

FORGET ME NOT

HAROLD WALLIN MARK WALLIN'S GRANDAD

My Grandad, Harold Edgar Wallin, was born and grew up in nearby Seagrave and worked in the local boot & shoe industry.

Like many of his peers, almost nothing of what he experienced was ever spoken about and so what follows is pieced together from his military records and the documented history of those regiments in which he served.

In December 1915, at the age of 21 years and 6 months, he enlisted at Loughborough and was recruited to the 2nd Life Guards, which later formed the Household Battalion. In late 1916, he married my Grandma, Evelyn Sophia Gamble, of Sileby, shortly before embarking from Southampton to Le Havre.

At that time, the Household Battalion was involved in the Battle of Arras and the 3rd Battle of Ypres (more often referred to as Passchendaele). At the beginning of 1918, he was transferred to the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, who, at this time, were in trenches near Arras and later they took part in the Battles of Bapaume, the Somme and Cambrai. Following the armistice, they marched through Belgium to Cologne for occupational duties, before being demobbed in 1919. My Grandad died in 1974.

I have a picture of my grandad and grandma on their wedding day framed between two embroidered regimental postcards that grandad sent to grandma during the war. On the back of the frame is a piece of material from my grandma's wedding dress.



ELLIS GREENHALGH MARIE WALLIN'S GRANDAD

To commemorate the centenary of the start of WWI, I thought I would tell you about my grandfather, Ellis Greenhalgh.

Grandad was, like many others, an ordinary man who did his duty and fought in WWI, but to me and my family he was a hero. Unfortunately I never really knew him as he died when I was a little girl and I only have a few fond memories of him.

Ellis joined the 9th Battalion of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment when war broke out in 1914. A year later he managed to get 72 hours leave to marry my grandmother, Hannah on the 15th May 1915.

Ellis served as an acting Quartermaster Sergeant in the 25th Division. He wrote many postcards and letters to my grandmother during the war but never described the horrors of what he must have experienced. In March 1918, his division was wiped out but he was lucky and escaped with only a light wound. In April it was wiped out again at Armentiers but was re-formed again. In May it was wiped out again at the Battle of the Marne but this time Ellis was shot through the jaw. After that the division was disbanded and Ellis and a few other survivors were transferred to the 1st Fifth Loyals. My grandad was demobbed in 1919 and went back to his job as a spinner at one of the many cotton mills in Bolton, he retired when he was 70!

I can't begin to imagine what he witnessed during the war and he never spoke of what he saw. He was a very brave man, one amongst the many who I thank for the freedom and relative safety we all now enjoy in our everyday lives.

Thank you Grandad, God bless and we'll never forget.

