



Bert James Small (Q1 1898 – 10 October 1918)

Bert was the son of Joseph James and Frances Sarah Elizabeth Small (nee Smith) who married in 1892 in Brentford. Mrs Small was usually known by her second name, Sarah. Joseph was born in Poplar, East London and his wife Sarah in Stoney Stratford in Buckinghamshire.

Joseph and Sarah had 4 boys: William George (1895), Bert James (1898), Arthur Stanley (1903) and George John (1906). William George died as an infant. All the children were born in Brentford.

In 1901 the family were living at 98 High Street, Brentford which at that time was The Barleycorn public house. Joseph's occupation was a publican. The pub had been run by Joseph's grandparents for many decades. However, by 1911 the family were living at Brentford End and Joseph was working as a House Painter. Sadly Bert's younger brother George John died aged 6 in 1912.

In World War 1 Bert joined the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment and was a Private in the 6th Battalion. His father Joseph also enlisted in October 1915, at the age of 46, when the family were living at 4 Brickfield Yard, Brentford End. Joseph served in the Army Service Corp, the Labour Corp and then transferred to the newly formed Royal Flying Corp in January 1918. He was finally discharged in 1920.



Cap Badge of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment reproduced by kind permission of the National Army Museum

Meanwhile Bert served in the 6th Battalion Leinster Regiment until it was disbanded in France in September 1918. He was then among 245 men of the Leinsters to be attached to the 5th Battalion Connaught Rangers. On 9 October this regiment, with others, was advancing on Le Cateau in northern France. They were subject to shelling so had to dig in for the night. On 10th they moved forward along the main road through Maurois and Reumont and took up a post west of Le Cateau where they came under heavy shelling and suffered casualties. At 17.00 on 10th they received orders to attack Le Cateau and take the high ground beyond. This was achieved but that day 2 were killed, 3 died of wounds, 13 were missing, 105 wounded and 19 were gassed.

Bert was killed in action on 10 October 1918 at the age of 20. He is remembered on the Memorial at the Vis-en-Artois British Cemetery, Haucourt in the Nord Pas de Calais, France.



At the time of Bert's death his parents were living at 4 Field Lane, Brentford. His mother Sarah was Bert's sole legatee.