



Ernest William Tebbutt

Ernest William Tebbutt was born in Great Oakley on 17th March 1894. He was baptised later on 14th December 1896, the same day as his brother Arthur George Richard Tebbutt.

His father John Tebbutt was from Great Oakley, his mother Sarah Ann Tebbutt (nee Mackness) from Cottingham. John and Sarah were to have 14 children in total, although one died in infancy.

The Family

In 1901 the family were living in Great Oakley. John Tebbutt was employed as a railway platelayer. With John and Sarah were their children Albert (a boot warehouse assistant), Florence, Edith, Joseph Herbert, Ernest, Arthur, Ethel and Emily.

Ernest attended Great Oakley School.

By 1911 Ernest was employed as a roadman by the county council. His brothers Joseph and Arthur both worked on farms. Ernest had five more sisters living at the family home Elsie (8), Ivy (6), Ada (5), Thelma (2) and Eva (10 months).

On 26th June 1915 Private Ernest W Tebbutt of the Grenadier Guards married Emma Wilkinson in Chelsea, London. Emma was the daughter of Mr and Mrs Jabez Wilkinson of Corby Glen. Jabez Wilkinson was the landlord of the "Woodhouse Arms", Corby Glen.

Military Service

Lance Corporal (20104) Ernest Tebbutt served in the 2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards. He arrived in France on 20th October 1915.

On 4th August 1914 the 2nd Battalion had been stationed in Chelsea as part of the 4th (Guards) Brigade of the 2nd Division. The battalion mobilised and arrived in Le Havre on 15th August 1914. On 20th August 1915 the 2nd Battalion transferred to the 1st Guards Brigade of the Guards Division.

Lance Corporal Ernest Tebbutt is recorded as being killed in action on 25th September 1916. The battalion as part of the XIV Corps. were engaged in the Battle of Morval (25-28 September 1916) on the Somme.



The diary entry for the 24th September (the day before Ernest's death) records the 2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards relieved the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards on the front line opposite Les Boeufs village on the Ginchy-Les Boeufs road.

On the 25th & 26th September 1916 the battalion diary recorded that the battalion suffered heavy losses. Four officers were killed with 5 others wounded. Sixty-seven Non-Commissioned Officers and men killed, 175 wounded, 11 died of wounds and 77 were missing.

On the night of the 26th September the battalion was relieved by the 2nd Battalion, Irish Guards and marched back to Citadel Camp on the way south of Bernafay Woods.

Lance Corporal Ernest Tebbutt is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial.

Thiepval Memorial

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.

In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918.

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial.



The memorial, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, in the presence of the President of France, on 1 August 1932.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Grantham Journal
Mr C Wesley

Lest We Forget

Ernest William Tebbutt
of the Grenadier Guards

d. 25th September 1916

It is known that at least two of Ernest's brothers served during the War. Albert served as a Lance Corporal in the Lincolnshire Regiment & Royal Army Service Corps. Arthur Tebbutt served in the Labour Corps.

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