

**Frank Simpson** was born in Birmingham. His father, Benjamin, was born in Staffordshire and was a Licensed Victualler by trade. Frank's mother was born in Somerset - it would be interesting to know how this couple had met! The Simpsons had two boys Frank in 1882 and Harry in 1883. At the turn of the century Frank's father is now recorded as a 'milk seller'. Frank is a shop assistant and his brother a Carriage Builder.



The 1911 Census tells us that Frank (29) was now working as a Brewer's Traveller. We can suppose that there was more work for Frank around west London. He is living at St Georges Terrace in St John's Road Isleworth, with his wife Helen Emma (nee Campbell) and his three young children, Frank (5), Christina(2) and new-born baby Norman Richard. Interestingly this Census records that Frank and Helen had already been married for six years. In fact, they were married in Brentford in June 1916. Frank enlisted in the 9th Battalion of Royal Fusiliers in Hounslow, but we don't know when. This may have been in 1914. However given the young age of his children and the tragic loss of their youngest boy Norman in 1915, it is more probable that Frank enlisted or was conscripted in 1916. Frank would have been engaged in the Battles of Albert, Pozieres, and Le Transloy.

April 9<sup>th</sup> 1917 was a bitterly cold Easter Monday. The 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers, acting as a supporting battalion, began moving forwards at 7.30 am - 100 yards every 4 minutes – movement known as 'a creeping barrage'. The Germans were heavily entrenched using vicious wire and machine guns. Frank would have been in the thick of it. His battalion was successful in gaining many enemy trenches that day, they captured two machine guns and had taken 220 prisoners, but the battle had also taken Frank's life – he was killed in action at The First Battle of the Scarpe.

Frank and Helen's daughter Christina Madge married Thomas Osborne at the Holy Trinity Church, Richmond in 1930. His surviving son Frank Donald married Vera Barnet in Ealing in 1955.

Frank (reg. no. 36812) is buried in a tiny cemetery (with only 54 WW1 burials) called Bunyan's Cemetery in the village of Tilloy-Les-Mofflaines which was re-captured from the Germans on the day that Frank was killed. Frank's grave (RefA5) inscription says -



"I have fought a good fight"

