

## **Edward George Grace**

***Sapper 368114, Base Signal Depot, Royal Engineers***



*(The above photographs of Edward G. Grace were supplied by Walter's granddaughter Viv Sandford).  
They appear to show Edward in the uniform of the Dragoon Guards into which he enlisted in 1914.*

**Edward George Grace's** birth was registered in the January-March quarter of 1883 in Islington. His father, Mark Grace, had been born in Coleshill, which was then in Hertfordshire, in 1855. In September 1876 Mark Grace married Sarah Charlotte Butterfield at Brentford, Middlesex, and by 1881 he was serving as a police officer in Islington, living with his wife and first son, Alfred. Ten years later the Census shows a family of six children (Edward George being the third), all born in Islington, and Mark Grace had been promoted to sergeant and was living at 59, Shakespeare Road, Acton. By 1901 Mark Grace had retired from the police force and returned to Coleshill as the landlord of the Red Lion Public House. Gertrude Alice, the last of their ten children, of whom only six survived, was born in 1894 at Brentwood and she, together with her brothers Herbert, a butcher; Ernest, a house painter; and sisters Edith and Annie, were living with their parents. Edward George Grace (18) was a boarder at 6 Goldsmith Road, Acton and employed as a railway porter.

In 1911 Mark Grace was the licensee of the Red Lion Public House, High Street, Amersham, but with just his wife Sarah and daughter Gertrude in residence. Edward George Grace, now 28, was employed as a wiring labourer by GPO Telephone and lodging with John and Mary Fenemore at Ebenezer Terrace, London Road, Loudwater, Bucks, and in the April - June quarter of the same year his marriage to Maud Florence Durban was registered in Fulham, London. Their son, Walter Edward, was born on 30 April 1915 at Amersham, Bucks.

At the start of WW1 in August 1914 the British army was referred to as the British Expeditionary Force and was a volunteer army, but as a result of the heavy losses at the front, the Military Service Act came into force on 2 March 1916. The Act specified that men between the ages of 18 and 41 were liable for call-up unless they were married or widowed with children, but this was amended in June 1916 when married men were included and the enlistment age-limit rose to 51. Certainly,

## *Edward George Grace*

Edward George Grace, as a married man of 31 when war was declared, would not have been expected to enlist immediately, particularly as his wife Maud must have been expecting their son, Walter Edward.



A photograph of Maud Florence Grace (wife of Edward George Grace) with son Walter Edward, on the left and Edward George in the inset. Maud remained a widow until her death in 1962, so the other children must be relatives.

The uniform of Edward is different from that of the earlier photos, and is probably that of the Royal Engineers

(photo by courtesy of Viv Sandford)

Despite that, Edward's Medal Roll Card shows that he first entered into a theatre of war on 14 August 1914 and records that he was then serving as Private 6219 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoon Guards. He then served with the Army Service Corps (number R/39164) before being transferred to the Royal Engineers, and posted to Base Signal Depot, Egypt. He died whilst serving in Egypt on 3 November 1918, just eight days before the Armistice was signed. According to his death certificate, Edward died in Alexandria, Egypt, aged 36 and the cause of death was broncho-pneumonia.

He is buried at Haifa War Cemetery in Israel. This cemetery was originally part of the German cemetery and was mainly for hospital burials, although some bodies were brought in from the battlefields. The reason for the Edward Grace being buried so far from his place of death is not known.



Edward George Grace is remembered with Honour at  
Haifa War Cemetery, Plot A.26

His name also appears on both the Amersham War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in the old Baptist Church, Amersham, which is now part of the King's Arms Hotel.



In 1919 when his wife Maud applied for the Clasp to go with Edward's 1914 Star, which he was awarded together with The British War Medal, 1914-18 and The Allied Victory Medal, she and their son Walter Edward were living at Turpin's Row Cottages in Amersham High Street.

Walter married Jessica G. Sherwood in 1936 at Chesham Bois, Amersham, Bucks.

Maud Florence Grace, then of 85 Cresswell Road, Chesham, remained a widow until she died on 11 May 1962 at St. Charles Hospital, London W10. Probate of her will on 26 July 1962 was to Walter Edward Grace (her son), an electricity mains foreman. Effects: £246.14s.6d.



Postcard showing Turpin's Row in the 1950s