

George Weston

George's mother and father, Ellen and John were both born in the village of Isleworth. Ellen lived with her family (who were originally from Ireland) in Lower Square and at some point in time George's father John, also lived in the Square as a 'border'. They met and married in 1893 and moved to Castle Place Isleworth. John originally worked as an agricultural labourer but later in 1901 he is listed as a bricklayer's labourer.



George was the second son born to John and Ellen in 1895. They had seven more children. In the 1911 census, this large family were living at 29 Magdala Road and, George was working as an errand boy for a wine shop. This same year, George enlisted. Maybe he had always wanted to be a soldier or maybe the regular pay might help feed the family and clothe his many younger brothers and sisters. George's scant army records show that he enlisted on 5th Dec 1911. We don't know what happened to George in the next two and a half years, however when war was declared in August 1914 his Battalion were stationed in Cork serving with 17th Brigade in 6th Division. It mobilised to Cambridge then Newmarket and on the 8th September, George's battalion left Southampton on the SS Michigan arriving at St Nazaire on the 9/10th. **George would never see his family or his country again.**

The 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade then marched miles to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), arriving during the Battle of Aisne on 19th Sep. This was possibly George's first taste of war but fortunately it appears that his Division and Brigade were in 'General Reserve'. The battle raged on and the enemy were pushed back - there were 2200 British casualties in a couple of days. Together with French troops, the BEF then moved towards Armentieres where the Germans were in retreat. George would have been in this mass of troops. The distance was great and the roads/pathways were strewn with partly burnt dead horses, hastily dug graves and abandoned vehicles. There was very little food for this army to march on, and their feet must have been sore and painful. There was also a bitterly cold wind too. The soldier slept where they could. Artillery and sniper fire continued throughout this long, dangerous march. The Battle of Armentieres began on 13th October and the town was captured by the British forces on 17th. However, there were several German counter-attacks. On Tuesday 20th October the Division was attacked across its whole front "they sent over Black Marias and shrapnel at a terrific pace. They fell all around us and the din was deafening. Half a dozen houses within 50 yards of us were soon blazing. All we could do was lie on the floor and wait for our fate. From all sides bullets were plunging into the trench".



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This is where George Weston from Isleworth was killed in action fighting for his country.

George is remembered on the Ploegsteert Memorial in Belgium. This memorial is dedicated to the missing soldiers of World War 1 - the majority of whom did not die in major battles but lost their lives in the day to day trench warfare. He is also remembered at St Bridget's Church in Isleworth.