



Casualty Biographies of WWI

North Bradley

Edwin Stephen Ford

Edwin was born in Aberkenfig, Glamorganshire in the March Quarter of 1886. The son of Alfred A. and Elizabeth Ford (nee Clark). He was baptised on the 21st February 1886 at St. Illtyd, Newcastle, Tondy, Bridgend, Glamorganshire. His father is recorded as being an engine driver resident of The Waun in the parish records.

The 1881 Census shows the family living at 3 Penny Street, Melcombe Regis, Dorset with 6 eldest children.

Sometime between 1881 and 1891 the family had moved to the Bridgend area of South Wales.

The 1891 Census for West Street, Higher Newcastle, Bridgend, Glamorganshire records the family as follows:- Alfred A. Ford, Head, 40, Railway Engine Driver, Born in Radipole, Dorset; Elizabeth A., Wife, 41, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; George A., Son, 19, Railway Engine Fireman, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Charles H., Son, 18, Sawyer, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Jessie A., Daughter, 16, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Agnes E., Daughter, 15, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Frederick A., Son, 14, Engine Fitter, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Arthur E. Son, 12, Scholar, Born in Melcombe Regis; Elizabeth A., Daughter, 9, Scholar, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Edith H., Daughter, 8, Scholar, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Walter E., Son, 6, Scholar, Born in Melcombe Regis, Dorset; Edwin S., Son, 5, Scholar, Born in Aberkenfig, Glamorganshire; Mabel B., Daughter, 2, Born in Aberkenfig, Glamorganshire; Harry J., Son, 1, Born in Aberkenfig, Glamorganshire

The 1901 Census at 26 Westbourne Road, Trowbridge list the family as:- Alfred A., Head, 50, In Charge of Boiler Washers for the GWR (Great Western Railway); Elizabeth, Wife, 50; Elizabeth, Daughter, 19; Edith, Daughter, 18, Dressmaker; Walter, Son, 16, Mattress Worker; Edwin, Son, 15, Cloth Worker; Mabel, Daughter, 12; Harry, Son, 10; Florence, Daughter, 8, Born in Glamorganshire

On 4th February 1903 at age 17 years and 1 month, Edwin Stephen Ford joined the 62nd and 99th Foot, Duke of Edinburgh's Wiltshire Regiment and allocated a service Number of 7110.

In the March Quarter of 1907 in the Pembrokeshire Registration District Edwin married Annie Evans.

In the 1901 Census at Woodmarsh, North Bradley the couple are recorded as follows:-
Edwin, Head, Labourer on the GWR, 25, Born in Tondy, Glamorganshire; Annie, Wife, 21, Born in Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire; Alfred, Son, 1, Born in Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire.

We also learn from the 1901 census that the couple had been married for 4 years, that an older child had died and that the couple lived in a 2 up two down property.

During WWI Edwin rejoined his previous regiment (The Wiltshire Regiment). He enlisted at Trowbridge and his birth place was given as Tondy, Glamorganshire and his residence as Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire.

The 1st Battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment left for France only 9 days after the declaration of war. It can be assumed that Edwin was shipped out with the first wave of troops since he had previously served probably with the Territorials.

The 1st Wiltshires took part in the Battle of Mons 10 days after landing in France, followed by the 'Retreat from Mons', a fighting withdrawal with a number of significant actions along a route which ended on the outskirts of Paris. Once the line stabilised the battalion took part in the First Battle of Ypres and Neuve Chapelle by which time they had lost 26 officers and 1000 men, the equivalent of a whole battalion.

Edwin is recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as having been killed in action on the 31st October 1914

The Battalion War Diary for October 30th and 31st do not record any deaths on those days, but a determined attack in their sector by the Germans had started on 25th October. This was probably what became known as the Battle of La Bassée, one of many battles which made up First Ypres. It was a time of frequent movement, so it would not be unusual for the individuals lost to not be confirmed for some days.

Edwin has no known grave and is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France and his name appears on panels 33 and 34. His name also appears on the Trowbridge Town War Memorial; Although there is no Edwin recorded on the North Bradley (St. Nicholas) Memorial we assume that the casualty Edward Ford which is etched on the brass tablet should have been Edwin since we can find no trace at this point in time of an Edward Ford. Edwin also appears in the Trowbridge (St. James) and North Bradley Sections of the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book which is held by Salisbury Cathedral, Salisbury. He also has an entry in the Trowbridge Roll of Honour Book 1914-1918.

In the June Quarter of 1919 in the Pembroke Registration District Sarah Ann Ford married Albert F. Wicks. This is confirmed by the record held by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission where Sarah is recorded as Sarah Ann Wicks (formerly Ford) of 15 Brewery Street, Pembroke Dock. It would appear that the couple went on to have three further children:- Margaret E. D. Wicks born in 1920; Charles H. Wicks, born in 1921 and Albert F. V. Wicks born in 1923 all in the Pembroke Registration District.

