Quarter.

Very few of Charles's military records have survived; many of these were destroyed as a result of bomb damage in the 2nd World War. We do know that he enlisted in London, had the regimental number of 11803 and quickly rose to the rank of Corporal in the 10th Battalion of the Gloucestershire



Regiment. He first served abroad in France on 4th October 1915. Nine days later, on 13th October 1915, he was killed in action and commemorated on the Loos Memorial, see above right, on panels 60-64. The memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay

According to The Long, Long Trail, the 10th Battalion of the Gloucestershire (see left for its regimental badge) formed at Bristol in September 1914 as part of K3 and was attached to as Army Troops to the 26th Division. The Battalion moved to Salisbury Plain but by November 1914 was in billets in Cheltenham. It returned to Salisbury Plain in April 1915 and landed in France on 8th August 1915. On 17th August 1915, it transferred to the 1st Brigade in the 1st Division. The

Battalion was heavily involved in the Battle of Loos (25 September- 8 October 1915), one of the first major engagements of the New Army units and casualties were very high. The French and British tried to break through the German defences in Artois and Champagne. The British made a final attack on 13 October, which failed due to a lack of hand grenades. It is likely that Charles was killed in action during this attack; his death was reported later as 'presumed'. He received three medals posthumously: the 1915 Star, The Victory and the British War Medal. His father Charles John, was his beneficiary in his Soldier's Effects. We assume that Charles's older sister, Eliza Ellen, would have put his name forward for the Isleworth Memorial to honour his name locally; we know that she was living at 3 Worple Road Isleworth from at least 1918.

