



WWI Casualty

Lance Corporal 6311 - Eli White

Eli White was born in Tockenham in 1887, his birth being registered in the September Quarter of that year in the Cricklade Registration District. He was the eldest son of Ernest and Dinah Emily White (nee Holliday).

In the 1891 census at Box Bush Cottage, Tockenham Wick, Tockenham the family are recorded as:- Ernest White, aged 26, an agricultural labourer, born in Tockenham; Emily his wife, aged 23, born in Lyneham; Ellen, their daughter, aged 2, born in Tockenham and Eliza Ann, another daughter, aged 1 also born in Tockenham. Eli is not recorded with his parents.

Eli was in fact recorded with his maternal grandparents, Richard and Ann Holliday of Chippenham Road, Lyneham, Richard aged 51 and Ann aged 53. Eli is aged 3.

In the 1901 census once more Eli is recorded with his grandparents still resident in Lyneham. Eli is given as age 13 and working as a horse boy on a farm.

His parents are recorded at The Banks, Lyneham with children Ellen, 12, Eliza 10 and Alfred 7.

On 20th October 1902 he attested to the Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire Regiment) 62nd & 99th Foot. His age on joining is recorded as 17 years and 9 months (there is an obvious age discrepancy here but it wasn't unusual for young boys to give false birth details to join the services). His physical description tells us that he was 5' 6" tall, weighed 110lbs., 30½ to 32½ inch chest span, fresh complexion, eyes and hair brown and he had no distinguishing marks. He attested in Devizes and did his training early in 1903. He was assigned to the Wiltshire Regiment with a service number of 7047 on 15th June 1903. He named his father Ernest of the Banks, Lyneham as next of kin, and also named his younger brother Alfred.

Further research suggests that Eli had married Lily Graham in the March Quarter of 1906 in Alton, Hampshire and that Lily was pregnant at the time of his death.

The 1911 census at the Banks, Bradenstoke records his parents Ernest and Emily with children Alfred now 17 and Herbert aged 4. I can find no entry for Eli (possibly he was serving overseas).

Eli was killed in action on 16th September 1914. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Ferte-Sous-Jouarre Memorial, Seine et Marne, France.

He is also commemorated on the Lyneham WWI War Memorial situated in Lyneham Library which was at one time the Memorial Hall. The War Memorial in Tockenham lists an E. White as having served during WWI it is probable that this is Eli.

According to the publication Soldiers Who Died in the Great War, Eli is recorded as being resident of Cosham, Hampshire and enlisted at Devizes.

Cambridgeshire Family History Society has published a transcript of an entry in a Cambridgeshire parish register (probably St. Mary's, Dullingham) which reads as follows:-

Nancy Louvain White, born 19th February 1915, baptised 23rd May 1915, parents Eli and Lily White of Cross Green, Dullingham. Eli is recorded as being a Lance Corporal of the Wiltshire Regiment.