



## James William Henry Roach (2 April 1878- 12 March 1915)

James was born in Jersey in the Channel Islands in 1878. He grew up on Jersey with his parents John and Matilda Roach (nee Le Feuvre)) and his older brother John, born 1872, older sister Matilda born 1875 and younger sister Edith, born in 1881. His father worked as a carter. In 1891 James, Edith and his parents were living together in St Lawrence on Jersey.

However, by 1901, James, now aged 24, was living with his married brother and his brother's family in the same area. At that time James and his brother John were both working as Journeyman Gardeners. By 1911 James had moved to Isleworth and was lodging with the Pulsford family at 32 Loring Road. He was working as a Domestic Gardener.



32 Loring Road, Isleworth

James enlisted in the Bedfordshire Regiment in 1914 and served as a Private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. He was sent to France in November 1914. On 8-9<sup>th</sup> March 1915 James' Battalion was in billets in Laventie, Belgium before going to the Frontline on 10<sup>th</sup> March. Very early on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> March, the allied trenches were rushed by the Germans. At 7am that day part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment made two attacks to attempt to re-capture the ground lost. However, the whole party was either killed or wounded. Then an officer with eight men of the Bedfordshire Grenade section advanced along one of the trenches. They were followed by a platoon. After one or two grenades had been thrown nearly 50 German troops surrendered to the allies. Part of the Battalion escorted the prisoners back and another part was sent forward to consolidate the position. Two machine guns were put in position near the captured trench area after dark. Losses were heavy that day with 15 killed, 70 wounded and 5 missing.

Among the dead was James who was killed in action on 12 March 1915 at the age of 37. He is remembered on the Le Touret Memorial in the Pas de Calais region of France and also at All Saints, St Bridget's and St John's Churches in Isleworth.

At the time of his death James' next of kin was his elder brother John, who was still living in Jersey. Two of James' nephews also fought in the war. One of John's sons, John Francis Henry Roach, enlisted and served in the Royal Jersey Garrison Artillery and later, in the Royal Engineers. James' sister Matilda married Albert Henry Balston in the Channel Islands in 1895. Their son, Clarence Albert Francis Balston also enlisted and served both with the 19<sup>th</sup> London Regiment and the Machine Gun Corps. Both of James' nephews survived the war. James' sister Matilda died at 30 Twickenham Road, Isleworth in August 1936.

Campaign :-		1914		(A) Where decoration was earned.	
				(B) Present situation.	
Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Roll on which included (if any)	
			MEDAL	ROLL	PAGE
(A) ROACH	Bedf. R.	PTE	38615	VICTOR	K/2/104 119
(B) JCH.				BRITISH	an 106
Action taken				14 STAR K/2/2 106	
				Clasp - 1V 5776/C/A 25 20 Clasp 1/303. H. in A.	
QUALIFYING DATE.				10.11.14 Clasp 1/303.	
(6 34 46) W234-HP5990 500,000 4/19 HWV(P240) K608				[OVER.	

Medal Index Card for James Roach