



Edwin Heaton Shields (22 April 1889 – 29 October 1918)

Edwin was the son of Edwin Colchester and Alice Shields (nee Reynolds) who married on Portsea Island, Hampshire in 1887. Edwin senior and Alice were both born in Portsmouth and Edwin junior, who was their only son, was also born there in 1889.

By the time Edwin junior was aged 9 the family had moved from Hampshire to west London and he was admitted to St Dunstan's Road School in Hammersmith on 6 March 1899. By 1901 when son Edwin was 11 years old, the family were living at 29 Waldeck Road, Chiswick. Father Edwin was employed as an Insurance agent at that time. By 1911 the family were living at 20 Castle Road, Isleworth. Son Edwin was working as a Grocer's assistant at the age of 21 and his father was employed as a general Labourer. In 1914 Edwin married Ellen Bailey in Brentford. They had one son, Roy Edwin Colchester Shields, in January 1915.

Edwin joined A company of the 2nd Battalion of The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). He became a Lance Corporal. In November 1917 his Battalion was moved from France to Italy to strengthen Italian resistance. In mid October 1918 they were billeted in Treviso. From there the Battalion marched until 23 October, when they reached a position south of Maserada where they prepared for battle. On 26 October the Battalion advanced across a pontoon bridge which had been constructed over the Piave River to the island of Papadopoli. Over the next two days the Battalion, along with the South Staffordshire and Border Regiments, gained ground. On 29 October the 2nd Battalion formed the advance guard which involved crossing a bridge over a river that was heavily defended by enemy machine guns. Eventually the 2nd Battalion forced a passage across the bridge and initially there was little opposition and they managed to advance 500 yards.



20 Castle Road, Isleworth



Footbridge over the River Piave, Italy 27 October 1918 © (IWM (Q26734))

Then enemy resistance stiffened and hostile machine gun fire slowed progress but despite this, that day the village of Cimetta was captured.

Edwin was killed in action on 29 October 1918 at the age of 30.

He died in Italy less than two weeks before the end of the war and was buried at the Tezze British Cemetery, Treviso Province, Veneto.

His wife Ellen was the sole beneficiary of his personal effects. Ellen did not re-marry and in 1939 she was living at 83 Hounslow Road, Twickenham while working as a civil servant. Her son Roy was living with her and was employed as a Depot Assistant in Passenger Road Transport. Roy married Maud Hyatt in Brentford in 1946.