

Private Ernest James Tancock®
Regimental number: 13601
1st/4th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment

born: 1892 – died: 1918

Ernest James Tancock was born in the first quarter of 1892 in Bath, Somerset.¹ He was the sixth and youngest son of William J. Tancock and his wife Bessie, née Darke.² William was a general labourer, working in 1911 in a sewage works.³

In 1911 Ernest was 19, and for some unknown reason was working a long way away from home, in Turton, Lancashire, just north of Bolton. He was a merceriser in a calico cotton bleaching factory,⁴ which involved treating cotton with sodium hydroxide to shrink it and increase its affinity for dye.⁵

While Ernest was in Lancashire, he met his future wife, Maud Waring, who was also working in Turton in the cotton industry in 1911, as a cotton weaver.⁶ They did not marry until 7 April 1917.⁷

In September 1915, Ernest was in the British Army, with the 1st/4th Battalion of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, a Territorial battalion. On 26 September he disembarked in France.⁸ The 1st/4th Battalion was stationed at Aveluy, between Arras and Amiens, and remained there for five months.⁹

During the next two and a half years, the battalion fought in a number of significant battles, including Guillemont, Ginchy, Flers-Courcelette, Morval, Pilkem Ridge, Menin Road Ridge, Estaires and Hazebrouk.¹⁰ In the midst of this, as noted above, Private Tancock took a leave of absence in April 1917 to get married.

In June 1918 the battalion was in Givenchy on the right sector, during a relatively quiet period in the war.¹¹ On June 18 there was a lively exchange of artillery fire (whizz-bangs) resulting in two Other Rank deaths and six wounded.¹² One of these was Private (Acting Corporal) Tancock, who was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with severe wounds to his left leg and skull.¹³ He died on June 22 and was buried the same day in the Pernes British Military Cemetery, Plot 5, Row C, Grave No. 1.¹⁴ His wife, his next-of-kin, was notified by letter. The inscription on his headstone reads

EVER IN MY THOUGHTS

Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance. The cemetery lies one kilometre west of Pernes-en-Artois, in the region of Pas de Calais, and contains the remains of 1096 soldiers from the two world wars.

Private Ernest Tancock received the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) for his service.¹⁵ He also received the 1914–15 Star.¹⁶

Ernest Tancock had five older brothers, as noted above. The eldest, William James, served before the war in the Duke of Cornwall's Somerset Light Infantry for 16 years from 1896 to 1912, spending time in India, Ceylon and South Africa.¹⁷ Then in August 1914 he re-enlisted in the 51st Graduated

Training Reserve Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry, and served for most of the war, including a little over one year in France.¹⁸ He was wounded several times, including a bullet wound to the palm of his left hand, and was diagnosed with shell shock; he was discharged in June 1918 as he was “required for ship building.”¹⁹ In 1939 he was a steel machinist (hence his value for ship building), living in Bath²⁰ with his wife, Kate, whom he married before the war in October 1905.²¹ He died in 1941, age 63.²²

Second son Mark also served in the military, with the Devonshire Regiment and the Labour Corps during the First World War.²³ He survived the war and lived to the age of 71.²⁴

No record of military service can be found for third son Arthur Thomas. He married Ethel May Hill on 1 December 1914,²⁵ and they had a daughter Ivy Ethel 18 days later.²⁶ In 1939 Arthur Thomas was an engine driver in Walthamstow, Essex.²⁷

Fourth son Albert Frederick seems to have been a troubled youth. In 1901, at the age of 14, he was charged with stealing a cash box with cash in it from a shop to which he had gone to pay some money. He admitted stealing it. He had previously expressed a wish to go to a ship and had told his mother he would do something to get sent away. The bench ordered him to go to the Akbar training ship for four years.²⁸ HMS *Akbar* was a reformatory training ship for Protestant boys, moored on the River Mersey.²⁹

Then in November 1914, at the age of 27, he was summoned by a young woman named Elsie Elizabeth Loveday, to show cause, etc. He admitted paternity and was ordered to pay costs and 3s. 6d. a week until the child was 16.³⁰ The child was Margaret Kathleen Loveday,³¹ and Albert married her mother eight years later.³²

The fifth son was Frank Herbert Tancock, born in 1890.³³ In 1911, at age 21, he was already serving in the 2nd Battalion of Prince Albert’s Somersetshire Light Infantry, stationed in Malta.³⁴ He served both before and during the First World War, for a total of 22 years.³⁵ He died in 1937, age 48.³⁶

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¹ “England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for Ernest James Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 564

² “GRO online index–birth,” *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 November 2019), entries for Tancock, mother’s maiden name Darke, Registration districts: Keynsham, Bath, Volume 05C, Pages 673, 573, 641, 602, 593, 564

³ “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for William Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Registration district number: 316, Sub-registration district: Walcot, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 23, Household schedule number: 228, Piece: 14725

⁴ “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for Ernest Janes [sic] Tancock, Registration district: Bolton, Registration district number: 461, Sub-registration district: Turton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 2, Piece: 23371

⁵ “Mercerised cotton,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercerised_cotton: accessed 4 November 2019)

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- ⁶ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for Maud Waring, Registration district: Bolton, Registration district number: 461, Sub-registration district: Turton, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Piece: 23376
- ⁷ "Manchester, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1930," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 14 November 2019), entry for Maied [*sic*] Waring, Reference number: GB127.L99/1/3/3
- ⁸ "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 15 November 2019), entry for E J Tancock
- ⁹ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 16 November 2019), entry for Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, Sub-unit: 1st/4th Battalion, Piece description: Piece 2887/4, page 51
- ¹⁰ "Unit History: Loyal North Lancashire Regiment," *Forces War Records* (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/274/loyal-north-lancashire-regiment/>: accessed 11 November 2019)
- ¹¹ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 16 November 2019), entry for Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, Sub-unit: 1st/4th Battalion, Piece description: Piece 2924/1, page 496
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 November 2019), entry for Tancock, E.J.
- ¹⁴ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 5 November 2019), entry for Tancock, E J, Service No: 13601
- ¹⁵ "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 15 November 2019), entry for Ernest James Tancock
- ¹⁶ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 15 November 2019), entry for Ernest J. Tancock
- ¹⁷ "UK Royal Hospital Chelsea Pensioner Soldier Service Records," *Fold3* (www.fold3.com: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for William Tancock
- ¹⁸ "British Army WW1 Pension Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for William Tancock
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ "1939 Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 16 November 2019), entry for William Tancock, Schedule number: 101, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: WNBU, Registration district: 316-1
- ²¹ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 5 November 2019), entry for William Tancock, Registration district: Bristol, Inferred county: Gloucestershire, Volume: 6a, Page: 395
- ²² "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for William Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 1765
- ²³ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 15 November 2019), entry for Mark E Tancock
- ²⁴ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for Mark E Tancock, Registration district: Bridgend, Inferred county: Glamorganshire, Volume: 8b, Page: 61
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- ²⁶ "1939 Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 16 November 2019), entry for Ivy E. Tancock, Schedule number: 36, Sub-schedule number: 3, Enumeration district: CDIM, Registration district: 188 B4. 6C

²⁷ Ibid., entry for Arthur T Tancock

²⁸ "Daily Press," 20 August, 1901, page 5, *British Newspaper Archive* (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk: accessed 10 November 2019), search for Albert Tancock

²⁹ "Merseyside Training Ships," *Liverpool Picturebooks Online* <https://www.liverpoolpicturebook.com/2013/08/merseyside-training-ships.html>: accessed 17 November, 2019

³⁰ Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, 14 November, 1914, page 6, *British Newspaper Archive* (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk: accessed 10 November 2019), search for Albert Tancock

³¹ "Somerset, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813–1914," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for Margaret Kathleen Loveday

³² "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916–2005," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 5 November 2019), entry for Albert F Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 891

³³ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for Frank Herbert Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 593

³⁴ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 November 2019), entry for Frank Herbert Tancock, Registration district number: 641, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: Malta, Piece: 34986

³⁵ "Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette," 30 October, 1937, page 11, *British Newspaper Archive* (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk: accessed 10 November 2019), search for Frank Tancock

³⁶ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 17 November 2019), entry for Frank H Tancock, Registration district: Bath, Inferred county: Somerset, Volume: 5c, Page: 574