

Private George Errington©
Regimental number: 50043
2nd Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers

born: 1899–died: 23 April 1918

Private George Errington was just 19 when he died, after fighting in World War I for just over one year.

George was the second of three children born to Joseph Errington and Isabella Bates. Joseph was the only child of Jane Errington, born in 1859 in Durham, England.¹ Isabella had been born about 1866, also in Durham, to George and Ann Bates.² Joseph and Isabella had been married in about 1897 in Durham,³ when Joseph was a commercial clerk.

Their eldest child, Alys, was born in Benfieldside, Durham, on 16 August 1897.⁴ On 5 December 1926 Alys wed Patrick John March in Ponteland, Northumberland.⁵ In 1939 Alys and Patrick were living in Castle Ward, Northumberland, where Patrick was a colliery undermanager.⁶

George was born about 1899 in Benfieldside, Durham.⁷

The third child, Cecil, was born about 1903 in Benfieldside.⁸ On 9 December 1927 Cecil emigrated to New Zealand, departing from Southampton aboard the *Tainui*.⁹ He died in Auckland, New Zealand, on 22 September 1952.¹⁰

In 1901 the family was living at 4 St. Cuthberts Avenue, Benfieldside, where Joseph was a commercial clerk and Isabella was raising Alys and George.¹¹

In 1911 the family was still living at 4 St. Cuthberts Avenue, Benfieldside. Joseph was a commercial clerk and the three surviving children were in school.¹²

Regrettably, only about 30 per cent of UK service records still exist, due to a fire resulting from a 1940 air raid on the Army Records Office in Walworth, London,¹³ and it appears that George's records were not saved. As a result, few specifics of George's military experience were obtainable.

We know that George enlisted with the Lancashire Fusiliers at Consett, Durham, (a town next to Benfieldside) being assigned to the 2nd Battalion.¹⁴ The regiment raised 30 battalions, losing 13,640 men during the course of the war.¹⁵ George was entitled to a war gratuity of £4,¹⁶ suggesting that he enlisted in March 1917. The war gratuity was introduced in December 1918 as a payment to be made to those WWI servicemen who had served in the home service for a period of at least six months, or for any length of time if the man had served overseas.¹⁷

On 23 April 1918 George was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station suffering from penetrating gunshot wounds to his abdomen.¹⁸ A casualty clearing station (CCS) is a military medical facility behind the front lines that is used to treat wounded soldiers. A CCS would usually be located just beyond the range of enemy artillery and often near transportation facilities (e.g., a railway). The CCS receives battlefield casualties from regimental aid posts located in the combat zone. Casualties that could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized there before being transported to a field hospital or military hospital.¹⁹

Sadly, on the same day as his admission, Frank died and was buried the following day, April 24, in the Pernes British Cemetery, in Plot 1, Row D, Grave 33. His mother requested the following inscription be added to his grave marker:^{20, 21}

THEY MISS HIM MOST
WHO LOVED HIM BEST



Gravestone of Private George Errington
Source: *Find a Grave*

Pernes British Cemetery was not opened until April 1918 when the 1st and 4th Canadian CCSs pulled back to Pernes, driven back by the German advance in Flanders. There are 1,098 First World War burials in Pernes.²²

George was posthumously awarded both the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).²³

In 1939 Joseph and Isabella were still living at the same home they had since at least 1901 in Benfieldside. Joseph was then 80 and a retired clerk.²⁴ However, it appears that Joseph and Isabella moved to be closer to their daughter Alys in Castle Ward, Northumberland, as they both died there in 1944 within a couple of months of each other. Joseph's death at the age of 85 was registered in the second quarter of 1944,²⁵ while Isabella's at the age of 78 was registered in the third quarter.²⁶

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¹ "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 20 April 2021) entry for Errington, Joseph, Registration district: Durham, Volume 10A, Page: 239

² "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 20 April 2021) entry for Bates, Isabella, Registration district: Durham, Volume 10A, Page: 304

³ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 8 February 2021), entry for Joseph Errington, Registration district number: 550, Sub-registration district: Consett, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 06, Piece: 29883

⁴ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Alys March, Borough: Castle Ward, Enumeration District: GDHC

⁵ "England, Select Marriages, 1538–1973," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Alys Errington, FHL film number: 2193453, Reference ID: item 541 p 109

⁶ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry*, entry for Alys March

⁷ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Joseph Errington, Registration district: Lanchester, Sub-registration district: Consett, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 06, Piece: 4668, Folio: 33, Page: 5, Household schedule number: 32

⁸ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry*, entry for Joseph Errington

⁹ "UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890–1960," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 26 April 2021), entry for Cecil Errington

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- ¹⁰ "New Zealand, Cemetery Records, 1800–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 26 April 2021), entry for Cecil Errington
- ¹¹ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry*, entry for Joseph Errington
- ¹² "1911 England Census," *Ancestry*, entry for Joseph Errington
- ¹³ "How to research a soldier," *The Long, Long Trail, The British Army in the Great War of 1914–1918* (<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/soldiers/how-to-research-a-soldier/>: accessed 7 February 2021)
- ¹⁴ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 7 February 2021), entry for Errington, G.
- ¹⁵ "Unit History: Lancashire Fusiliers," *Forces War Records* (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/units/267/lancashire-fusiliers/>: accessed 20 April 2021)
- ¹⁶ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 7 February 2021), entry for George Errington
- ¹⁷ "What is the war gratuity?" *War Gratuity Resources in WW1 records* (<https://www.wargratitude.uk/what-is-the-war-gratuity/>: accessed 7 February 2021)
- ¹⁸ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*, entry for Errington, G.
- ¹⁹ "Casualty Clearing Station," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station: accessed 7 February 2021)
- ²⁰ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 7 February 2021), entry for Errington, G., Service No: 50043
- ²¹ *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/123047630/g-errington/photo#view-photo=164183253>: accessed 7 February 2021), entry for Private G Errington
- ²² *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 7 February 2021), entry for Pernes British Cemetery
- ²³ "UK, WWI Service Medal and Award Rolls, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 26 April 2021), entry for George Errington
- ²⁴ "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Joseph Errington, Borough: Consett, Enumeration district: FFJH
- ²⁵ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca : accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Joseph Errington, Registration district: Northumberland Central, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 453
- ²⁶ "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca : accessed 9 February 2021), entry for Isabella Errington, Registration district: Northumberland Central, Inferred county: Northumberland, Volume: 10b, Page: 409