



Name, Rank & Regiment of Soldier:

Ashworth, Leonard

2nd Lieut. 13th Battalion

York & Lancaster Reg

No: 873992

Formerly: No. 26875 in the Sherwood Foresters

| Date of birth | Date Killed-in-Action | Age |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1894 | April 12 th 1918 | 24 |

Background: Leonard Ashworth

Leonard Ashworth was born in 1894 to William Hilton Ashworth (born 1866) and Clara Hannah Ashworth (née Hoe) born Radcliffe 1867.

William Ashworth was a cotton mill manager and in 1901 the family lived in Netherfield a village near Carlton on the outskirts of Nottingham. The children were George (8), Leonard (6), Elsie (4) and Lilian (2). Clara's sister, Florence Hoe, born Derby 1881, was living with them and working as a cotton winder. In 1911 there were further children Florence (9), Arthur (5) and Evelyn (3) all born in Netherfield. They lived in 'Mill House', Victoria Road, Netherfield, a house with ten rooms, indicating a fairly comfortable lifestyle.

It was Leonard's sister, Elsie, who provided a link to Collingham. In 1917 she married William Henry Would (1891-1953). Would was from Langford and the pair appear to have worked at The Lodge on Newark Road after the war. Elise later married Ralph Thompson and is buried in All Saints' Churchyard. Another link was their father who appears to have run the Royal Oak for a brief time in 1915.

In 1911 Leonard was an insurance clerk. His address on enlistment was 50 Manor Street, Sneinton, Nottingham. An 'L. Ashworth' appears as a member of Collingham Cricket 1st team in 1914 (see T Frecknall's book p 7).

Military History: 2nd Lieut L. Ashworth

In WW1 Leonard Ashworth first served in the Notts and Derby (Sherwood Foresters) Regiment, Regimental number 26875. His exact date of enlistment is unknown¹.

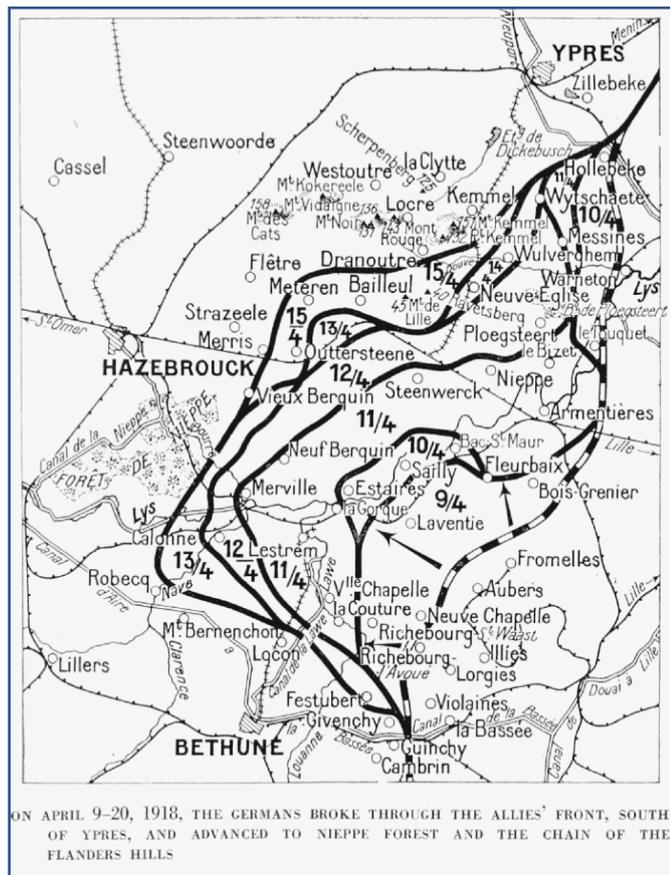
According to his entry on the Nottinghamshire County Council Roll of Honour website he volunteered for service and went to France on March 6th 1916, rising to the rank of sergeant. Leonard was later sent home for officer training and received a commission in the 13th Bn. York & Lancaster Regt.

In 1918 he was a 2nd Lieutenant in the York & Lancaster Regiment (the original 'Barnsley Pals' battalion) serving in the sector south of Ypres, Belgium.

His battalion (attached to the 94th/31st Division) was involved in the line during March and April 1918² (part of the 'Spring Offensive' known as the Battle of the Lys).

April 12th

On the day Leonard Ashworth was reported missing, his battalion was somewhere south of Outtersteene (see map). Along with the 18th Durham Light Infantry and the 15th West Yorkshires, they were caught by Germans 'amassing in front of them' at 7.30 am as they were attempting to withdraw. According to a diary account from the 18th Durham Light Infantry it became obvious they were in peril. At one stage they were fired upon by their own artillery. Instructed to 'hold the line' the three battalions held on for over an hour until they found



Above: Outtersteene is in the middle of the map with the railway line cutting through it.

¹ His attestation paper does not appear on databases search so far. 40% of papers were destroyed during WW2

² As was Private Albert Hammond (see Hammond, A. entry)

themselves, 400 strong, spread out across a railway line with Ashworth's York and Lancaster battalion in the middle. This left them vulnerable and sure enough the Germans began 'enfilading' the exposed troops.

The commanding officers ordered the various Companies to 'work round' and head North to their HQ at Merris, taking shelter behind thick hedgerows. It appears this was enough to reach safety and regroup.

It is unknown where 2nd Lt Ashworth exactly met his fate. He was reported as 'wounded and missing' on that day. His body was never recovered.

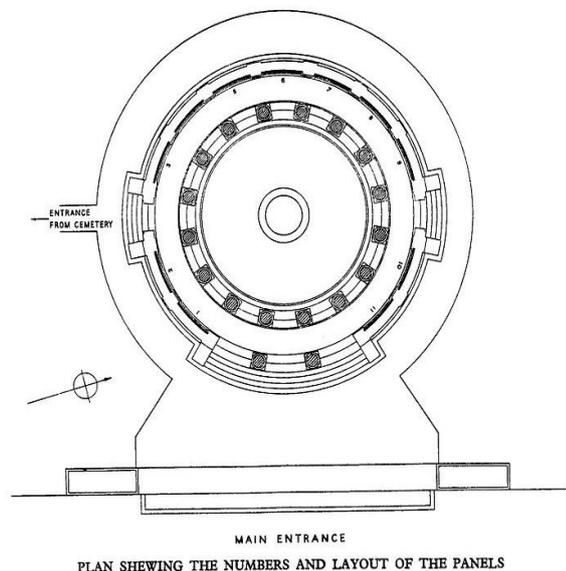
2nd/Lieut. L. Ashworth is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial, Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Belgium. Plot no: Panel 8.

This memorial is to more than 11, 000 British and South African soldiers who served in this sector and have no known grave (although one wonders why he was not commemorated at the nearby Outtersteene Community Extension Cemetery?).

Leonard's mother Clara was granted probate with respect to his will in the sum of £209 in 1920.

His father requested his service medals in 1922. Neither of their two sons' bodies were ever found.

Leonard Ashworth is also commemorated on the WW1 Parishioners' Plaque in All Saints Church, Collingham, the North Collingham War Memorial Cross and the Loggerheads Public House Roll of Honour, Narrow Marsh, Nottingham (now in St Mary's Church near his brother George's memorial).



Above: Plan of the Ploegsteert Memorial. Panel 8 is at '2.00pm'

On the right-hand side. Image c/o CWGC

With thanks to Charlie Stothard for the initial research into L. Ashworth 2014

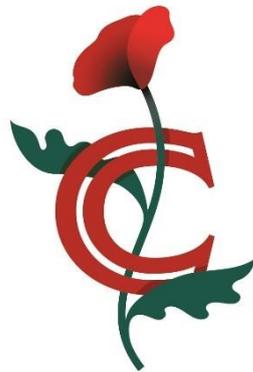
Updated with details of battle and expansions on family background 2018 (HP)

Sources:

- 🕒 Ancestry.co.uk
- 🕒 Find a grave.com
- 🕒 East Trent Genealogy database
- 🕒 Trevor Frecknall 'Collingham and District in The Great War' published in 2015 (limited edition)
- 🕒 Image of Leonard Ashworth courtesy of Trevor Frecknall
- 🕒 Nottinghamshire in the Great War Roll of Honour database

Information about the day Leonard Ashworth was killed from The War Time Memories Project.
<http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/greatwar/allied/battalion.php?pid=1025>

See also Leonard's brother George Ashworth's profile (Killed in Action
October 2nd 1916)



HP 29/3/2018