

## EMINSON, HERBERT - Died 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1918 aged 37

5197 Private, 3/8th Reserve Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Nottingham & Derbyshire Regiment)

203395 Private, 15th Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Regiment)



Photograph courtesy of David Capes.

Herbert was a bachelor, born in March 1881, the son of John Milton Oxley (a pharmaceutical chemist) and Fanny Froment (nee Button from Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire) Eminson of London Road, Earley in Berkshire. His older sister and brother were Gertrude and Robert George (mentioned on the west face of the village memorial.)

The family had another home in St. John's Wood, London and owned Mount House (demolished in the 1970's) on Messingham Road, Scotter.

Herbert qualified as a dispensing chemist and for a time worked in Gloucester as an assistant chemist, where he lived at the home of policeman John Sharrock and his family.

The rest of Herbert's family had moved to live at 11 Alderman's Drive, Peterborough and his father died here in 1912.

At Peterborough, Herbert enlisted into the Army on 18th March 1916 and was described as a Wesleyan, just over 5' 9" tall, weighing 134 pounds with a scar on the left side of his chin. On 30<sup>th</sup> July he was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> /5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, part of 139<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 46<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> North Midland) Division, IX Corps.

In May 1917 he contracted influenza and spent weeks in hospital, rejoining his unit in July. Herbert was granted leave at the end of August 1917.

The Battle of St. Quentin Canal began on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1918. The 46th Division were specially equipped with bridging material with the aim of taking the crossings of the canal at Bellenglise and Riqueval Bridge. They rehearsed the move on the Somme and had life belts, rafts and scaling ladders to climb the 10 feet high walls of the canal. Enemy troops defended the bridges behind barbed wire and machine gun posts. Canal defences had been largely destroyed by heavy artillery and at 8:30am the assault was launched in a mist that helped the attackers. The operation was a success and both bridges were taken.

At 11:20am his Brigade advanced again, accompanied by tanks. Their objectives were reached by 3:30pm and they pushed on and Lehaucourt was cleared by 4 o'clock. Herbert suffered gunshot wounds in the advance of 30<sup>th</sup> September and two days later was admitted to hospital at Rouen.

He died the next day.

In February 1919 Herbert's family were sent his effects. They were listed as:-

*'2 discs, photos, 3 religious books, silver watch, scissors, 2 dentures, wallet, papers, letters, metal big case, purse, note book, 2 pencils, shaving brush, holdall, 2 razors, strop, comb, tooth brush, 2 German notes, certificates, charm.'*

Private Herbert Eminson is buried in Bois Guillaume Communal Cemetery extension near Rouen. PLOT – F. 15. A.

The inscription on his headstone reads:-

*'Steadfast and true'.*

He is also remembered in Scotter churchyard on the gravestone of his Aunt Maria Jane Eminson who died in 1919.

Herbert is one of the four grandsons of Dr. Robert Eminson junior who lost their lives in the Great War. His cousins, Richard

Percival (Percy) & Robert Astley Franklin, are also remembered on the north face of the Memorial. Details of the other cousin, Herbert Luther, are shown in the section 'Others associated with the parish during the Great War.'



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Source: [www.findagrave.com/memorial/19471564/herbert-eminson](http://www.findagrave.com/memorial/19471564/herbert-eminson)