

Stanley Arthur Tipton

Private

235174

1st Battalion, Herefordshire Regiment



The story of the Tipton family of Kington starts when Thomas Tipton from Ludlow moved to Kington, probably following work. He was a plumber by trade and moved here between 1871 and 1880. In 1880 Thomas married Eliza Hergest who was born and bred in Kington and came from a long standing Radnorshire family. Their first home was at 10 Duke Street, a tiny little house opposite The Oxford, but plenty big enough for them.

In 1882 the first of what was to be a large family arrived when Harry was born in 1882. Harry was quickly followed by John (1883), Reginald (1885), Lillian (1887), Nelly (1889) and Jessie in late 1890. Clearly the little house at Duke Street was too small and by the 1891 census the family had moved to No5 Coopers Yard which is just off the High Street at the back of Upper Cross, Kington. The family continued to grow and in 1893 Clara was born swiftly followed by William (1894) and in 1895 the focus of this peace Stanley Arthur Tipton was born. Stanley was to be the youngest son of Thomas and Eliza but they did have one further child Gladys, who was born in 1898.

In the 1901 census the family are still living at 5 Coopers Yard with Harry and his brother Reginald having been taken under their father's wing and were both working as painters for their father. Tragedy was to hit the family in 1904 when Thomas, at the relatively young age of 51, passed away. This left Harry as the father figure of the family and as will be seen this is relevant as time goes by. In June 1910 young

Stanley got himself into trouble and was called to appear before the local Magistrate. He was charged with 'Breaking and Entering' with two accomplices all of whom were just fifteen. They were caught breaking into a local fruit merchant's warehouse in Coopers Yard and attempting to acquire apples. They were seen and hence ended up in court. They all pleaded guilty to the charge and were each fined £5 and given a severe reprimand by the Magistrate. In the 1911 census Eliza and four of her children, many have moved out by now, are living at 35 Duke Street. A slightly larger house but nothing huge and by now Eliza has her father, William Hergest, living with her. He is recorded as a ninety year old widower and ex General Labourer, sadly he was to pass away in 1915.

The main source of information about the Tipton family throughout the war and beyond is the Kington Times and it is interesting to discover what happened to the boys in the family. The first we should look at is Reginald. We find that he had served in the army previously and at the outbreak of war was in the reserves. He re-enlisted on the 5th of August 1914, into the 2nd Battalion the Royal Irish Rifles. The Rifles had been activated immediately at the onset of war and became one of the first regiments to enter France and head toward the Germans in Belgium. They arrived at Rouen on the 15th of August and immediately started the long move forward. At 1pm on the 22nd of August the battalion arrived at Cibly, just two miles south of Mons. It was decided that Mons would be the place where the German advance across Belgium would be stopped. At 6am on the 23rd of August the battalion were stood to arms and by 2:30pm they had moved forwards and were facing the enemy. Mons was to be the place where many heroic deeds were performed. Massively outnumbered, the British held the Germans until their position became untenable at which time a steady, managed retreat was undertaken. Gradually the British Army fell back as the German hoards advanced. By the 3rd of September the Battalion were at the Marne River and were detailed to act as rear-guard while thousands of British troops swarmed across the bridge at Meaux. When the last were safely over the 2nd battalion the Royal Irish Rifles also crossed the bridge with it being blown up as soon as the last man crossed. The battalion were not involved in the Battle of Marne but were dispatched to counter any move made by the enemy around the left flank of the

British position. The reason for relaying the story of Reginald and his battalion is because many, many men from the 2nd Battalion the Royal Irish Rifles gave their lives during the early phases of the war; however, Reginald was not one of them. The Kington Times reported on the 14th October that Reginald had been injured during the retreat from Mons and had indeed been taken prisoner. He was a Prisoner of



War throughout the conflict and was held at Gefangenen Lager or prisoner's camp at, Doeberitz which was located just eight miles from Berlin. The photograph above shows British Prisoners of War at Doeberitz returning from a work detail. Note the soldiers holding their spades above their faces. Reginald survived captivity and the reason we know this is because his mother regularly received postcards and letters from him which she passed to the Kington Times for publication. Initially he was cared for at a hospital in Berlin before being transferred to the POW camp at Doeberitz. It appears his life in the camp was not totally unbearable. In his postcards and letters home he often thanked friends and relatives for the kind gifts they had sent him but he craved some 'good old Kington bread'. He got to eat his beloved bread again when he arrived back home to Kington in early 1919.

Stanley's brother William saw action at Gallipoli with the Herefordshire's and was also wounded. In September 1915 the Kington Times reveals that Thomas (William) Tipton was slightly wounded at Gallipoli and was in hospital in Bristol recovering. He survived the war.

Of Harold, the oldest brother, his war was slightly different. We know that he went through the Tribunal route and appears not to have gone to war. You will remember that his father Thomas had died in 1904 leaving Harold to fend for the family. This was the reason he gave for not enlisting and it appears he was successful. He was also active in the community, serving on the Town Council and numerous committees. He was on the committee set up to manage the War Memorial build and also on the Recreation Grounds Committee. It was in 1922, when discussions were held about erecting gates to the Recreation Ground to commemorate those lads who had survived the war that Harold dissented. He is on record as saying that erecting the gates was a waste of money when there were so many of Kington's people starving. His objection was overruled and the gates were erected, as can still be seen today.

Our story now moves back to Stanley. Most of Stanley's service records do not survive but from the few that do we learn that he joined the Herefordshire Regiment on the 23rd of January 1913 as Private, 1263 Tipton, this was to be changed later to 235174. At the time he was just eighteen. The next information we have reveals he first entered into conflict on the 7th of September 1915. You will recall that the Herefordshire's first landed at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli peninsular on the 9th of August 1915. Stanley, still only twenty years old, must have joined the regiment as a replacement following the awful losses in the initial landings. Following the debacle of Gallipoli the regiment was extricated and sent to Cairo in Egypt. Here they recuperated and the next we hear of Stanley is in the 17th of June 1916 edition of the Kington Times. A report states that 'Private Stanley A. Tipton is dangerously ill with a gunshot wound to his right thigh and is in the General Hospital of Cairo'. How Stanley came by his injuries is unknown but the regimental records tell us that at the time they were billeted just outside Cairo at a place called Zeitoun, now a suburb of Cairo. The record does not suggest they were involved in any troubles at the time so the circumstances of his injuries remain unknown. What happened to Stanley immediately after that date we do not know but it would appear the seriousness of his

injury necessitated him being release from the army. He was discharged, with a severely crippled leg, on the 24th of October 1917 in Shrewsbury.



Stanley was awarded the Silver War Badge, an image of which can be seen to the left. The Silver War Badge was awarded to service personnel who had been honourably discharged due to wounds or sickness. The Sterling Silver lapel badge was to be worn on the right breast and only on civilian clothing. It was forbidden to be worn on military uniform. The next time were hear of Stanley is when his death is announced in the Kington Times in April 1927. The report states that his health had been deteriorating for about two years. Stanley died on the 5th of April 1927, he was just 32 years of age. He was

buried at Kington Cemetery on the 9th of April with his family and friends attending. To go with his Silver War Badge Stanley was awarded the Victory and British War Medals and the 1915 Star.

The fate of the rest of Stanley's family is as follows. Maggie Tipton, Stanley's younger sister died, still single, in 1934 at the tender age of just 36. Harry Tipton died in 1947 aged 67. Eliza, Stanley's mother, died the following year in 1948 at the grand old age of 90. And Reginald, who survived four years of incarceration, passed away in 1951 aged 66.

