

## **Wilfred George JACKSON**

Born, 3 October 1895, Milton Damerell, nr Holsworthy      Died, 27 April 1915, aged 19  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant,      East Kent Regiment (The Buffs)

**Wilfred George Jackson's** great-grandfather had a colourful start in life.

**William Collins Jackson (1754-1814)** made a fortune as an East India Company merchant. He married Jane Shee (1765-1839) and had a son, William Collins Burke Jackson (1792-1828) born in London. The son, William, played with a wealthy Regency set and dropped out of school with considerable debts. He ended up in the debtors' prisons of Newgate and Fleet before being eventually convicted of forgery and transported to Australia, where he arrived in Sydney on 28 July 1814.

William married Mary Jones in 1815 in Sydney, and in December 1817 (George) William Collins Jackson was born. William's son originally shared his father's name, but in 1823 his mother, Mary, had him baptised as George in Hobart and ensured that he gained two valuable godfathers.

### **George William Collins Jackson(1817-1893)**

Children of convicts were known as 'currency' and it was impossible to erase the sins of a convict parent. In later life, George frequently altered his birth date and place to India on official documents, to remove any hint of his parent's criminal past.

In 1826, at the tender age of nine, George left his family in Van Diemen's Land and set out for England to continue to contest the Chancery Case started by his father. A year or two later his father died in Australia and his mother, Mary, visited England to aid her son's case in Chancery. William's attorney and widow had difficulty in even proving his death, and the case ground on for fifteen years, while Coutts Bank held a significant proportion of Jackson's money. Mary returned to Australia and married again.

In 1830 Chancery Court appointed Colonel Charles Shee as guardian to George and made provision for his education and clothing to be paid under the terms of Jackson's Will. He went up to Oxford and matriculated on 29 March 1838 from Exeter College. In the same year his grandmother, Jane, died, but left nothing to her grandson in her will. With Shee's help he enlisted as a Cornet in the First Dragoon Guards in 1839 and later witnessed the Charge of the Light Brigade. In 1842 he finally took charge of the remainder of the Jackson estate and in 1848 he married a very wealthy heiress, Catherine Price Lewis (1823-1898), who bore him 8 daughters and 2 sons over a period of sixteen years.

The 1851 Census shows them living at Roath Castle, Cardiff (this was a location in Cardiff and not an actual castle) with two children and five servants. He is described as 'Captain (half pay) Army Staff Pensions'. The family have a number of commissions in their possession. George rose to the rank of Major in the 7<sup>th</sup> Hussars.

By 1861 George William Collins Jackson was living at 39 Royal York Crescent, Clifton, Bristol and is shown as a Major, Army (retired) with his wife and six children, a visitor and four servants.

By 1871 they had moved to Albert Place, Kempsey, Worcs, with three more children including **George Wilfred Collins Jackson (1865-1901)**, the youngest, aged 5, who was born in Silloth, Cumberland. This was a mobile family.

In 1881 George, his wife and three children had moved again and were listed at Old Town Street, Dawlish and by 1891 they occupied the **Manor House, Dawlish**.

Major George William Collins Jackson died in 1893 aged 71.

In the 1901 census, the eldest unmarried daughters, Katherine (Kate) Anne Jackson (1855-1929), 46, and Louisa Georgina Jackson (1856-1934), 44, were jointly listed as 'Head' of family unit at the Manor House.

### **George Wilfred Collins Jackson (1865-1901)**

George Wilfred Collins Jackson married twice, first to Emily Maud Mary Poole (1865 -1891) in 1890. They are shown on the 1891 census as husband and wife living at The Elms, Windmill Lane, North Curry, Somerset with a visitor and two servants. Sadly, Emily died aged 36, soon after the birth of a daughter Evelyn Maude Jackson (1891- )

George Wilfred Collins Jackson next married Anne Edith Ashby (1874-1897) on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1895 in Bristol.

**Wilfred George Jackson** was born at Sutcombe, Milton Damerell near Holsworthy on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1895, the only son, to be followed by a sister, Marjorie Helen Catherine (1897 -) whose entry into the world caused the demise of her mother, Anne, who died in childbirth in Holsworthy on 28 July 1897.

George Wilfred Collins Jackson, by now a widower twice over, is shown in the 1901 Census to be living at the **Manor House, Dawlish** with his two older spinster sisters Katherine and Georgina, and his daughter Evelyn Maud, 9, and son (**Wilfred**) **George**, 5. His baby daughter, Marjorie, had been given over to one of his sisters, Mary Shee Gwynne (1849-1930).

George Wilfred Collins Jackson himself died at age 36, soon after the census, on 18 November 1901, and son **Wilfred, found himself at age 6 without mother or father**. His half-sister, Maude, was ten and they passed into the care of the dowager aunts Katherine and Georgina, to live at The Manor House.

George Wilfred Collins Jackson had left £3,330. 15s. 1d. to Katherine Anne Jackson and Georgina Louisa Jackson, and to Maude Jackson he left £2,397.14s.5d. No provision appears to have been made directly for his son or Marjorie, his youngest daughter.

By 1911 Georgina Louisa Jackson, 55, and her niece, Maude Evelyn Jackson, 18, had moved away from the Manor House and are shown living at 1 Alma Crescent, Falmouth with three servants.

Evelyn Maud Jackson married Victor Alexander Huggins in St Matthew's Church, Ealing Common on September 11<sup>th</sup> 1918. He was a Lieutenant in the Highland Light Infantry, having been discharged medically unfit on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1918. Georgina Jackson was a witness at the wedding.

Katherine Anne Jackson continued to live at the Manor House until her death on 22 April 1929. In her Will she left £20,462. 7s.6d. to her sisters Emily Blanch and Georgina. The Manor House was sold by Georgina in the autumn of 1929.

Georgina died at Corner Combe, Tekels, Camberley, Surrey on 12 January 1934, where Maude and her husband Harold Baseden were living. Georgina left £10,625.9s. to her neice, Maude.



### The history of 28th Division

The 28th was formed at Hursley, Pitt Hill and Magdalen Hill Camps near Winchester in December 1914 - January 1915 and was rushed as a much-needed reinforcement to France. Shortage of some types of units were filled by Territorial units taken from other Divisions. The units of the Division embarked at Southampton and landed at Le Havre on 16-19 January 1915 and then moved to concentrate in the area between Bailleul and Hazebrouck.

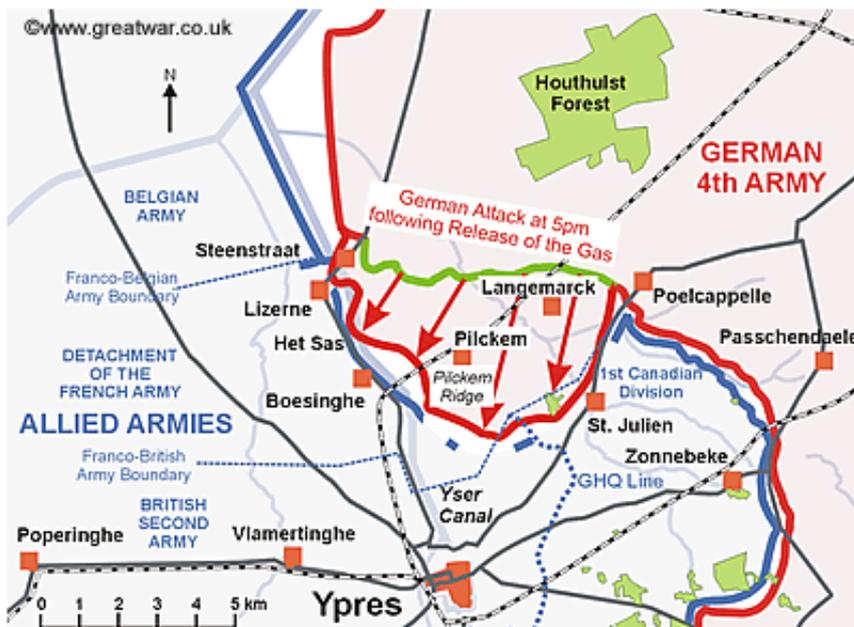
Casualty Form – Active Service B.103 shows that **W G Jackson** landed in France on the 18 January 1915, and that he was treated at No 3 Casualty Clearing Station, for the effects of cold in the feet, at Hazebrouck on 6<sup>th</sup> February, transferred to Queen Mary's hospital, Nice, and rejoined the regiment on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1915. He had been appointed Temporary Lieutenant on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1915.

### The Second Battle of Ypres – 22 April 1915 onwards

“ After three attempts to blow the gas cloud across the sector held by two French divisions in the northern part of the Ypres Salient, the German infantry attack on the sunny spring afternoon of 22<sup>nd</sup> April made significant advances into Allied held territory.

Most of the French territorial and Algerian troops not immediately asphyxiated by the poisonous gas retired from the front line in confusion. The German infantry, following on behind the gas cloud at 5.15pm, successfully broke through the Allied front line.

Within half an hour of the attack the German 52. Reserve Division in the centre of the attacking front had covered 3 to 4 kilometres of French-held ground and had reached its first objective - the high ground of **Pilckem Ridge** - by the village of Pilckem.



The German 45. and 46. Reserve Divisions reached the **Yser Canal** and established bridgeheads on the west bank. at Steenstraat and the lock at Het Sas (south of **Lizerne**).

A dangerous gap in the Allied front line was created as a result of the French withdrawal. The way to **Ypres** was open.

The left wing of the British Second Army sector (at **St. Julien**) was not directly attacked. However, as a result of the French withdrawing on their immediate left, the rear of **13th Battalion of 1st Canadian Division** was in danger of being exposed. This battalion, together with some French troops, formed a flank on the left wing of the British sector along the St.

Julien-Poelcappelle road. They put up a stubborn defence to hinder the progress of the German 51. Reserve Division on the left wing of the German attack. "

Over following days the German attack would be pressed and at some point the East Kent Regiment was sent up to support the exposed flank of the Canadian Division. Survivors' statements vary in detail, but it appears that 'B' Company were surrounded by German infantry and captured at St Julien. Only four got away to rejoin the Regiment. **Lieut. Jackson was seen to sustain a stomach wound and was left to be captured.** There were some who expected that he would have been recovered as a prisoner, and another thought "that recovery was impossible." Other indications were that this action took place between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**30 April 1915-** A telegram was sent by the Secretary, War Office to Miss Jackson at the Manor House. -

*"2 Lieut W G Jackson East Kent Regt has been reported wounded and a prisoner 27 April."*

**On June 1<sup>st</sup>,** Evelyn Maud Jackson wrote from The Manor House, Dawlish -

*"Dear Sir,*

*I wonder if you could give me any news of my brother, Wilfred G Jackson, Lieutenant, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battn. Att. 2<sup>nd</sup> Battn. East Kent Regt. (The Buffs) He was reported wounded and a prisoner – taken April 27<sup>th</sup> near Ypres, we heard privately that he was very badly wounded. I shall be most awfully grateful to you for any information you can give me. Yours Truly  
(Miss) E.M.Jackson "*

**20 August, 1915,** a reply-paid telegram was received at the War Office from Miss Jackson -

*"Has any definite news been received of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut W G Jackson 2<sup>nd</sup> Battn East Kent Regt"*

It was not until **3 October 1917** that the family received a letter from the War Office concluding that "....Lieutenant Jackson is dead and that his death occurred on, or since, 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 1915." The decision was given bearing in mind the length of time that had elapsed without news, and the omission of Jackson's name from lists of prisoners of war received from the German Government.

In his Will he left £2,786.12s.8d to his step sister Evelyn Maud Jackson.

### **About Lt Jackson's death**

The Dawlish Gazette of 8<sup>th</sup> May 1915 printed:

*"..the casualty lists from France reported Second-Lieutenant W G Jackson, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup>) East Kent Regiment (The Buffs), as being wounded and a prisoner. Lieut Jackson is a nephew of Miss Jackson, of the Manor House. He is a promising and keen young officer. It was only in Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> last that we were able to announce that he had been gazetted to the East Kent Regiment. We sincerely hope that good news of him will soon be forthcoming."*

A similar report appeared in the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of Friday 7 May, 1915.

He is recorded on the Devon Roll of Honour, but without date or location of death.

The Dawlish War memorial inscription is JACKSON W.G. 2<sup>ND</sup> LT. THE BUFFS.

Commonwealth War Graves entry: Jackson, Wilfred George, Lieutenant, The Buffs, died 27 April 1915 commemorated at Ploegsteert Memorial, Comines-Warneton, Hainault, Belgium where 11,429 casualties are listed.

The memorial at Ploegsteert carries the regimental casualties and shows Wilfred George Jackson as a Lieutenant. Nothing is known about his death, simply "killed in action."

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
JACKSON		G. Kent R. <sup>2nd</sup>	Lt. *	
Wilfred George.		do	Lieut *	
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
E. KENT R. *	OFF/ 151	84	Dead 27.4.15. Missing N. + 5516. d/ 10.11.22. NW/6/1940	
BRITISH	"	"		
15 STAR *	OFF/ 151	25.		
Theatre of War first served in		France		
Date of entry therein		18. 1. 15.		
28 FEB 1922		NW/6/1970.		
				K. 1580

Lieutenant Wilfred George Jackson's medal record card.

The PLOEGSTEERT MEMORIAL commemorates more than 11,000 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in this sector during the First World War and have no known grave. The memorial serves the area from the line Caestre-Dranoutre-Warneton to the north, to Haverskerque-Estaires-Fournes to the south, including the towns of Hazebrouck, Merville, Bailleul and Armentieres, the Forest of Nieppe, and Ploegsteert Wood.

Most of those commemorated by the memorial did not die in major offensives, such as those which took place around Ypres to the north, or Loos to the south. Most were killed in the course of the day-to-day trench warfare which characterised this part of the line, or in small scale set engagements, usually carried out in support of the major attacks taking place elsewhere.

References:

- Free Birth Marriage Death records
- Service Record held by National Archives, Kew.
- The History of the Manor House, by Tricia Whiteaway, Dawlish Local History Group, 1997
- 'The Profligate Son' by Dr Nicola Phillips (Kingston University) research into Chancery cases.
- The Great War 1914-1918 -2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ypres.

Refs via subscription sites:

- Census records.
- National Probate Calendar
- Jackson family history by descendant.
- Family trees on Ancestry.