

Gunner William Ewart Yardley

Regimental number: 155144

31st Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

born: about 1883 - died: 25 September 1918

Gunner William Ewart Yardley was born in early 1883 in Cradley Heath,¹ Staffordshire and was baptised on 3 April that year in Rowley Regis, Staffordshire.² He was the youngest son of Henry and Eliza Yardley, both of whom were also born in Cradley Heath in about 1850.³ Henry Hazledine Yardley and Eliza (née Clark) married in 1868 in Stourbridge, Worcestershire.⁴ They had six children – three of whom survived to 1911.⁵ Five of the six children include: Joseph Hazledine (born in about 1868⁶ and died in 1896),⁷ Mary Ann H. (born in about 1871),⁸ David Yardley (born in about 1874⁹ and probably died sometime between 1901 and 1911),¹⁰ Henry Yardley (born in about 1876)¹¹ and William. The sixth child and the third who died before 1911 was possibly Rosanna, born in late 1869¹² and died in November of that year.¹³

In 1871, Henry was a “gas prover” and the family was living on Corngreaves Row in Rowley Regis, Staffordshire.¹⁴ Eliza was a dressmaker. In 1881, the family had moved to 20 Spinners End and Henry was a gas tube worker and general dealer.¹⁵ Ten years later they were at the same address, but Henry was now a chair maker and the four eldest children had joined him in that occupation.¹⁶

By 1901, William was the only child still living at home with his parents.¹⁷ They were living at Daisy Cottage in Belbroughton, Worcestershire and William and his father were both chair makers.

At the beginning of 1908, William married May Clarke near Dudley, Staffordshire.¹⁸ May was born in about 1888 near Dudley, Staffordshire,¹⁹ the daughter of Elon and Sarah Clarke.²⁰ Three years after their marriage, they were living at 38 High Street in Cradley Heath, where William now had his own fruit store and May was helping in the business.²¹

At that time, his parents were living at 32 Graingers Lane, in Cradley Heath.²² Henry was once again a gas tube warehouse man and Eliza was working in a fruit shop. Perhaps she was working with her son and daughter-in-law. His parents had their grand-daughter, Eliza Westwood, living with them. Eliza was the daughter of Mary Ann and her husband, Joseph Westwood.²³ Eliza’s parents and siblings were living in Old Hill, near Cradley Heath.²⁴

William enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery at Brierley Hill.²⁵ On 25 September 1918, he was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his left thigh.²⁶ He died that day and was buried the following day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Grave 2, Plot 7, Row A) with the chaplain A. D. Reid presiding. His wife, as his next-of-kin, was notified of his death. The monies owing to him from the army after his death were also sent to his wife.²⁷

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²⁸ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²⁹ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September 1918.

William was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).³⁰

William's three surviving siblings all married in the Dudley area well before the Great War. The first to marry was his sister, Mary Ann, who married Joseph H. Westwood in 1892.³¹ They went on to have eight children.³² Sadly, Mary Ann died in 1913.³³

Then William's brother, David, married Beatrice Maude Lee in 1895.³⁴ They had two children: Nellie and Arthur.³⁵ It appears that David may have died or otherwise left the family sometime in the following decade because, in 1911, his wife married Frank Evans³⁶ and she and the two children were living with Frank at Old Hill, Staffordshire.³⁷

His second brother, Henry, married Jemima Bloomer in 1898 and they had at least four children: Joseph, Laura, Angelina and Edith.³⁸ In 1911, the family was living Cradley Heath.

With William's death in 1918, his wife, May, was a widow. In 1920, she remarried, marrying William's brother-in-law, Joseph H. Westwood, the widower of his sister, Mary Ann. Together they had at least four children: Hazel I. (born in 1921),³⁹ Hubert W. (born in 1922),⁴⁰ Edwin H. (born in 1926)⁴¹ and Mary M. (born in 1930).⁴²

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¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for William Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 2

² "England Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NV6M-WBW>: accessed 11 January 2016), William Ewart Yeardley, 03 Apr 1883; Rowley-Regis, Stafford, England, reference yr 1871-1984 fiche 1; FHL microfilm 6,085,645

³ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 January 2016), entry for William Yardley, Registration district: Bromsgrove, Sub-registration district Belbroughton, ED, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 2801, Folio: 26, Page Number: 19, Household schedule number: 123

⁴ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 6 January 2016), entry for Henry Hazledine Yardley, Registration district: Stourbridge, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6c, Page: 185

⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for Henry Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 22, Household schedule number: 28, Piece: 17371

⁶ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Joseph Hazledine Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 25

⁷ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Joseph Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6c, Page: 1

⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Mary Ann H. Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 22

⁹ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for David Yardley, FHL Film Number: 6085645

¹⁰ David married Beatrice Lee in 1895. ("England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for David Yardley, District: Dudley, County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6C, Page: 99). He may have died or left the family between 1901 and 1911 because, in 1911, his wife married Frank Evans. ("England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 16 January 2016), entry for Beatrice Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 50) In 1911, she and Frank were living with David and Beatrice's two children, Nelly and Arthur. ("1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 January 2016), entry for Beatrice Evans, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-

registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 16, Household schedule number: 110, Piece: 17365)

¹¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Henry Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 11

¹² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Rosanna Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 14

¹³ "England, Select Deaths and Burials, 1538-1991," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Rosanna Yardley, FHL Film Number: 1470777, Reference ID: p 380

¹⁴ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for Henry Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 18, Household schedule number: 96, Piece: 2995, Folio: 13, Page Number: 19

¹⁵ "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2016), entry for Henry Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, ED, institution, or vessel: 25, Piece: 2862, Folio: 102, Page Number: 34

¹⁶ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 27 January 2016), entry for William Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, ED, institution, or vessel: 25, Piece: 2282, Folio: 99, Page Number: 30

¹⁷ "1901 England Census," entry for William Yardley

¹⁸ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for William Edward Yardley, District: Dudley, County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6C, Page: 53

¹⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 January 2016), entry for May Clarke, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 2

²⁰ "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for May Clarke, Registration district: Dudley, ED, institution, or vessel: 21, Piece: 2281, Folio: 144, Page Number: 50

²¹ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for William Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 22, Household schedule number: 133, Piece: 17371

²² "1911 England Census," entry for Henry Yardley

²³ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 January 2016), entry for Mary A. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Sub-registration district Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 25, Piece: 2733, Folio: 20, Page Number: 32, Household schedule number: 184

²⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for Mary A. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 16, Household schedule number: 103, Piece: 17365

²⁵ "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for William Yardley

²⁶ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2016), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 668

²⁷ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for William Yardley

²⁸ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)

²⁹ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)

³⁰ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 December 2015), entry for William Yardley

³¹ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Mary Ann Yardley, District: Dudley, County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6C, Page: 79

³² Joseph (1894), Anne (1895), Lily (1901), Charles (1904), Emma (1907) and Florence (1909) ("1911 England Census," entry for Mary A. Westwood); Eliza (1899) ("1911 England Census," entry for Henry

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- Yardley) and Mary (1911) ("England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Mary Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Staffordshire, Volume: 6c, Page: 16)
- ³³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Mary Ann Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1141
- ³⁴ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," entry for David Yardley
- ³⁵ Nellie (1906) and Arthur (1908) ("1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 January 2016), entry for David Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Sub-registration district Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 23, Piece: 2732, Folio: 144, Page Number: 31, Household schedule number: 181
- ³⁶ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," entry for Beatrice Yardley
- ³⁷ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 8 January 2016), entry for Beatrice Evans, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 16, Household schedule number: 110, Piece: 17365
- ³⁸ Joseph (in late 1899 or early 1900), Laura (late in 1900), Angelina (1906) ("1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Henry Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Registration District Number: 372, Sub-registration district: Rowley Regis, ED, institution, or vessel: 22, Household schedule number: 176, Piece: 17371); and Edith M. (1913) ("England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Edith M. Yardley, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1793)
- ³⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Hazel I. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1756
- ⁴⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Hubert W. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1749
- ⁴¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Edwin H. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1759
- ⁴² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 January 2016), entry for Mary M. Westwood, Registration district: Dudley, Inferred County: Worcestershire, Volume: 6b, Page: 1392