

Lance Corporal Edward Elwy Jones

Edward's great grandparents were John and Anne (née Jones). John was a carpenter and joiner.ⁱ At the time of their son Edward's birth on 23rd April 1828, they were resident in Oswestry, Shropshire. Edward (Edward Elwy Jones' grandfather) was baptised at the Chapel of the Independent Congregational Church of Protestant Dissenters in Arthur Street, Oswestry.ⁱⁱ Like his father, he became a carpenter and joiner.

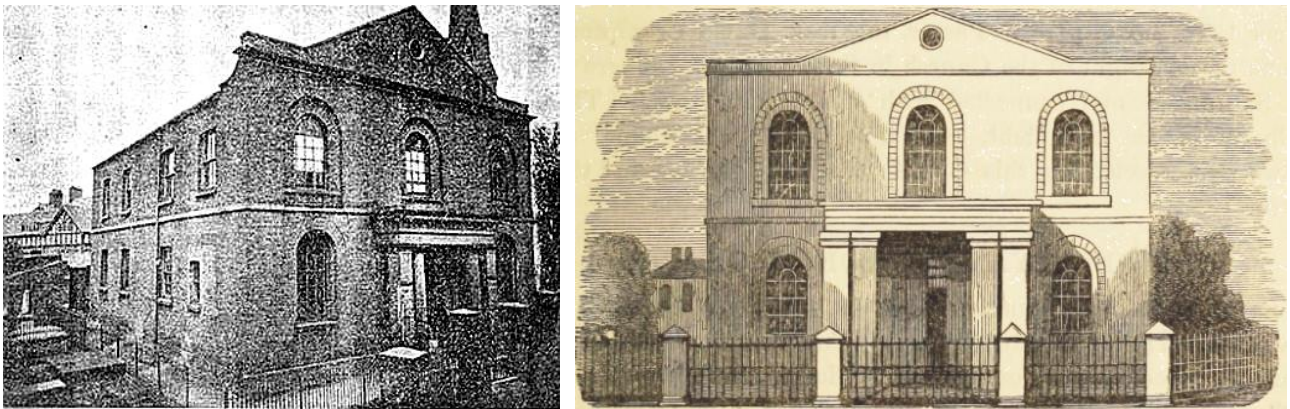


Figure 1: The original 1750 chapel was replaced by the chapel in this photograph on the left which was built in 1829. The picture to the right is a drawing of the chapel, c 1850

By 1857, Edward had moved to Birmingham where, on 15th May at St Martin's Church in the centre of Birmingham, he married a widow by the name of Mary Williams (née Owen). The marriage certificate documents that they both lived in Macdonald Street in the Highgate area of Birmingham.

1857. Marriage solemnized at <u>the Parish Church in the Parish of Martin Birmingham in the County of Warwick</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
11	May 15	Edward Jones	full	bachelor	carpenter	Macdonald St	John Jones	carpenter
		Mary Williams	full	widow		Macdonald St	John Owen	carpenter
Married in the <u>Parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <u>J. Radgens</u> or after <u>Banns</u> by me,								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,			Edward Jones			Mary Williams		
In the Presence of us,			Henry Gibbins			Elizabeth Jones		

Figure 2: Marriage certificate of Edward Jones to Mary Williams (née Owen)

From 1860, Edward became a minister of the Welsh Baptist Church in Birmingham. The 1861 census confirms that Edward was not only just a carpenter but also a 'local preacher'. The couple resided in No 7 Court, House 7 in Moseley Road, Highgate with

their first-born child, born on 4th May 1858, named Edward (Edward Elwy Jones' father) and a five month old daughter, Elizabeth Ann together with fifteen year old John Williams, Mary's son by her first marriage. Interestingly, Mary's place of birth was recorded as 'America'.

By 1871, Edward and Mary had moved to Landor Street, Saltley. The family had increased to three children with the birth of their their final child, Robert in 1863.

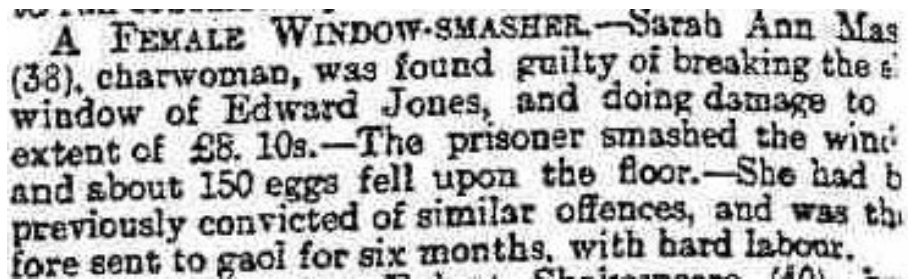
Ten years later, in the 1881 census, Edward had become an 'Insurance Company Collector' and was residing at 44 Arden Road, Saltley with Mary and son Robert,

Mary died on 19th July 1890, age seventy. Edward died aged eighty-seven on 28th September 1895 at Llansilin, Wales, five miles west of Oswestry.

Edward (Edward Elwy Jones' father) married Mary Ann Russell at St David's Church, Bissell Street, Highgate, Birmingham on Christmas Day 1884.

By 1891, Edward had set up business as an 'egg merchant'. Mary and Edward's first home was at 83 Jakeman Road, Balsall Heath. By then they had two children, Gertrude, born on 24th July 1888ⁱⁱⁱ and Nellie Gwynne, born in 1891. Residing with them was Mary's sister, Sarah Russell, who was helping out with the family business as a dairy shop assistant. The business was doing well enough for Edward to employ two domestic servants.

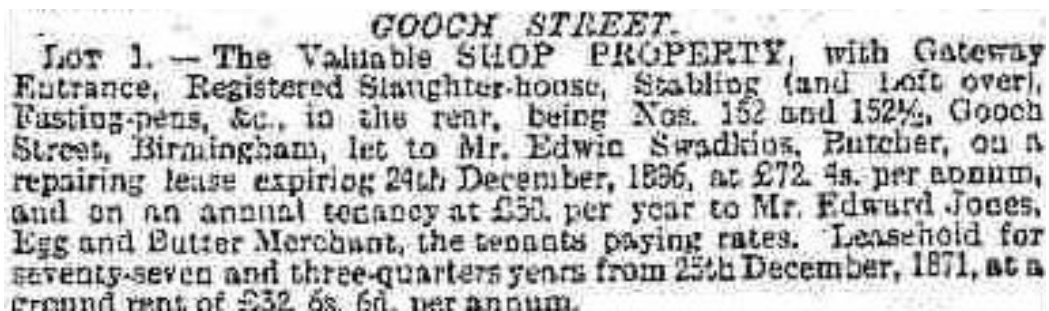
In July 1893, the shop window was smashed by a charwoman, breaking about 150 eggs.



A FEMALE WINDOW-SMASHER.—Sarah Ann Mas (38), charwoman, was found guilty of breaking the window of Edward Jones, and doing damage to extent of £8. 10s.—The prisoner smashed the window and about 150 eggs fell upon the floor.—She had been previously convicted of similar offences, and was therefore sent to gaol for six months, with hard labour.

Figure 3: Birmingham Daily Post 4th July 1893

Edward also appears to be buying and renting out property like this one below in Gooch Street



GOOCH STREET.
Lot 1. — The Valuable SHOP PROPERTY, with Gateway Entrance, Registered Slaughter-house, Stabling (and Loft over), Fasting-pens, &c., in the rear, being Nos. 152 and 152½, Gooch Street, Birmingham, let to Mr. Edwin Swadlow, Butcher, on a repairing lease expiring 24th December, 1896, at £72 4s. per annum, and on an annual tenancy at £50. per year to Mr. Edward Jones, Egg and Butter Merchant, the tenants paying rates. Leasehold for seventy-seven and three-quarters years from 25th December, 1871, at a ground rent of £32 8s. 6d. per annum.

Figure 4: Birmingham Daily Post, 8th December 1894

Edward's businesses were evidently successful as by 1901 he had bought a substantial house, 'Brynhyfryd', 10 Chantry Rd, Moseley, one of the premier roads in the leafy neighbourhood of Moseley. Two further children had been born, Dora Mary in 22nd December 1893 and Edward Elwy in 1895.

In October 1899, while Edward was delivering eggs he was in collision with another trap passing along Jamaica Road, in the old markets area of Birmingham. The injured party, Israel Walton, was awarded £15 in consequence of his injuries and Edward's negligence.

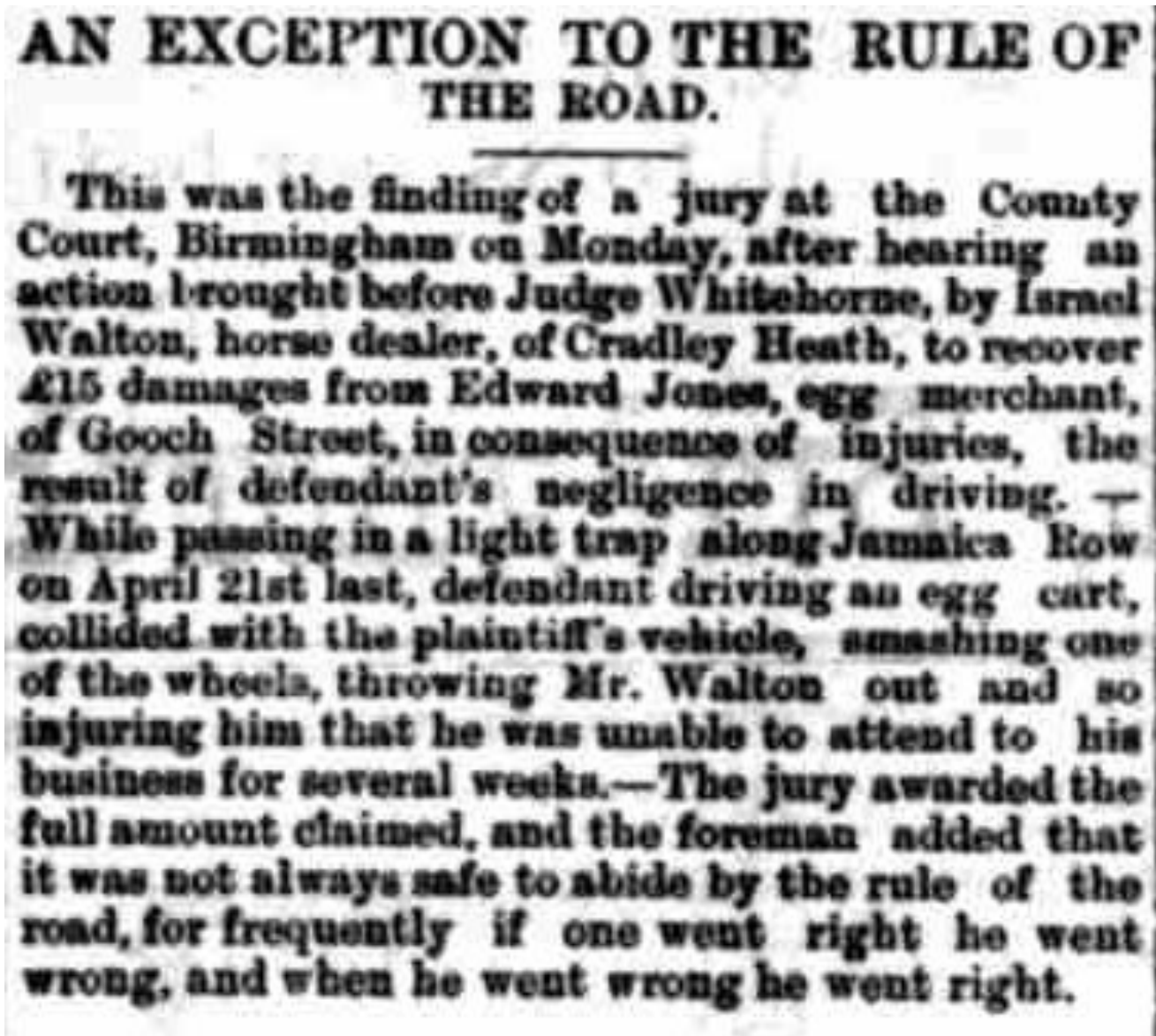


Figure 5: Report of Edwin Jones' collision in Jamaica Row

In 1904, tragedy struck the family with the sudden death of Nellie in Rhyl, aged just thirteen.^{iv}

Edward exhibited a soft side to his character when, at the end of December 1906 after heavy snow from Christmas day to the end of the month, he wrote a letter to the editor

of the Birmingham Mail asking the readers to look out for the birds during this cold spell (see below^v).

PLEA FOR OUR BIRDS.

Sir,—May I ask for thoughtful sympathy for the poor blackbirds, thrushes, robins, sparrows, etc., who, since snow covered the earth in 'the four quarters of the city and suburbs, fly hither and thither, seeking for sustenance and shelter? Yesterday I was much interested in these lovely creatures looking piteously for crumbs of comfort from our tables.—

Yours, etc.,
Brynhyfryd, Moseley.

EDWARD JONES.

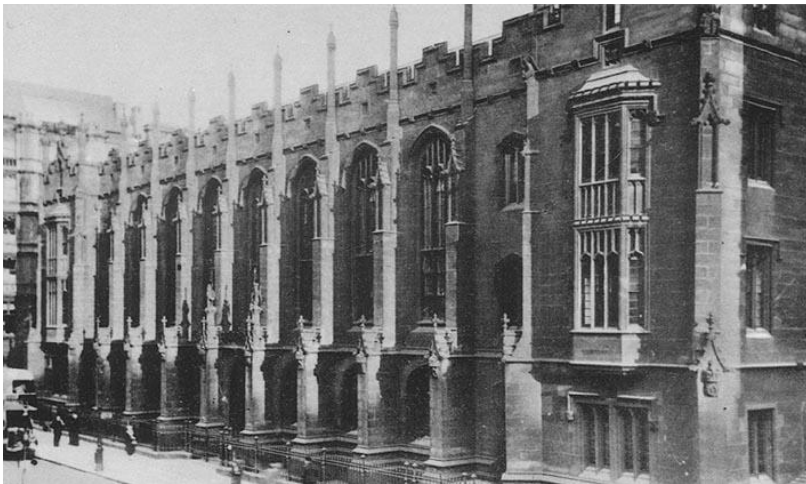


Figure 6: King Edward School, New Street, Birmingham

Edward's only son, Edward Elwy Jones, attended King Edward School, New Street, Birmingham from 1908 to 1912.

When war was declared on 3rd August 1914 Edward was one of the first to enlist in the 3rd Birmingham Pals Battalion which soon became the 16th Royal Warwickshire Regiment (16th Royal Warwicks). He joined as a Private, No 174 in 'A' Coy, Platoon III.^{vi}

The 16th Royal Warwicks was formed at Birmingham in September 1914 by the Lord Mayor and a local committee. It was initially based at Spring Hill College, Moseley, but trained in Sutton Park. In April 1915 the battalion continued its training at Malvern and then at Bolton Hall, Wensleydale on 26th June, where it came under command of 95th Brigade, 32nd Division.

The battalion then undertook a musketry course at Hornsea from 28th July to 5th August before it was transferring to Codford on the Salisbury Plain their final training ground before departure to France.



Figure 7: 'A' Coy, Platoon III, 16th Royal Warwicks. Edward is one of the privates in this photograph

From Cosford the battalion entrained for Folkestone. They landed at Boulogne on 21st November 1915. On Boxing Day, the battalion was transferred to 15th Brigade, 5th Division in the Somme region where it was engaged in various actions on the Western Front.

The Battalion spent a miserable Christmas period in the front line trenches on the Bray Front at Carnoy, during which they sustained eight casualties (four killed and two from wounds the same day). Towards the middle of January 1915 the casualties increased when the Germans, as part of the 'softening up' before their next major assault, shelled the British front lines.

In early February, the 5th Division were on the move and were marched to an area north of Amiens where they remained until 25th February. They were then transferred to XI Corps and moved to Arras. On 4th March the 5th Division had completed the relief of the French. Here, the 16th Royal Warwicks like other Birmingham Battalions were in reserve, alternating with other Warwicks battalions in the front line trenches. When not in the front line, the majority of men were used on mining fatigues, removing spoil in sandbags from the tunnelling operations out of sight of the enemy. During this period the battalion losses were eleven killed and forty-one wounded.

During the first two weeks of the Battle of the Somme commencing on 1st July 1916 the 5th Division remained part of GHQ reserve and in training. Orders then came through unexpectedly to move south to the Somme area and, by the evening of 13th July, they were on their way.

On 27th July, having mainly been in reserve the 16th Royal Warwicks were in action at Longueval and Deville Wood where the creeping barrage was to be used for the first

time. At 08.15 Edward's 'A' Coy together with B' Coy were called up in support of 1st Norfolks for two days at Longueval under continuous shell fire. The 16th Royal Warwicks suffered 267 casualties, fifty-seven killed and forty-five missing.

Following a period of rest, the 16th Royal Warwicks went back in reserve from 24th August 1916.

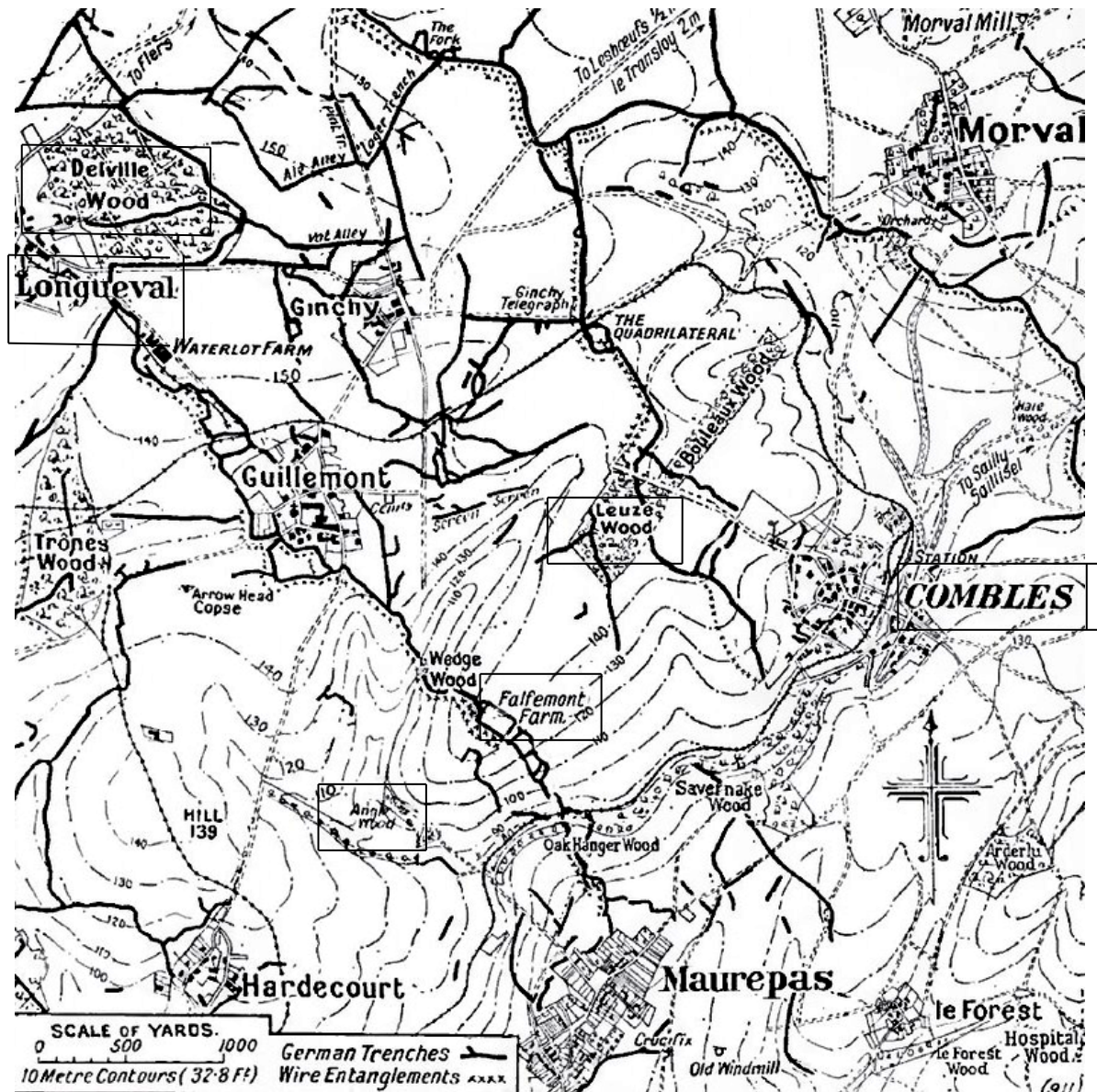


Figure 8: Map showing the area of fighting for the 16th Royal Warwicks in 1916

On 3rd September 1916 the 16th Royal Warwicks were called into action again as part of an attack to secure a spur that overlooked Leuze Woods near Comblès. In the evening two patrols of eighteen men made their way into No Man's Land in order to take and consolidate a strongly fortified German position at Falfemont Farm, an impossible task, retrospectively, for thirty-six men. The following day the German artillery retaliated by heavy bombardment of the Angle Wood area where the 16th Royal Warwicks had

remained in close support. Edward's 'A' Coy together with 'B' Coy and were ordered up to help out the 1st Norfolks, moving from one shell hole to another under heavy fire. As darkness fell the 16th Warwicks started digging in on the south west edge of the farm, building saps towards the German positions. On the morning of the 5th September, the saps were used in the final assault on Falfemont Farm which fell after heavy fighting at close quarters. Sixty-one men were killed and one hundred and ninety-five wounded from the battalion. Those killed during the period of 3rd to 5th September were put down as killed on 3rd September.^{vii} Edward's body was never found and his death date was recorded as 3rd. His name appears on the Thiepval Memorial. He is also commemorated on the WW1 Memorial at the Baptist Church in Oxford Road, Moseley now the Calvary Church of God in Christ and the King Edward School WW1 Memorial.

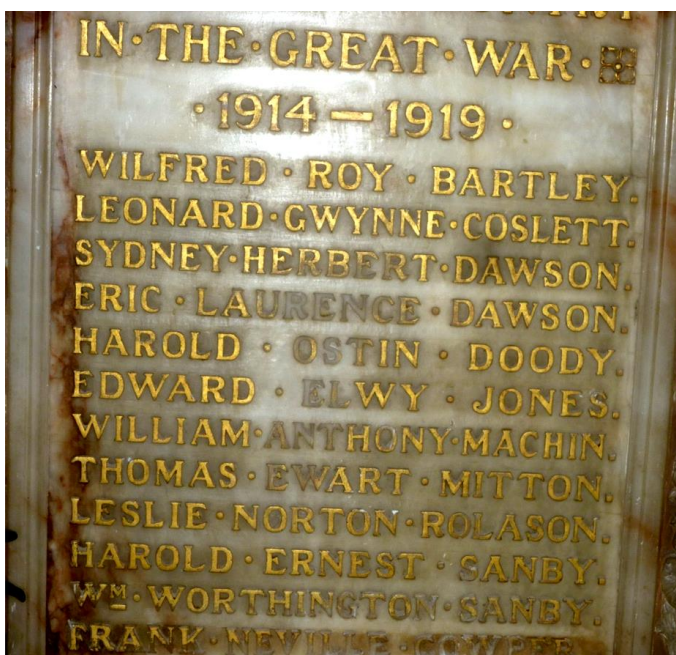


Figure 9

(Left) Baptist Church Memorial, Oxford Road (now the Calvary Church of God in Christ)
(Above) A photo of the Thiepval Memorial on its unveiling in 1922



Figure 10

The Diamond wedding announcement of Edward and Mary Russell, Edward's parents

On 25th December 1944, Edward and Mary celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. Edward died on 31st March 1949, at the age of 91. He left an estate of £27,666 2s 5d worth over a million pounds in today's money. Probate was given to his daughters Gertrude and Dora. Mary died five years later on 6th July 1954, aged 95, at her home in 10 Chantry Road, Moseley. She was buried in Yardley cemetery.

Edward's eldest sister, Gertrude, married Frederick Victor Smith in the summer of 1917. In the 1939 Register they are listed as living at 22 Strensham Road, Moseley with

their son David M R Smith born on 25th September 1931. Frederick was a motor cycle accessory order clerk. Gertrude died in 1973, aged 84. Their son, David, married Betty Pye in 1963.^{viii}



Edward's younger sister, Dora, married Thomas Harry Lawrence Stone in 1923. Thomas was a grocer and wine and spirit merchant. Dora trained as a nurse between 1929 to 1932 at Dudley Road Hospital. The 1939 Register records them living at 290 Mary Street, Balsall Heath. Dora was left a widow in 1946. She died at 57 West Drive, Edgbaston in 1970, at the age of 76.

There is a family headstone at Yardley cemetery listing the names of three generations of the Jones family. The last to be added was Edward Jones (Edward Elwy's father) who died in 1949. Sadly, there is no mention of Edward Elwy Jones on the family headstone.

Figure 11: The Jones family gravestone

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Endnotes

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- i The Marriage Certificate of Edward Jones dated 15.5.1857 records his father as John Jones, occupation, carpenter
 - ii England & Wales, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567-1936, Ancestry
 - iii 1939 Register
 - iv Family headstone inscription in Yardley Cemetery
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/109860927/edward-jones/photo>
 - v *Birmingham Post*, 31st December 1906
 - vi *Birmingham Daily Post*, 7th September 1914
Birmingham City Battalions Book of Honour, 1920
 - vii *Birmingham Pals: 14th, 15th & 16th (Service Battalions) of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment*, Carter, Terry. 1997. Pen & Sword Books, Barnsley
 - viii The transcript of their marriage details in 1963 has 'Berty' Pye as the wife of David M R Smith. The original type for the 'r' is smudged so it is more likely to be Betty

Illustrations

- Figure 1 Independent Congregational church of Protestant Dissenters, Old Chapel, Arthur Street, Oswestry
http://search.shropshirehistory.org.uk/collections/getrecord/CCS_MSA8370/
- Figure 2 Birmingham, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1857, Ancestry
- Figure 3 *Birmingham Daily Post*, 4th July 1893
- Figure 4 *Birmingham Daily Post*, 8th December 1894
- Figure 5 *Bridgenorth Journal and South Shropshire Advertiser*, 28th October 1899

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- Figure 6 King Edward School, New Street, Birmingham
<http://www.staffshomeguard.co.uk/L4OtherReminiscencesstaffshg.shtml>
- Figure 7 Birmingham City Battalions Book of Honour, 1920
- Figure 8 Map of the Longueval region in 1916, Wikimedia
Volume: 11 Subject: Times history of the war; Times history and encyclopaedia of the war; World War, 1914-1918 -- Periodicals Publisher: London
- Figure 9 WW1 memorial, Calvary Church of Christ, Oxford Road, Moseley. Photograph taken by Edwina Rees
Thiepval Memorial, 1922 unveiling
<https://www.lutyenstrust.org.uk/portfolio-item/national-commemorative-event-thiepval-memorial-mark-centenary-battle-somme/>
Diamond Wedding Notice, *Birmingham Daily Post*, 2nd January 1945
- Figure 10 *Birmingham Weekly Post*, 9th July 1954
- Figure 11 Edward Jones family headstone
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/109860927/edward-jones/photo>