

## **Private Ernest Walter Trembath<sup>©</sup>**

**Regimental Number: 288754**

**78th Battalion, Canadian Infantry**

**born: 27 January 1893<sup>1</sup> – died: 1 February 1918**

Private Ernest Walter Trembath was born and grew up near Tavistock, Devon, where his parents lived in Sampford Spinney parish,<sup>2</sup> which is located on the verge of Dartmoor.<sup>3</sup> It is also the location of a mansion won by Sir Francis Drake in 1581 for a £500 bet.<sup>4</sup> The Trembaths lived in the small town of Horrbridge, where they raised their four children. Ernest's parents were William Trembath and Eliza Mary German; they were both born in Horrbridge and married there in the spring of 1889.<sup>5, 6</sup>

Their first son, Frederick Joshua Albert,<sup>7</sup> was born 27 June 1890<sup>8</sup> and then Ernest in 1893.<sup>9</sup> Just one year later, their third son was born and named William Henry German after his mother's side of the family.<sup>10</sup> The family became complete with the birth of Olive Gladys in 1900.<sup>11</sup>

William supported his family as a driver in the 1891 Census and then as a carrier working on his "own account" in 1901.<sup>12</sup> He had at least one employee, William Gallop, a 17-year-old who lived with the family in the Elms farmhouse.<sup>13, 14</sup>

By the spring of 1913, all of the family had left Horrbridge and settled in the west of Canada.<sup>15, 16</sup> In 1910, Frederick went to Saskatchewan,<sup>17</sup> where William joined him in 1912.<sup>18</sup> William Sr. went to Rosser, Manitoba, where he homesteaded and established a new home for Eliza, Ernest and Gladys. Eliza and Gladys joined him there in the spring of 1913. When the next census was taken in 1916, William Sr. was managing the farm, while Ernest had enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) and was training in Camp Hughes, Manitoba.<sup>19</sup>

When war broke out, all of the brothers were still single and it wasn't long before they enlisted. Ernest was the first to sign up with the 78th Battalion, Canadian Infantry on 12 June 1916.<sup>20</sup> Next to enlist was Frederick, less than a month later, on 6 July 1916.<sup>21</sup> Once Frederick enlisted, William moved to stay with the rest of the family in Rosser, Manitoba, probably to help his father on the farm. By 12 November 1917, William too had enlisted.<sup>22</sup>

By 1918, Ernest found himself with the 78th Battalion stationed near Pas-de-Calais, France. On 1 February 1918 he was admitted to the No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, where he died of gas poisoning later that day. He was 25 years of age.<sup>23</sup>

Ernest was buried the next day by Chaplain R.K. Lambert in the Barlin Communal Military Cemetery Extension, Pas-de-Calais, France in Plot 3, Row E, Grave 6, where he rests with the other 1093 soldiers of WW I.<sup>24</sup>

The Barlin Cemetery Extension, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was begun by French troops in October 1914; when they moved south in March 1916 to be replaced by Commonwealth forces, it was used for casualty clearing station burials. In November 1917, Barlin began to be shelled and the station was moved back to Ruitz, but the extension was used again in early 1918 during the German advance on this front. The Extension contains 1094 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and a number of French and German war graves.

Ernest Walter Trembath's life was memorialized on the Horrabridge War Memorial and a short biography was compiled on his life by Peter Hamilton-Leggett on November 2014. A pdf of this document can be found online.<sup>25</sup>

Ernest's brothers Frederick and William both survived the war and rejoined the family in Canada. William returned to Manitoba, where he later married and eventually settled in Vancouver, British Columbia.<sup>26</sup> Frederick received a land grant in Saskatchewan after his return from serving in WW I in France<sup>27</sup> and later moved to Winchester, Manitoba,<sup>28</sup> where he settled down and married. Gladys married in 1923 and continued to live in Manitoba.<sup>29</sup> Ernest's mother, Eliza, died on 8 May 1827, at age 64, and his father, William, at age 70, on 26 February 1939.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279678>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for Ernest Walter Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-9, Item number: 279678, Attestation paper.

<sup>2</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 21 November 2014), entry for Ernest Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Sub-registration district: Tavistock, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 2118, Folio: 7, Page: 32, Household schedule number: 32.

<sup>3</sup> "Sampford Spinney, Devon Genealogy," *Family Search* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 3 July 2016).

<sup>4</sup> "Article 3 July 2016, News, Mail Online," *Daily Mail* ([www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2290197/Country-manor-won-Sir-Francis-Drake-bet-1581-goes-sale-1-25m-theres-LORDSHIP-thrown-in.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2290197/Country-manor-won-Sir-Francis-Drake-bet-1581-goes-sale-1-25m-theres-LORDSHIP-thrown-in.html): accessed 3 July 2016), entry on Sampford Manor.

<sup>5</sup> "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for William Trembath and Eliza Mary German, Registration district: Tavistock, Inferred county: Devon, Volume: 5b, Page: 599.

<sup>6</sup> "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for William Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 18, Piece: 1750, Folio: 80, Page: 6.

<sup>7</sup> "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Frederick Joshua A. Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Inferred county: Devon, Volume: 5b, Page: 364.

<sup>8</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279679>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for Frederick Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-10, Item number: 279679, Attestation paper.

<sup>9</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279678>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for Ernest Walter Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-9, Item number: 279678, Attestation paper.

<sup>10</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279683>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for William Henry German Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-14, Item number: 279683, Attestation paper.

<sup>11</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 21 November 2014), entry for Ernest Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Sub-registration district: Tavistock, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 2118, Folio: 7, Page: 32, Household schedule number: 32.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for William Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 18, Piece: 1750, Folio: 80, Page: 6.

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- <sup>14</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 21 November 2014), entry for Ernest Trembath, Registration district: Tavistock, Sub-registration district: Tavistock, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 2118, Folio: 7, Page: 32, Household schedule number: 32.
- <sup>15</sup> "1911 England Census," *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 26 November 2014), entry for William Trembath, Registration district: Plimpton St. Mary, Registration district number: 275, Sub-registration district: Plympton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, ED: 17, Piece: 12932, Schedule number: 28.
- <sup>16</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Gladys Trembath and Mrs. E. Trembath.
- <sup>17</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Frederick Trembath.
- <sup>18</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for William Trembath.
- <sup>19</sup> "1916 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 26 November 2014), entry for William Trimbach [*sic*], Home in 1916: 04, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Address: 12, 15, 1, Risser [*sic*].
- <sup>20</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279678>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for Ernest Walter Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-9, Item number: 279678, Attestation paper.
- <sup>21</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279679>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for Frederick Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-10, Item number: 279679, Attestation paper.
- <sup>22</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=279683>: accessed 21 November 2014) entry for William Henry German Trembath, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9771-14, Item number: 279683, Attestation paper.
- <sup>23</sup> "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 21 November 2014), entry for E.W. Trembath.
- <sup>24</sup> "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 21 November 2014), entry for E.W. Trembath, Service No: 288754.
- <sup>25</sup> "Spiney Men on the Horrabridge War Memorial" (<http://www.westdartmoor.church/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/HORRABRIDGE-WAR-MEMORIAL.pdf>: accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Ernest Walter Trembath.
- <sup>26</sup> "Bailey Family Tree" *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 2 July 2016), entry for William Trembath.
- <sup>27</sup> "Canada, Soldier Homestead Grant Registers, 1918–1931," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for F. Trembath [*sic*].
- <sup>28</sup> "Canada, Voters Lists, 1935–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Frederick Trembath.
- <sup>29</sup> "Web: Manitoba, Marriage Index, 1879–1931," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 3 July 2016), entry for Gladys O. Trembath and Ralph Egerton Childerhose, Marriage Place: Winnipeg, Manitoba.
- <sup>30</sup> "Bailey Family Tree" *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 2 July 2016), entry for Frederick Trembath.