

Henry George Purver



Born on 3rd May, 1891, Henry lived at 4 Winkworth Cottages, Linkfield Road Isleworth. By 1901 the family had moved to 24 Grainger Road.



Henry's father, William Richard Thomas Purver, originally from Chiswick was a carman, working for a builder, his mother, Honora, was from Sunbury. Henry's brother, William (1884-1957) then aged 16, was a baker's errand boy and in 1916, a soldier with the Royal Fusiliers; he had a brother John (1889-1968), then aged 12, and four sisters: Hilda, 7; Edith, 5; Irene, 3 and Norah, 1. Henry's grandmother, Mary Mahoney, aged 78 from Ireland was also living with them. By 1911, Henry, now 20, is working as a reader in a newspaper office. His sister, Norah, is using her middle name of Daisy and he has a new sister, Ethel Sarah who is now 8. His grandmother is still living with them and lists her age as 93!

Henry played for Brentford Football Club for five or six seasons before his active war service, Reports in the Middlesex Chronicle listed his matches at home and away including on November 13th 1915, a fiercely fought away match by the Sportsman's Battalion at Nottingham the previous Saturday, where Henry scored a goal. He also played for Oxford City and other Midland clubs.

On 17th October, 1915, Henry married Margaret Clifford at St Bridget's Church in Isleworth. According to the Parliamentary and Parochial Electors' Records, Henry occupied a first floor furnished bedroom at 24 Grainger Road (*see left for a photo of the same property in 2016*) for which he paid 17 shillings a week for board and lodging to his landlady (who was his mother).

Henry enlisted in Hounslow into the London Regiment of the 24th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers in July 1915, before that he worked as a reporter on 'The Times'. He was Private SP/3728 (2nd Sportsman's Battalion). He suffered from a gas attack shortly after enlisting but returned to the front after a long period at home. He saw further active service from 13th April 1916 until he was killed on 31st July, 1916 in Delville Wood, Somme. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial on Pier and Face 8C, 9A and 16A. In his obituary in the Middlesex Chronicle, on August 19th and 26th 1916, it reported that 'The game of football has lost an ardent and clever devotee and Isleworth a most popular and charming fellow'. He was well known in amateur football circles and 'had latterly gained greater prominence particularly as a prolific goal getter in the centre forward position in the Brentford Football Team.'

Henry is also remembered at St Bridget's Church, Isleworth. His widow, Margaret remarried in December 1920 in Richmond to Ernest Jenks. His sister, Edith, went to Wellington, New Zealand on 24th July, 1914 and his sister Irene married George Ham in January 1916.



Above, the Memorial at Brentford Football Club includes the name of Private Henry George Purver.

This photo of Harry was a card he sent to his sister, Hilda, a month before his marriage. It is included with the permission of his family