

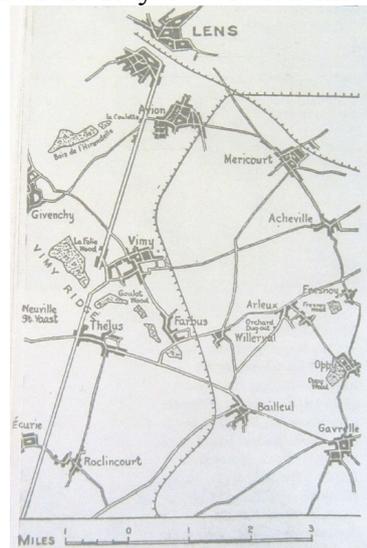
George Warpole.

Private, No 32384 Grenadier Guards (formerly No. 20851 Royal Warwickshire Regiment (14th Bn.).

From records currently available it is probable to assume that George Walpole did not arrive in the village of Wellesbourne Mountford until after the commencement of World War 1 hostilities. He married Elsie Burrows on the 11th June 1913 in the North Cotswold parish church of St. Michael, in the village of Great Wolford. Their children Francis and Annie were born during the successive summers of 1914 and 1915 in Chipping Norton. George's attestation papers of the 7th June 1916 are therefore the first indication of his appearance in Wellesbourne. He worked as a Stud Groom and lived with his family in Chapel Street. Although born in Epsom, Surrey during 1889 much of his early life was spent in Norfolk where his father James worked as a Police Officer.

With the second year of the Great War coming to its end George attested in Warwick and was posted in late July to the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. A further transfer on the 25th November to the 15th Battalion saw him arrive at the Base Depot of the British Expeditionary Force in Harfleur, France. He transferred again to the 14th Battalionⁱ 12 days later.

The 14th Battalion formed part of the 13th Brigade 5th Division which during April and May 1917 were involved in the Battle of Arras, a British offensive on the western front where they provided munitions support for consolidating troops in the capture of Vimy Ridge. Whilst in the area of Farbus Wood, on the 22nd July George, a specialist Lewis gunner, received a gunshot wound which removed the little finger from his left handⁱⁱ. A month earlier Heber Climer of the same battalion and a native of Wellesbourne was killed by shell fire.



Extensive treatment in three different hospitalsⁱⁱⁱ followed his return to England and George was not finally discharged again for active service until the end of April 1918. He was then deployed to the Grenadier Guards, initially to the 5th and then to the 4th Battalions arriving in Boulogne on the 22nd September as part of the GHQ Reserve. George missed the birth of his and Elsie's daughter Elizabeth born in Wellesbourne on the 26th October. At the secession of hostilities in November 1918 George's Battalion was located at Criel Plage near Le Treport, France. Yet a further transfer to the 3rd Battalion saw him board a ship on the 1st March 1919 in Dunkirk bound for England and subsequent discharge from the Army a year later. He received the British War and Victory medals.

Researched by Grev. Hudson, May 2016(grev.hudson@btinternet.com)

ⁱ The 14th, 15th and 16th Battalions of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment were raised from men recruited in the Birmingham area. They were also known as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Birmingham Pals Battalions.

ⁱⁱ A report in the 15/2/1918 edition of the Stratford upon Avon Herald suggests that in addition to the finger wound George also received wounds to his head, however his Service record does not confirm this

ⁱⁱⁱ Metropolitan Hospital London N.1, Cedar Lawn Military Hospital, Hampstead Heath N.W.3 and Command Depot, Sutton Coldfield.

Other Sources:

War Diaries for 14th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment(N.A. WO95/1556/1)

George Walpole Service Record(via Ancestry.com)